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# BRITISH POETRY AND PROSE

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## *A Book of Readings*

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c1928

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# PREFACE

In compiling this book the editors have recognized, first, that literature is a fine art; second, that literature has had an historical development both in its forms and in its material, corresponding to changing social conditions and intellectual interests and attitudes; and, third, that it is an expression of the personalities in whom its creative force was incarnate. Accordingly, literature may be approached from three points of view, not, of course, to be sharply separated — the æsthetic, the historical and social, and the personal. From the first point of view the effort has been made to select the most excellent examples of literary genius from *Beowulf* to the close of the nineteenth century. Arranged in chronological order, these will, it is believed, enable the student to gain for himself a consecutive view of the development of literature in accordance with the tastes, interests, and needs of changing generations. As a matter of convenience the conventional division into periods has been adopted, with the warning that these are not to be emphasized as hard-and-fast distinctions. The introductory notes to the several periods are intended to point out general characteristics of their literary production as affected by political and social movements. The introductions to individual authors have been prepared with the aim of *identifying* the writer, of giving a succinct account of his experience in life as a key to his work, and of suggesting the qualities of his mind and art. As it is hoped that the student will draw in his mind an outline of the historical development of English literature, so it is hoped that he will see and enjoy for himself the qualities which make its exponents memorable. The editors have tried to refrain from forcing opinions and conclusions, and in general to avoid doing for the student what he can reasonably be expected to do for himself.

With these principles in mind they have undertaken to select the most characteristic work of each writer, whether it is generally familiar, or comparatively unknown. They have sought to give due representation to the various types and forms of literature, and to illustrate their progress from period to period. For those who wish to approach the field from this point of view rather than the historical, a special introduction to the study of literature according to types has been provided. The editors have not hesitated to include in the volume selections which may be regarded as important primarily as expressive of the intellectual or social characteristics of a period or school. And they have been especially hospitable to work having the interest of autobiography and personal revelation.

In particular the editors have tried to limit the inclusion of fragmentary extracts, however striking or elegant or famous as purple patches, in the belief that for appreciation of a writer's point of view, form, and style, the unit in which he wrote should be considered. Particularly is this study of literature as units necessary in the case of works significant as historical documents. Thus, for example,

both *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and Milton's *Areopagitica* have been presented in their entirety. Where space forbade such presentation, complete books, cantos or chapters, or other integral portions of the work have been chosen — e.g., the first book of the *Faërie Queene*, the first two books of *Paradise Lost*, the first voyage of *Gulliver's Travels*, the three chapters of *Sartor Resartus* which give the most vital portion of Carlyle's spiritual biography and creed. Omissions have been made only where the substance became clearly unnecessary, or unsuitable, such as the last third of Ruskin's chapter on the *Nature of Gothic*, which is too technical for reading without diagrams. Occasionally the editors have reduced to its fundamental elements a work too important to be omitted and too long to be reproduced in its entirety, such as Mill's tractate *On Liberty*, and Macaulay's *Essay on Bacon*.

This effort to present units has forced the editors to omit frankly and entirely the two forms of novel and drama. They believe that the study of a novelist's work in selections is of limited value, and that while several fine plays might be presented in completeness to give acquaintance with the dramatic form, the number would be inadequate to give a conception of the history and development of the form. And for both novel and drama there are editions easily accessible to be used as supplementary reading. For the editors are far from claiming anything like completeness or finality for their list of selections. They hope rather that their work may be a basis for widely intelligent choice and reading in accordance with the student's own interests and tastes and in addition to any formal academic requirement. In the description of types, references are given to the drama of the Elizabethan period and the novel of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which the reader cannot fail to follow with greater understanding and interest through his general acquaintance with the characteristics of their periods as revealed in this book.

The editors have kept in mind the fact that the purpose of literature is to be read, not studied. They have therefore endeavored to reduce the apparatus for study to a minimum. They have sought to include in the introductions to periods, writers, and works such preliminary information as may be necessary to general understanding; and for details they have limited explanatory footnotes to a minimum. Absolute consistency in procedure in this matter is both impossible and undesirable. On the whole, the editors have attempted to give such explanations as are indispensable to an immediate understanding of the passage while leaving to the reader the pursuit of allusions which can be traced in generally accessible reference books, histories, encyclopædias, or classical and biographical dictionaries. Quotations and references to literature have not, in general, been referred to their sources, except when they were obviously intended to be read in connection with the work itself, as, for example, Macaulay's references in his *Essay on Milton*. In such cases usually the author's own notes are sufficient, and these have, wherever practicable, been retained.

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# A GUIDE TO THE STUDY OF TYPES OF LITERATURE

The general arrangement of this anthology is intended to present the development of English literature in historical sequence. For a simultaneous study of forms and types of literature the following classification is offered.

## THE EPIC

The epic is a long narrative poem written in an elevated style, based on a racial or national theme, and dealing with supernatural and heroic characters. Folk epics arose spontaneously among primitive peoples; examples are *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. Imitations of these in more sophisticated times are called literary epics, the classical example of which is Virgil's *Æneid*. The epic is also imitated for humorous effect in the mock-heroic poem.

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## THE BALLAD

The ballad is a short story in song. It employs a simple meter, usually stanzas of four lines, alternately of four and three feet, sometimes with a refrain. Like the folk epic, the ballad arose spontaneously in primitive times. It was preserved by memory, and only later were the original ballads written down. Most of the famous old ballads in English date from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The revival of interest in the past during the eighteenth century led to the recovery and preservation of ballads — Percy's *Reliques of Old English Poetry* being the most famous collection — and to their imitation, as a form of literature.

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## THE ROMANCE

The romance is a type of narrative in verse or prose which flourished especially in the Middle Ages. It dealt with aristocratic themes of war, adventure, and love, in a spirit of idealism. It was revived in modern times, particularly in connection with the romantic movement of the nineteenth century. Browning developed a type of narrative poem which he called the dramatic romance, examples of which have been included under this heading.

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Morte D'Arthur, 1067

ROBERT BROWNING
My Last Duchess, 1098
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A Grammarian's Funeral, 1109
The Statue and the Bust, 1110
"Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came," 1114

WILLIAM MORRIS
The Defence of Guenevere, 1264
The Haystack in the Floods, 1269

## THE TALE

The tale corresponds in popular literature to the romance in aristocratic. It is an unpretending and realistic narrative of events and human characteristics. Great numbers of tales were afloat in the Middle Ages, preserved, like the ballads, by oral tradition. Many were directed to moral edification; others to counsel in ways of gaining worldly success; others merely recorded striking or humorous episodes, practical jokes, etc. Many collections of tales were made in the Renaissance, such as those of Boccaccio in Italy, and Chaucer in England. It was a convention to bind such collections together by a frame story, such as that furnished by Chaucer's account of the Canterbury pilgrims. The short story is a modern outgrowth of the tale, differing chiefly in its unity and concentration, and its avoidance of diffusion of interest. Examples of modern short stories are those of Poe, Stevenson, and Kipling.

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## THE LYRIC

The lyric is a short poem expressive of the emotion of the author or of some character whom he represents. It was originally intended to be sung, but often in modern times it merely suggests a connection with music. The lyric is various in its forms and uses.

### *The Sonnet*

Of the established forms of lyric the sonnet is most important. Originating in Southern France in the twelfth century, it was introduced into Italy, where it was practiced by Dante, Petrarch, and other poets. It was brought to England in the early sixteenth century by Sir Thomas Wyatt. It enjoyed great vogue in the later years of the century, as an expression of courtly love. Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare, Daniel, Drayton, and many others wrote series or sequences of sonnets. The sonnet was also turned to reflective and religious, and later to political themes.

The sonnet properly consists of fourteen lines of five feet, divided into two parts, the

octave of eight and the sestet of six lines. In the Italian sonnet the octave rhymes *abbaabba*; the sestet employs the rhymes *cde* in various orders, avoiding the couplet at the close. The English sonnet is an adaptation used by the Earl of Surrey, which consists of three quatrains, *ab ab, cd cd, ef ef*, closed by a couplet *gg*. This form was followed by Shakespeare. The sonnet sequence lends itself to narrative as in Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, and in Meredith's *Modern Love*, where the "sonnet" is expanded to sixteen lines.

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Sonnet: To a Young Lady Who Sent Me a Laurel Crown, 845
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Matthew Arnold
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Sonnets from the Portuguese, 1243
To George Sand, 1244

Dante Gabriel Rossetti
The House of Life:
The Sonnet, 1261
Love-Sight, 1261
Silent Noon, 1261
The Choice, 1261
Vain Virtues, 1262

Lost Days, 1262
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ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE
On the Deaths of Thomas Carlyle and George Eliot, 1284
Hope and Fear, 1285

GEORGE MEREDITH
Modern Love, 1322
Lucifer in Starlight, 1323
A Certain People, 1323

THOMAS HARDY
Revulsion, 1333
Embarcation, 1334

### *The Ode*

The ode was a form of lyric poetry of recognized structure among the Greeks. Pindar's odes have been imitated by English poets, notably Cowley and Gray, but in general the term is applied by poets freely to sustained lyric utterances, based on elevated themes and often intended for some dignified celebration. The ode form usually connotes irregular structure, permitting change of rhythm, meter, and rhyme scheme according to the mood.

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Ode to a Nightingale, 842
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LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

ALFRED TENNYSON
Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington (Elegy), 1084

FRANCIS THOMPSON
The Hound of Heaven, 1319

GEORGE MEREDITH
Ode to the Comic Spirit, 1325

### *The Elegy*

The eclogue and elegy were originally of late Greek origin. The poet Theocritus in Alexandria, remembering the songs of goat-

herds which he had heard in his native Sicily, imitated them in more cultivated form. Some of these were love songs, others songs sung in competition among shepherds for prizes, others were dirges on the death of a dead shepherd. This pastoral verse was imitated by Virgil, and later by the poets of the Renaissance. In particular, the elegy became a recognized medium for the expression of grief, and many of the great mourning poems in English have taken this form.


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Coronach: From *The Lady of the Lake*, Canto III, 769
Proud Maisie: From *The Heart of Midlothian*, 771

Walter Savage Landor
Rose Aylmer, 855

Thomas Hood
The Death Bed, 871

Later Nineteenth Century

Alfred Tennyson
Home They Brought Her Warrior Dead: From *The Princess*, 1077
In Memoriam A. H. H., 1078

Matthew Arnold
Requiescat, 1176
Rugby Chapel, 1181

Alfred Edward Housman
To an Athlete Dying Young, 1341


### *The Dramatic Lyric*

The dramatic lyric is a poem defined by Browning as lyric in expression, but dramatic in principle, the thought or feeling attributed to some person other than the author.


Eighteenth Century

Robert Burns
The Jolly Beggars, 663

Percy Bysshe Shelley
Prometheus Unbound: End of the last act, 815

Later Nineteenth Century

Alfred Tennyson
Œnone, 1057
Ulysses, 1071
Locksley Hall, 1071
Northern Farmer, Old Style, 1090
Rizpah, 1094

ROBERT BROWNING
Cavalier Tunes:
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## THE ESSAY

The essay is a form of prose which, like the lyric, is of wide and various application. Originally applied by Bacon to what he called "a set of dispersed meditations," as suggestive of their tentative character, it has been used to designate writings as different as Lamb's whimsical personalities, and Macaulay's brief biographies. Certain types of the essay may be distinguished as Personal or Familiar, Reflective or Philosophical, Historical, or as Criticism of Literature and Art, and Criticism of Life.

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MATTHEW ARNOLD
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A Liberal Education; and Where to Find It, 1227
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WALTER PATER
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ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON
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A Christmas Sermon, 1312

## THE DIALOGUE

The dialogue was a form of exposition and argument, largely used by Greek and Roman writers, the dialogues of Plato being most famous. It is only occasionally employed in modern times. Landor's *Imaginary Conversations* are in part directed to developing ideas and opinions; in part to revealing character.

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Bossuet and the Duchess de Fontanges, 862
The Empress Catharine and Princess Dashkof, 866

## THE ORATION

The oration was a classic form of great importance in the days of Athens and Republican Rome. British Parliamentary institutions also fostered a type of political argument intended for oral delivery. In the debates of the Long Parliament at the time of the Civil War, oratory was a great public weapon. Milton in approaching Parliament on the subject of a free press modeled his address on the classic orations of Isocrates. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries likewise furnished many examples of British eloquence of which Burke was the accepted master.

### Seventeenth Century

John Milton
Areopagitica, 399

### Eighteenth Century

Edmund Burke
From *The Impeachment of Warren Hastings, Esq.*, 635

## THE SERMON

### Seventeenth Century

Jeremy Taylor
From *Of Slavery and Pains Eternal*, 359

## BIOGRAPHY AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The biography was written in Greece and Rome largely for purposes of commemoration of, or inspiration to, civic virtue. In the Renaissance it became important as a record of experience, and this function has increased its interest and value until at present it is one of the most popular forms of literature. Realism and frankness of portrayal are necessary elements, in both of which Boswell's *Johnson* set a standard. Autobiography likewise owes its value to these qualities, of which Pepys' *Diary* is a notable instance.

### Seventeenth Century

Thomas Fuller
The Life of Sir Francis Drake, 356

Samuel Pepys
From *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, 423

John Bunyan
From *Grace Abounding*, 444

### Eighteenth Century

James Boswell
From *The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*, 590

### Early Nineteenth Century

William Wordsworth
The Prelude:
From Book First: *Childhood and Schooltime*, 697
From Book Ninth: *Residence in France*, 697

### Later Nineteenth Century

Thomas Carlyle
Sartor Resartus:
Book II, Chapters VII, VIII, IX; Book III, Chapter VIII, 948

John Henry Newman
From *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, 1039

Thomas Henry Huxley
Autobiography, 1215

Walter Pater
The Child in the House, 1291

## THE DRAMA AND THE NOVEL

Two important longer forms of literature, which cannot properly be represented in this work, are the drama and the novel.

The drama originated in religious ceremonies among primitive peoples, and achieved distinction in Athens in the fifth century B.C. and later in Rome. The drama in the Middle Age likewise owed its revival to religious influences, and scenes from the Bible, or the lives of the saints, were acted in the churches on appropriate days. These were later taken over by the guilds of artisans, and performed out of doors on holidays, upon movable stages or pageants. Gradually, companies of professional actors were formed who acted in the courtyards of inns, or other public places. Thus, the popular drama was secularized. At the same time a revival of the classical drama was taking place in schools and universities. The first theater was built in London in 1576. Others rapidly followed, and the drama written in blank verse became the leading form of popular literature in the early seventeenth century. With this greatest period of the flourishing of the drama are connected the names of Marlowe, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Webster, and others. The theaters were closed by the Puritans in 1642, but reopened after the Restoration, when Dryden and Congreve became the leading dramatists. In the nineteenth century, determined efforts were made to revive the poetic drama, to which Byron, Shelley, Tennyson, and Browning contributed. Toward the close of the century, the realistic prose drama became a vehicle for social criticism in the hands of Mr. G. B. Shaw, Mr. John Galsworthy, and others.

A collection of plays illustrating fully the progress of the drama from the Middle Ages to the present is Matthews and Lieder, *The Chief British Dramatists.*

The novel is a long narrative in prose, partaking of the qualities of the epic, the romance, the tale, and, particularly in its modern form, of the biography. Features of the novel may also be attributed to the influence of the drama, the essay, and the lyric. In the Elizabethan period, large numbers of stories were translated and adapted, one of them furnishing the germ of John Lyly's *Euphues*, a didactic narrative, accompanied by essays, which in the second part, *Euphues and His England*, becomes a sort of novel of manners. Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* shows the influence of the epic, through the Greek romance, and the romance of chivalry. A novel by Thomas Nash, called *The Unfortunate Traveller*, imitated in England a type of novel destined to be very popular, the picaresque romance, in which the hero of the chivalric romance, intent on idealistic adventure, is replaced by the *picaro*, or rogue, whose motive is the realistic one of cheating his way through the world.

The interest in human experience in the late seventeenth century showed itself in the popularity of biography, and this speedily became fiction. Defoe's novels, particularly *Robinson Crusoe*, are excellent examples of this process. Thenceforth the English novel may be described as fictional biography or autobiography. Such is the character of the eighteenth-century novels by Richardson, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne. The didactic element appears strongly in fiction at the close of the eighteenth century, and at the same time the revival of romantic feeling shows itself in the novel dealing with the past.

In the fiction of the nineteenth century, the historical novel is important. From the time of Sir Walter Scott, nearly every great novelist has contributed to this type. The industrial and social problems of the century are reflected in the novels of Charles Dickens and Charles Kingsley. At the beginning of the century, we have admirable pictures of English manners in the novels of Jane Austen; and this realistic strain remains one of the chief qualities of nineteenth-century fiction, in Thackeray and Trollope. The philosophical element of fiction, reflecting the influence of science, becomes stronger in the work of George Eliot, George Meredith, and Thomas Hardy. Toward the close of the century, a revival of romanticism is seen in the work of Stevenson, Kipling, and Joseph Conrad.

# THE ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD

# BRITISH POETRY AND PROSE

## THE ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD

English literature first began to be when the Angles and Saxons, who had won for themselves a new home in the island of Britain, were converted to Christianity and learned from the Christian missionaries the art of writing. It flourished vigorously for some four hundred years, and then with the Norman Conquest suffered a long period of almost total eclipse, during which the language itself underwent such radical changes that this earlier literature became unintelligible to Englishmen. When in the fourteenth century English again became the vehicle of a fine literature, it was to French and Italian models that writers turned for inspiration. But cut off as it is from the continuous tradition of our later literature, the literature of Anglo-Saxon England is an integral part of the great heritage of English-speaking people. It shows the same qualities of robust vigor and bold imagination which appear in all later English writers who are in their temper most completely English. Since the time of Tennyson and William Morris it has begun to make its influence felt upon modern literature.

When Julius Cæsar invaded Britain in 55 B.C., he found there a Celtic people who spoke a language similar to the Gaelic of Ireland and to the Celtic speech which still survives in parts of Wales and in the Highlands of Scotland. A century later Britain became a province of the Roman Empire; and its people gradually adopted the civilization of Rome and, among the town-dwellers at least, the Latin language. But this Celto-Roman civilization was short-lived. It was destroyed by the Germanic tribes of Angles and Saxons who shortly after the middle of the fifth century began to cross the North Sea, first as piratical raiders, later as ruthless conquerors. Before the year 600, these invading tribes possessed the whole island except the mountainous country which fringes it on the West and North. It was they who gave to their new home the name "Englalond," land of the Angles; and their speech, which they called "Englisc," a dialect of Low German closely related to the language still spoken in the islands off the northern coast of Holland, became what we call the English language.

The invading Angles and Saxons brought with them their own rude but not ignoble culture which had been affected hardly at all by the civilization of Rome. Something of their way of life may be gathered from the manners and customs, and the ideals of conduct, poetically depicted in the story of *Beowulf*. Each petty tribe had its "king" who was surrounded by his faithful company of warlike followers, to whom he distributed in his great "mead-hall" the plunder won in battle. They brought also from their continental home the rudiments of our earliest literature. At each tribal court was to be found the "scop" who put into poetic form, and sang to the accompaniment of his harp, the exploits of his lord or the heroic legends of his tribe; and these epic lays were spread abroad by the gleeman, whose profession it was to know them and recite them to an assembled company. It is from the matter of such lays as these, brought across the seas by the invading tribes, that a more sophisticated poet later put together his epic story of *Beowulf*. We have in *Beowulf* echoes of other heroic lays; and there can be no doubt that still others have perished without leaving a trace.

In 597, a Roman missionary named Augustine, sent by Pope Gregory the Great, landed in Kent; and shortly afterwards missionaries from Ireland brought the Christian religion to northern England. The Angles and Saxons were ready converts, and within a century from the landing of Augustine the religion of the pagan North had yielded to the Cross, and the pagan scop had given place to the Christian poet.

With the Christian religion came the rich civilization of Latin Christianity. Monasteries were established all over the country, which became centers of learning, where the Latin classics as well as the writings of the Fathers were copied and read. This Christian civilization of Anglo-Saxon England is vividly described for us in *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, written in Latin prose by the Venerable Bede (673–735), a scholarly monk of the monastery at Jarrow in Northumbria. It is Bede who has preserved the record of the first English poet whose name has come down to us, Caedmon, a lay brother of the monastery of Whitby, who put into the alliterating measure of *Beowulf* poetical paraphrases of portions of the Bible. Of Caedmon's poetry all but a short hymn quoted by Bede has perished. We have similar paraphrases of parts of Genesis and

Exodus and Daniel which were formerly believed to be by Caedmon, and are still called "Caedmonian" though now believed to be of later date. In them the Biblical stories are freely retold with much of the vigor and the delight in battle which characterize *Beowulf*.

The Christian poetry of Anglo-Saxon England is at its best in the writings of Cynewulf and his imitators. Of Cynewulf's life we know nothing with certainty. He probably lived in Northumbria and wrote about the middle of the eighth century. Four poems are signed in riddling fashion with his name — two legends of Christian saints, a short poem called *The Fates of the Apostles*, and the *Christ*, a mystic rhapsody, done with profound religious fervor and vivid poetic power, on Christ's ascension and His coming again with power to judge the world. Other poems which may be by Cynewulf, or by an imitator of his art, are the *Andreas*, which deals with the marvelous missionary adventures of St. Andrew the Apostle, and the *Phœnix*, a very lovely allegory of the resurrection. To the same general school of Northumbrian poetry belong the more lyric, elegiac poems, *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*.

The literary culture of Northumbria, and the poetry fostered by it, were suddenly crushed by the Danish invasions which began before the end of the eighth century. It was in Wessex, south of the valley of the Thames, that English literature next found a home. Here Alfred the Great, King of the West-Saxons from 871 to 901, succeeded in checking the Danes and in establishing peace and prosperity. Alfred was a patron of learning and a lover of literature. He collected and preserved the poetry of Northumbria, which has in consequence survived to us only in a West-Saxon form, and himself translated or caused to be translated into English various Latin writings — among them Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* — which he thought most useful to the intellectual life of his people. He also began the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which was continued year by year for a century after his death. Into it were incorporated two fine historical poems, *The Battle of Brunnanburh* (937) and *The Battle of Maldon* (991), which mark the end of Anglo-Saxon poetry. With the eloquent homilies of Aelfric (about 1000) ends the earliest period of English literature; for even before the Norman Conquest of 1066 French had become the polite language of England, and consequently the medium of all literary composition which did not prefer the greater dignity of Latin.

For the general history of the period one may read Chapter I of Green's *Short History of the English People;* for an account of the literature, Volume I of *The Cambridge History of English Literature* and Stopford Brooke's *English Literature from the Beginning to the Norman Conquest* (Macmillan) are the best guides. The student who wishes to extend beyond the selections contained in the present volume his acquaintance with Old English literature should use J. D. Spaeth's *Old English Poetry* (Princeton University Press), Cook and Tinker's *Select Translations from Old English Prose* (Ginn), and C. W. Kennedy's *The Poems of Cynewulf* and *The Poems of Caedmon* (Dutton).

## BEOWULF

*Modern Version by J. Duncan Spaeth*[1]

In the British Museum is preserved a manuscript written about the year 1000 A.D. which contains the Old English epic of *Beowulf*. To the lucky survival of this precious volume we owe our knowledge of the heroic poem which stands at the very beginning of English literature. But the poem itself is older than the one surviving copy of it. It was probably composed somewhere about the year 750 A.D. in the far north of England. The name and identity of its author are hopelessly lost. The material which this nameless author put into its present poetic form is still older — a body of oral lays brought over from the Continent by the Angles and Saxons when they settled in the island of Britain. These lays embodied a certain amount of historic fact — Hygelac, uncle of Beowulf and his predecessor as king of the Geats, is an historic chieftain who died about 520 A.D. But if the hero, Beowulf, is to some extent an historic personage, the greater part of his heroic exploits have been built up out of legend and myth. One of the Old Norse sagas, the *Grettis Saga*, contains what is clearly a variant version of Beowulf's fight with Grendel's mother below the waters of the haunted mere. The scene of the poem is in the regions of the Baltic Sea, modern Denmark and southern Sweden; England is never mentioned. Though the English poet has supplied a certain amount of Christian comment, the story itself and all its persons are purely pagan. It is the pagan divinity Wyrd, or Destiny, who shapes their ends. The manners and customs portrayed belong also to the pagan North. Pagan also are the qualities of character which the poem extols — courage, loyalty, generosity. To these fine and abiding virtues the Christian tradition has taught us to add another, the quality of modesty. Beowulf is unashamedly boastful.

The story of the poem falls into three episodes: Beowulf's fight with Grendel, the monster who has been ravaging the great mead-hall of Hrothgar, king of the Scyldings; the fight with Grendel's

1 By the kind permission of Professor Spaeth and of the Princeton University Press this spirited version of *Beowulf*, and those of the *Wanderer* and of the *Battle of Maldon* which follow, are reprinted from Professor Spaeth's volume of *Old English Poetry*, Princeton, 1921.

mother who has sought to avenge her son; finally, after the lapse of fifty years, the fight of the aged Beowulf with the fire-breathing dragon who has been laying waste the kingdom of which Beowulf is now king.

The poem is written in that primitive form of English, spoken and written before the Norman Conquest, which we call Old English or Anglo-Saxon. Though actually our own speech in an earlier form, it is so unlike modern English that it presents all the difficulties of a foreign language; so that most modern readers must be content to know it only in translation. In the original the first five lines of the poem run thus:

Hwæt! we Gar-Dena in gear-dagum
þeod cyninga þrym gefrunon,
hu þa æþelingas ellen fremedon.
Oft Scyld Scefing sceaþena þreatum,
monegum mægþum meodo-setla ofteah.

The metrical form, freely reproduced in Professor Spaeth's rendering, consists of a line of four feet. Each foot contains a heavily stressed syllable and a varying number of unstressed syllables. The line is divided into halves by a heavy cæsural pause after the second foot. The two halves of the line are bound together by alliteration of stressed syllables — normally the first, second, and third, or merely the first and third. There is no use of rhyme. A characteristic feature of Old English poetry is the device of repetition in parallel clauses. As in the Hebrew poetry of the Psalms, an idea is repeated, sometimes in a series of striking metaphors, a line or half-line echoing that which precedes it.

The poem has been many times translated. An excellent translation of the entire text into modern English prose is that of C. B. Tinker (Henry Holt and Co.). The version by J. D. Spaeth printed here is condensed to about two thirds of the original length by the omission of passages not essential to the story. The passages omitted are briefly summarized in prose. The result of this condensation is a narrative considerably more unified than the original. A good edition of the original text is that of F. Klaeber, Boston, 1922.

## BEOWULF

*The Myth of the Sheaf-Child*[1]

List to an old-time lay of the Spear-Danes,
Full of the prowess of famous kings,
Deeds of renown that were done by the heroes;
Scyld the Sheaf-Child from scourging foemen,
From raiders a-many their mead-halls wrested.
He lived to be feared, though first as a waif,
Puny and frail he was found on the shore.
He grew to be great, and was girt with power
Till the border-tribes all obeyed his rule,
And sea-folk hardy that sit by the whale-path
Gave him tribute, a good king was he.
Many years after, an heir was born to him,
A goodly youth, whom God had sent
To stay and support his people in need.
(Long time leaderless living in woe,
The sorrow they suffered He saw full well.)
The Lord of Glory did lend him honor,
Beowulf's[2] fame afar was borne,
Son of old Scyld in the Scandian lands.
A youthful heir must be open-handed,
Furnish the friends of his father with plenty,
That thus in his age, in the hour of battle,
Willing comrades may crowd around him
Eager and true. In every tribe
Honorable deeds shall adorn an earl.
The aged Scyld, when his hour had come,
Famous and praised, departed to God.
His faithful comrades carried him down
To the brink of the sea, as himself had bidden,
The Scyldings' friend, before he fell silent,
Their lord beloved who long had ruled them.
Out in the bay a boat was waiting
Coated with ice, 'twas the king's own barge.
They lifted aboard their bracelet-bestower,
And down on the deck their dear lord laid,
Hard by the mast. Heaped-up treasure
Gathered from far they gave him along.
Never was ship more nobly laden
With wondrous weapons and warlike gear.
Swords and corselets covered his breast,
Floating riches to ride afar with him
Out o'er the waves at the will of the sea.
No less they dowered their lord with treasure,
Things of price, than those who at first
Had launched him forth as a little child
Alone on the deep to drift o'er the billows.
They gave him to boot a gilded banner,
High o'er his head they hung it aloft.
Then set him adrift, let the surges bear him.
Sad were their hearts, their spirits mournful;
Man hath not heard, no mortal can say
Who found that barge's floating burden.

1 Scyld, the "Sheaf-Child," is the mythical ancestor of Hrothgar, King of the Scyldings, or Spear-Danes.

2 Not the hero of the poem, but another of the same name, an ancestor of King Hrothgar.

## I

### *The Line of the Danish Kings and the Building of Heorot*

Now Beowulf was king in the burgs of the Scyldings,
Famed among folk. (His father had left
The land of the living.) From his loins was sprung
Healfdene the royal, who ruled to old age,
Gray and battlegrim, the bold-hearted Scyldings.
Children four to this chief of the people
Woke unto life, one after another;
Heorogar and Hrothgar, and Halga the brave,
And winsome Sigeneow, a Scylfing she wedded;
Saewela's queen they say she became.
To Hrothgar was given such glory in battle,
Such fame he won, that his faithful band
Of youthful warriors waxed amain.
So great had grown his guard of kinsmen,
That it came in his mind to call on his people
To build a mead-hall, mightier far
Than any e'er seen by the sons of men,
Wherein to bestow upon old and young,
Gifts and rewards, as God vouchsafed them,
Save folk-share lands and freemen's lives.
Far and wide the work was published;
Many a tribe, the mid-earth round,
Helped to fashion the folk-stead fair.
With speed they built it, and soon 'twas finished,
Greatest of halls. Heorot[1] he named it,
Whose word was law o'er lands afar;
Nor failed in his promise, but freely dealt
Gifts at the feast. The fair hall towered
Wide-gabled and high, awaiting its doom,
The sweep of fire; not far was the time
That ancient feuds should open afresh,
And sword-hate sunder sons from fathers.

In the darkness dwelt a demon-sprite
Whose heart was filled with fury and hate,
When he heard each night the noise of revel
Loud in the hall, laughter and song.
To the sound of the harp the singer chanted
Lays he had learned, of long ago;
How the Almighty had made the earth,
Wonder-bright lands, washed by the ocean;
How he set, triumphant, sun and moon
To lighten all men that live on the earth.
He brightened the land with leaves and branches;
Life he created for every being,
Each in its kind, that moves upon earth.
So, happy in hall, the heroes lived,
Wanting naught, till one began
To work them woe, a wicked fiend.
The demon grim was Grendel called,
March-stalker huge, the moors he roamed.
The joyless creature had kept long time
The lonely fen, the lairs of monsters,
Cast out from men, an exile accurst.
On offspring of Cain, the killing of Abel
Was justly avenged by the Judge Eternal.
Nought gained by the feud the faithless murderer;[1]
He was banished unblest from abode of men.
And hence arose the host of miscreants,
Monsters and elves and eldritch sprites,
Warlocks and giants, that warred against God;
Jotuns and goblins; He gave them their due.

1 The word Heorot means hart, stag.

## II

### *The Ravaging of Heorot Hall by the Monster Grendel*

When night had fallen, the fiend crept near
To the lofty hall, to learn how the Danes
In Heorot fared, when the feasting was done.
The aethelings[2] all within he saw
Asleep after revel, not recking of danger,
And free from care. The fiend accurst,
Grim and greedy, his grip made ready;
Snatched in their sleep, with savage fury,
Thirty warriors; away he sprang
Proud of his prey, to repair to his home,
His blood-dripping booty to bring to his lair.
At early dawn, when day-break came,
The vengeance of Grendel was revealed to all;
Their wails after wassail were widely heard,
Their morning-woe. The mighty ruler,
The aetheling brave, sat bowed with grief.
The fate of his followers filled him with sorrow,
When they traced the tracks of the treacherous foe,
Fiend accurst. Too fierce was that onset,
Too loathsome and long, nor left them respite.
The very next night, anew he began
To maim and to murder, nor was minded to slacken
His fury of hate, too hardened in crime.
'Twas easy to find then earls who preferred
A room elsewhere, for rest at night,
A bed in the bowers, when they brought this news

1 i. e. Cain. 2 princes.

Of the hall-foe's hate; and henceforth all
Who escaped the demon, kept distance safe.

So Grendel wrongfully ruled the hall,
One against all till empty stood
That lordly mansion, and long remained so.
For the space of twelve winters the Scyldings' Friend [1]
Bore in his breast the brunt of this sorrow,
Measureless woe. In mournful lays
The tale became known; 'twas told abroad
In gleemen's songs, how Grendel had warred
Long against Hrothgar, and wreaked his hate
With murderous fury through many a year,
Refusing to end the feud perpetual,
Or decently deal with the Danes in parley,
Take their tribute for treaty of peace;
Nor could their leaders look to receive
Pay from his hands for the harm that he wrought.
The fell destroyer kept feeding his rage
On young and old. So all night long
He prowled o'er the fen and surprised his victims,
Death-shadow dark. (The dusky realms
Where the hell-runes haunt are hidden from men.)
So the exiled roamer his raids continued;
Wrong upon wrong in his wrath he heaped.
In midnights dark he dwelt alone
'Mongst Heorot's trophies and treasures rich.
Great was the grief of the gold-friend of Scyldings,
Vexed was his mood that he might not visit
His goodly throne, his gift-seat proud,
Deprived of joy by the judgment of God.
Many the wise men that met to discover
Ways of escape from the scourge of affliction.
Often they came for counsel together;
Often at heathen altars they made
Sacrifice-offerings, beseeching their idols
To send them deliverance from assault of the foe.
Such was their practice, they prayed to the Devil;
The hope of the heathen on hell was fixed,
The mood of their mind. Their Maker they knew not,
The righteous Judge and Ruler on high.
The Wielder of Glory they worshipped not,
The Warden of Heaven. Woe be to him
Whose soul is doomed through spite and envy,
In utter despair and agony hopeless
Forever to burn. But blessed is he
Who, after this life, the Lord shall seek,
Eager for peace in the arms of the Father.

1 Hrothgar.

## III

*The Voyage of Beowulf to the Hall of Hrothgar*

Thus boiled with care the breast of Hrothgar;
Ceaselessly sorrowed the son of Healfdene,
None of his chieftains might change his lot.
Too fell was the foe that afflicted the people
With wrongs unnumbered, and nightly horrors.
Then heard in his home king Hygelac's thane,[1]
The dauntless Jute,[2] of the doings of Grendel.
In strength he outstripped the strongest of men
That dwell in the earth in the days of this life.
Gallant and bold, he gave command
To get him a boat, a good wave-skimmer.
O'er the swan-road, he said, he would seek the king
Noble and famous, who needed men.
Though dear to his kin, they discouraged him not;
The prudent in counsel praised the adventure,
Whetted his valor, awaiting good omens.

So Beowulf chose from the band of the Jutes
Heroes brave, the best he could find;
He with fourteen followers hardy,
Went to embark; he was wise in seamanship,
Showed them the landmarks, leading the way.
Soon they descried their craft in the water,
At the foot of the cliff. Then climbed aboard
The chosen troop; the tide was churning
Sea against sand; they stowed away
In the hold of the ship their shining armor,
War-gear and weapons; the warriors launched
Their well-braced boat on her welcome voyage.

Swift o'er the waves with a wind that favored,
Foam on her breast, like a bird she flew;
A day and a night they drove to seaward,
Cut the waves with the curving prow,
Till the seamen that sailed her sighted the land,
Shining cliffs and coast-wise hills,
Headlands bold. The harbor opened,
Their cruise was ended. Then quickly the sailors,

1 Beowulf.
2 In the original, *Geat*. This tribe of Geats, to which Beowulf belonged, lived somewhere on the shores of the Baltic, possibly in Jutland, possibly in southern Sweden. Professor Spaeth's translation assumes that it is identical with the Jutes.

The crew of Weder-folk, clambered ashore,
Moored their craft with clank of chain-mail,
And goodly war-gear. God they thanked
That their way was smooth o'er the surging waves.

High on the shore, the Scylding coast-guard
Saw from the cliff where he kept his watch,
Glittering shields o'er the gang-plank carried,
Polished weapons: it puzzled him sore,
He wondered in mind who the men might be.
Down to the strand on his steed came riding
Hrothgar's thane, with threatening arm
Shook his war-spear and shouted this challenge:
"Who are ye, men, all mailed and harnessed,
That brought yon ship o'er the broad seaways,
And hither have come across the water,
To land on our shores. Long have I stood
As coast-guard here, and kept my sea-watch,
Lest harrying foe with hostile fleet
Should dare to damage our Danish[1] land.
Armed men never from overseas came
More openly hither. But how do ye know
That law of the land doth give ye leave
To come thus near. I never have seen
Statelier earl upon earth than him, —
Yon hero in harness. No house-carl he,
In lordly array, if looks speak true,
And noble bearing. But now I must learn
Your names and country, ere nearer ye come,
Underhand spies, for aught I know,
In Danish land. Now listen ye strangers,
In from the sea, to my open challenge:
Heed ye my words and haste me to know
What your errand and whence ye have come."

## IV

### *Beowulf's Words with the Coast-Guard*

Him the hero hailed with an answer,
The war-troop's leader, his word-hoard unlocked:
"In truth we belong to the tribe of the Jutes;
We are Hygelac's own hearth-companions.
Far among folk my father was known,
A noble chieftain, his name was Ecgtheow.
Honored by all, he ended his days
Full of winters and famed in the land.
Wise men everywhere well remember him.
Hither we fare with friendly purpose
To seek thy lord, the son of Healfdene,
The land-protector. Instruct us kindly.
Bound on adventure we visit thy lord,
The prince of the Danes. Our purpose is open;
Nought keep we secret; thou surely wilt know
If the tale we were told is true or not:
That among the Scyldings a monster strange,
A nameless demon, when nights are dark,
With cruel cunning, for cause unknown,
Works havoc and slaughter. I have in mind
A way to help your wise king Hrothgar,
Your ruler to rid of the ravening foe,
If ever his tide of troubles shall turn,
The billows of care that boil in his breast
Shall cool and subside, and his sorrow be cured;
Else, failing my purpose, forever hereafter
He shall suffer distress, while stands on its hill,
Mounting on high, his matchless hall."
Straight answered the coast-guard, astride his horse,
The warrior brave: "Twixt words and deeds
A keen-witted thane, if he thinks aright,
Must well distinguish and weigh the difference.
Your words I believe, that you wish no evil
To the Scylding lord. I will let you bring
Your shields ashore and show you the way.
My comrades here shall keep the watch,
From meddling foe defend your craft,
Your fresh-tarred boat, fast by the beach,
And faithfully guard her till again she bear
With curving bow, o'er the bounding main,
Her master well-loved to the Wedermark.
Fortune oft favors the fighter who yields not;
Hero unflinching comes unhurt from the fray."
Landward they hastened, leaving behind them
Fast at her moorings the full-bosomed boat,
The ship at anchor. Shone the boar-heads,
Gleaming with gold, o'er the guards of their helmets;
Bright and fire-forged the beast kept watch.
Forward they pressed, proud and adventurous,
Fit for the fight, till afar they descried
The high-peaked radiant roof of the hall.
Of houses far-praised, 'neath heaven by the people
That inhabit the earth, this house was most famous,
The seat of King Hrothgar; its splendor gleamed bright
O'er many a land. Their leader well-armed
Showed them the shining shield-burg of heroes,
And set them right on the road to their goal.

[1] The Scyldings are "Danes"; but their home is in modern Sweden.

Then, wheeling his steed, he wished them farewell:

'Tis time that I leave you; the Lord of Heaven,
The Father Almighty in mercy keep you
Safe on your journey; seaward I turn
Watch to keep and ward against foe."

## V

### *Beowulf's Arrival at the Hall and the Manner of his Reception*

The street was stone-paved; straight it led
To the goal of their journey. Glistened their byrnies [1]
Stout and strong-linked; sang the rings
Of their iron mail as they marched along,
In armor and helmet right up to the hall.
Sea-voyage-sated, they set their shields,
Their linden-woods broad, along the wall.
As they bent to the bench, their byrnies clattered.
They stacked their spears that stood in a row,
Ashwood tipped with iron above;
Well-equipped was the warlike band.
A stately Dane the strangers addressed,
Asked who they were and whence they had come:
"Whence do ye bear your burnished shields,
Your visored helmets and harness gray
Your heap of spear-shafts? A servant of Hrothgar's,
His herald, am I. Hardier strangers,
Nobler in mien, have I never seen.
'Tis clear you come to the court of Hrothgar,
Not outlaws and beggars, but bent on adventure."
To him gave answer the hero brave,
The lord of the Weders these words returned,
Bold 'neath his helmet: "We are Hygelac's men,
His board-companions. I am Beowulf called.
Ready am I the ruler to answer,
To say to thy lord, the son of Healfdene,
Why we have come his court to seek,
If he will graciously grant us a hearing."
Wulfgar replied: (he was prince of the Wendles,
His noble renown was known to many,
His courage in war, and wisdom in counsel)
"I will carry thy quest to the king of the Danes,
And ask him whether he wishes to grant
The boon thou dost ask of the breaker-of-rings,
To speak to himself concerning thy journey;
And straight will I bring thee the answer he sends."
Swiftly he hied him where Hrothgar sat,
White-haired and old, his earls around him.
Stately he strode, till he stood in the presence
Of the king of the Danes, — in courtly ways
Was Wulfgar skilled; he spoke to his lord:
"Hither have fared from a far country,
A band of Jutes o'er the bounding sea.
Their leader and chief by his chosen comrades
Is Beowulf called; this boon they ask:
That they may find with thee, my lord,
Favor of speech; refuse them not,
But grant them, Hrothgar, gracious hearing
In armor clad, they claim respect
Of choicest earls; but chiefly their lord
Who lately hither hath led his comrades."

[1] coats of chain-armor.

## VI

### *Hrothgar's Welcome to Beowulf*

Hrothgar spoke, the Scyldings' protector:
"Beowulf I knew in his boyhood days;
His aged father was Ecgtheow named.
To him, to take home, did Hrethel give
His only daughter. Their dauntless son
Now comes to my court in quest of a friend.
My sea-faring men whom I sent afar
To the land of the Jutes, with generous gifts,
In token of friendship, have told me this,
That the power of his grip was so great it equalled
The strength of thirty stout-armed thanes.
Him bold in battle, the blessed God
Hath sent in his mercy, to save our people
— So I hope in my heart — from the horror of Grendel.
I shall offer him gold for his gallant spirit.
Go now in haste, and greet the strangers;
Bid to the hall the whole of the company;
Welcome with words the warrior band,
To the home of the Danes." To the hall door went
Wulfgar the courtly, and called them in:
"My master commands me this message to give you,
The lord of the Danes your lineage knows;
Bids me to welcome you, brave-hearted warriors,
Bound on adventure o'er the billowy main.
Ye may rise now and enter, arrayed in your armor,
Covered with helmets, the king to greet.

But leave your shields, and your shafts of slaughter,
Here by the wall to await the issue."
Then rose the leader, around him his comrades,
Sturdy war-band; some waited without,
Bid by the bold one their battle-gear to guard.
Together they hastened where the herald led them,
Under Heorot's roof. The hero went first,
Strode under helmet, till he stood by the hearth.
Beowulf spoke, his byrnie glistened,
His corslet chain-linked by cunning of smithcraft:
"Hail, king Hrothgar! Hygelac's thane
And kinsman am I. Known is the record
Of deeds of renown I have done in my youth.
Far in my home, I heard of this Grendel;
Sea-farers tell the tale of the hall:
How bare of warriors, this best of buildings
Deserted stands, when the sun goes down
And twilight deepens to dark in the sky.
By comrades encouraged, I come on this journey.
The best of them bade me, the bravest and wisest,
To go to thy succor, O good king Hrothgar;
For well they approved my prowess in battle,
They saw me themselves come safe from the conflict
When five of my foes I defeated and bound,
Beating in battle the brood of the monsters.
At night on the sea with nicors I wrestled,
Avenging the Weders, survived the sea-peril,
And crushed in my grip the grim sea-monsters
That harried my neighbors. Now I am come
To cope with Grendel in combat single,
And match my might against the monster, alone.
I pray thee therefore, prince of the Scyldings,
Not to refuse the favor I ask,
Having come so far, O friend of the Shield-Danes,
That I alone with my loyal comrades,
My hardy companions, may Heorot purge.
Moreover they say that the slaughterous fiend
In wanton mood all weapons despises.
Hence, — as I hope that Hygelac may,
My lord and king, be kind to me, —
Sword and buckler I scorn to bear,
Gold-adorned shield, as I go to the conflict.
With my grip will I grapple the gruesome fiend,
Foe against foe, to fight for our life.
And he that shall fall his faith must put
In the judgment of God. If Grendel wins,
He is minded to make his meal in the hall
Untroubled by fear, on the folk of the Jutes,
As often before he fed on the Danes.
No need for thee then to think of my burial.
If I lose my life, the lonely prowler
My blood-stained body will bear to his den,
Swallow me greedily, and splash with my gore
His lair in the marsh; no longer wilt then
Have need to find me food and sustenance.
To Hygelac send, if I sink in the battle,
This best of corslets that covers my breast,
Heirloom of Hrethel, rarest of byrnies,
The work of Weland.[1] So Wyrd will be done."

## VII

*The Feasting in Heorot and the Customs of the Hall*

Hrothgar spoke, the Scyldings' defender:
"Thou hast come, dear Beowulf, to bring us help,
For the sake of friendship to fight our battles

Fifteen lines are omitted, in which Hrothgar recounts the exploits of Beowulf's father.

Sad is my spirit and sore it grieves me
To tell to any the trouble and shame
That Grendel hath brought me with bitter hate,
The havoc he wrought in my ranks in the hall.
My war-band dwindles, driven by Wyrd[2]
Into Grendel's grasp; but God may easily
End this monster's mad career.
Full often they boasted, my beer-bold warriors,
Brave o'er their ale-cups, the best of my fighters,
They'd meet in the mead-hall the mighty Grendel,
End his orgies with edge of the sword.
But always the mead-hall, the morning after,
The splendid building, was blood-bespattered;
Daylight dawned on the drippings of swords;
Soiled with slaughter were sills and benches,
My liege-men perished, and left me poor.
Sit down to the board; unbend thy thoughts;
Speak to my men as thy mood shall prompt."
For the band of the Jutes a bench was cleared;
Room in the mead-hall was made for them all.

1 The heroic smith of Norse legend. 2 Destiny.

Then strode to their seats the strong-hearted heroes.
The warriors' wants a waiting-thane served;
Held in his hand the highly-wrought ale-cup,
Poured sparkling mead, while the minstrel sang
Gaily in Heorot. There was gladness of heroes,
A joyous company of Jutes and of Danes.

## VIII

*Unferth Taunts Beowulf*

Then up spoke Unferth, Ecglaf's son,
Who sat at the feet of the Scylding ruler;
He vented his jealousy. The journey of Beowulf,
His sea-adventure, sorely displeased him.
It filled him with envy that any other
Should win among men more war-like glory,
More fame under heaven than he himself:
"Art thou the Beowulf that battled with Brecca,
Far out at sea, when ye swam together,
What time you two made trial of the billows,
Risking your lives in reckless folly,
On the open sea? None might dissuade you,
Friend nor foe, from the fool-hardy venture,
When straight from the shore you struck for the open,
Breasted the waves and beat with your arms
The mounting billows, measured the sea-paths
With lusty strokes. Stirred was the ocean
By wintry storms. Seven days and nights
Your sea-strife lasted; at length he beat you,
His strength was the better; at break of day
He made the beach where the Battle-Reamas
Dwell by the shore; and straightway returned
To his people beloved in the land of the Brondings,
Where liegemen and towns and treasure were his.
In sooth I say, the son of Beanstan
His boast against thee made good to the full.
But now I ween a worse fate awaits thee,
Though thy mettle be proved in many a battle
And grim encounter, if the coming of Grendel
Thou darest abide, in the dead of the night."
Beowulf spoke, the son of Ecgtheow:
"What a deal of stuff thou hast talked about Brecca,
Garrulous with drink, my good friend Unferth.
Thou hast lauded his deeds. Now listen to me!
More sea-strength had I, more ocean-endurance,
Than any man else, the wide earth round.
'Tis true we planned in the pride of our youth
This ocean-adventure, and vowed we would risk
Our lives in the deep, each daring the other.
We were both of us boys, but our boast we fulfilled.
Our naked swords as we swam from the land,
We held in our grasp, to guard against whales.
Not a stroke could he gain on me, strive as he would,
Make swifter speed through the swelling waves,
Nor could I in swimming o'ercome him at sea.
Side by side in the surge we labored
Five nights long. At last we were parted
By furious seas and a freezing gale.
Night fell black; the norther wild
Rushed on us ruthless and roughened the sea.
Now was aroused the wrath of the monsters,
But my war-proof ring-mail, woven and hand-locked,
Served me well 'gainst the sea-beasts' fury;
The close-linked battle-net covered my breast.
I was dragged to the bottom by a blood-thirsty monster,
Firm in his clutch the furious sea-beast
Helpless held me. But my hand came free,
And my foe I pierced with point of my sword.
With my battle-blade good 'twas given me to kill
The dragon of the deep, by dint of my blow."

## IX

*Beowulf Completes the Story of his Swimming Adventure with Brecca. Hrothgar's Departure from the Hall*

"Thus sore beset me sea-beasts thronging,
Murderous man-eaters. I met their charges,
Gave them their due with my goodly blade.
They failed of their fill, the feast they expected
In circle sitting on the sea-floor together
With me for their meal. I marred their pleasure.
When morning came, they were cast ashore
By the wash of the waves; their wounds proved fatal,
Bloated and dead on the beach they lay.
No more would they cross the course of the ships,

In the chop of the channel charge the sailors.
Day broke in the east, bright beacon of God;
The sea fell smooth. I saw bold headlands,
Windy walls; for Wyrd oft saveth
A man not doomed, if he dauntless prove.
My luck did not fail me, my long sword finished
Nine of the nicors. Ne'er have I heard
Of fiercer battle fought in the night,
Of hero more harried by horrors at sea.
Yet I saved my life from the sea-beasts' clutch.
Worn with the struggle, I was washed ashore
In the realm of the Finns by the run of the tide,
The heave of the flood. I have failed to hear
Of like adventure laid to thee,
Battle so bitter. Brecca did never, —
Neither of you was known to achieve
Deed so valiant, adventure so daring,
Sword-play so nimble; not that I boast of it,
But mark me Unferth, you murdered your brothers,
Your closest of kin. The curse of hell
For this you will suffer, though sharp be your wit.
In sooth I say to you, son of Ecglaf,
Never had Grendel such grim deeds wrought,
Such havoc in Heorot, so harried your king
With bestial fury, if your boasted courage
In deeds as well as in words you had proved.
But now he has found he need not fear
Vengeance fierce from the Victory-Scyldings,
Ruthless attack in return for his raids.
He takes his toll of your tribe as he pleases,
Sparing none of your spearmen proud.
He ravens and rages and recks not the Dane folk,
Safe from their sword-play. But soon I will teach him
How the Jute-folk fight. Then freely may go
To the mead-hall who likes, when the light of morning,
The next day's dawn, the dark shall dispel,
And the heaven-bright sun from the south shall shine."

Glad in his heart was the giver of rings,
Hoped to have help, the hoar-headed king;
The Shield-Danes' shepherd was sure of relief,
When he found in Beowulf so firm a resolve.
There was laughter of heroes. Loud was their revelry,
Words were winsome, as Wealhtheow rose,
Queen of Hrothgar, heedful of courtesy,
Gold-adorned greeted the guests in the hall.
First to her lord, the land-defender,
The high-born lady handed the cup;
Bade him be gleeful and gay at the board,
And good to his people. Gladly he took it,
Quaffed from the beaker, the battle-famed king.
Then leaving her lord, the lady of the Helmings
Passed among her people in each part of the hall,
Offered the ale-cup to old and young,
Till she came to the bench where Beowulf sat.
The jewel-laden queen in courteous manner
Beowulf greeted; to God gave thanks,
Wise in her words, that her wish was granted,
That at last in her trouble a trusted hero
Had come for comfort. The cup received
From Wealhtheow's hand the hardy warrior,
And made this reply, his mind on the battle;
Beowulf spoke, the son of Ecgtheow:
"I made up my mind when my mates and I
Embarked in our boat, outbound on the sea,
That fully I'd work the will of thy people,
Or fall in the fight, in the clutch of the fiend.
I surely shall do a deed of glory,
Worthy an earl, or end my days,
My morning of life, in the mead-hall here."
His words pleased well the wife of Hrothgar,
The Jutish lord's boast. The jewelled queen
Went to sit by the side of her lord.

Renewed was the sound of noisy revel,
Wassail of warriors. Brave words were spoken.
Mirth in the mead-hall mounted high,
Till Healfdene's son [1] the sign did give
That he wished to retire. Full well he knew
The fiend would find a fight awaiting him,
When the light of the sun had left the hall,
And creeping night should close upon them,
And shadowy shapes come striding on
Dim through the dark. The Danes arose.
Hrothgar again gave greeting to Beowulf,
Wished him farewell; the wine-hall lofty
He left in his charge. These last words spoke he:
"Never before have I fully entrusted
To mortal man this mighty hall,
Since arm and shield I was able to lift.
To thee alone I leave it now,
To have and to hold it. Thy hardihood prove!
Be mindful of glory; keep watch for the foe!
No reward shalt thou lack if thou live through this fight."

1 Hrothgar.

## X

*Beowulf's Watch in Heorot*

Then Hrothgar went with his warrior-band,
The Arm-of-the-Scyldings, out of the hall.
Would the war-lord Wealhtheow seek,
The queen for his bed-mate. The best of kings
Had placed in the hall, so heroes report,
Watch against Grendel, to guard his house,
Deliverance bring to the land of the Danes.
To the lord of the Jutes, joyfully trusted
In the might of his arm and the mercy of God.
Then he stripped his iron byrnie,
Helmet from head, and handed his sword,
Choicest of blades, to his body-thane,
And bade him keep the battle armor.
Then made his boast once more the warrior,
Beowulf the bold, ere his bed he sought,
Summoned his spirit; "Not second to Grendel
In combat I count me and courage of war.
Not with the sword will I slay this foeman,
Though light were the task to take his life.
Nothing at all does he know of such fighting,
Of hewing of shields, though shrewd be his malice
And deeds to contrive. We two in the night
Shall do without swords, if he dare to meet me
Hand to hand battle. May the holy Lord
Give one or the other award the victory,
As it seems to Him right, Ruler all-wise."
Then he sought his bed. The bolster received
The head of the hero. In the hall about him,
Stretched in sleep, his sailormen lay.
Not one of them thought he would ever return
Home to his country, nor hoped to see
His people again, and the place of his birth.
They had heard of too many men of the Danes
Overtaken suddenly, slain without warning,
In the royal hall. But the Ruler on High
Through the woof of fate to the Wederfolk gave
Friendship and help, their foes to o'ercome,
By a single man's strength to slay the destroyer.
Thus all may learn that the Lord Almighty
Wields for aye the Wyrds of men.

. . . . . .

## XI

*Beowulf's Fight with Grendel*

Now Grendel came, from his crags of mist
Across the moor; he was curst of God.
The murderous prowler meant to surprise
In the high-built hall his human prey.
He stalked neath the clouds, till steep before him
The house of revelry rose in his path,
The gold-hall of heroes, the gaily adorned.
Hrothgar's home he had hunted full often,
But never before had he found to receive him
So hardy a hero, such hall-guards there.
Close to the building crept the slayer,
Doomed to misery. The door gave way,
Though fastened with bolts, when his fist fell on it.
Maddened he broke through the breach he had made;
Swoln with anger and eager to slay,
The ravening fiend o'er the bright-paved floor
Furious ran, while flashed from his eyes
An ugly glare like embers aglow.
He saw in the hall, all huddled together,
The heroes asleep. Then laughed in his heart
The hideous fiend; he hoped ere dawn
To sunder body from soul of each;
He looked to appease his lust of blood,
Glut his maw with the men he would slay.
But Wyrd had otherwise willed his doom;
Never again should he get a victim
After that night. Narrowly watched
Hygelac's thane how the horrible slayer
Forward should charge in fierce attack.
Nor was the monster minded to wait:
Sudden he sprang on a sleeping thane,
Ere he could stir, he slit him open;
Bit through the bone-joints, gulped the blood,
Greedily bolted the body piecemeal.
Soon he had swallowed the slain man wholly,
Hands and feet. Then forward he hastened,
Sprang at the hero, and seized him at rest;
Fiercely clutched him with fiendish claw.
But quickly Beowulf caught his forearm,
And threw himself on it with all his weight.
Straight discovered that crafty plotter,
That never in all midearth had he met
In any man a mightier grip.
Gone was his courage, and craven fear
Sat in his heart, yet helped him no sooner.
Fain would he hide in his hole in the fenland,
His devil's den. A different welcome
From former days he found that night!

Now Hygelac's thane, the hardy, remembered
His evening's boast, and bounding up,
Grendel he clenched, and cracked his fingers;
The monster tried flight, but the man pursued;
The ravager hoped to wrench himself free,
And gain the fen, for he felt his fingers
Helpless and limp in the hold of his foe.
'Twas a sorry visit the man-devourer
Made to the Hall of the Hart that night.
Dread was the din, the Danes were frighted
By the uproar wild of the ale-spilling fray.
The hardiest blenched as the hall-foes wrestled
In terrible rage. The rafters groaned;
'Twas wonder great that the wine-hall stood,
Firm 'gainst the fighters' furious onslaught,
Nor fell to the ground, that glorious building.
With bands of iron 'twas braced and stiffened
Within and without. But off from the sill
Many a mead-bench mounted with gold
Was wrung where they wrestled in wrath together.
The Scylding nobles never imagined
That open attack, or treacherous cunning,
Could wreck or ruin their royal hall,
The lofty and antlered, unless the flames
Should some day swallow it up in smoke.
The din was renewed, the noise redoubled;
Each man of the Danes was mute with dread,
That heard from the wall the horrible wail,
The gruesome song of the godless foe,
His howl of defeat, as the fiend of hell
Bemoaned his hurt. The man held fast;
Greatest he was in grip of strength,
Of all that dwelt upon earth that day.

## XII

*The Defeat of Grendel*

Loath in his heart was the hero-deliverer
To let escape his slaughterous guest.
Of little use that life he deemed
To human kind. The comrades of Beowulf
Unsheathed their weapons to ward their leader,
Eagerly brandished their ancient blades,
The life of their peerless lord to defend.
Little they deemed, those dauntless warriors,
As they leaped to the fray, those lusty fighters,
Laying on boldly to left and to right,
Eager to slay, that no sword upon earth,
No keenest weapon, could wound that monster:
Point would not pierce, he was proof against iron;
'Gainst victory-blades the devourer was charmed.
But a woful end awaited the wretch,
That very day he was doomed to depart,
And fare afar to the fiends' domain.

Now Grendel found, who in former days
So many a warrior had wantonly slain,
In brutish lust, abandoned of God,
That the frame of his body was breaking at last.
Keen of courage, the kinsman of Hygelac
Held him grimly gripped in his hands.
Loath was each to the other alive.
The grisly monster got his death-wound:
A huge split opened under his shoulder;
Crunched the socket, cracked the sinews,
Glory great was given to Beowulf.
But Grendel escaped with his gaping wound
O'er the dreary moor his dark den sought,
Crawled to his lair. 'Twas clear to him then
The count of his hours to end had come,
Done were his days. The Danes were glad
The hard fight was over, they had their desire
Cleared was the hall, 'twas cleansed by the hero
With keen heart and courage, who came from afar.
The lord of the Jutes rejoiced in his work,
The deed of renown he had done that night
His boast to the Danes he bravely fulfilled;
From lingering woe delivered them all;
From heavy sorrow they suffered in heart;
From dire distress they endured so long;
From toil and from trouble. This token they saw:
The hero had laid the hand of Grendel
Both arm and claws, the whole forequarter
With clutches huge, 'neath the high-peaked roof.

## XIII

*The Celebration of the Victory and the Song of the Gleeman*

When morning arrived, so runs the report,
Around the gift-hall gathered the warriors;
The folk-leaders fared from far and near,
The wide ways o'er, the wonder to view,
The wild beast's foot-prints. Not one of them felt
Regret that the creature had come to grief,
When they traced his retreat by the tracks on the moor;
Marked where he wearily made his way,

rried and beaten, to the haunt of the nicors,
nk to the water, to save his life.
ere they beheld the heaving surges,
lows abrim with bloody froth,
ed with gore, where the gruesome fiend,
icken and doomed, in the struggle of death
ve up his ghost in the gloom of the mere,
s heathen soul for hell to receive it.
en from the mere the thanes turned back,
en and youths from the merry hunt,
me they rode on their horses gray,
oudly sitting their prancing steeds.
owulf's prowess was praised by all.
ey all agreed that go where you will,
wixt sea and sea, at the south or the north,
ne better than he, no braver hero,
ne worthier honor could ever be found,
hey meant no slight to their master and lord,
e good king Hrothgar their ruler kind.)

ow and again the noble chiefs
ave rein to their steeds, and spurred them to race,
alloped their grays where the ground was smooth.
ow and again a gallant thane,
hose mind was stored with many a lay,
ith songs of battle and sagas old,
ound new words in well-knit bars,
old in verse the valor of Beowulf,
latched his lines and moulded his lay.

Here is introduced an episode of the Nibelungen Lend. The gleeman tells how Sigmund the Volsung, with s son and nephew Fitela, ranged the forests and slew ld beasts. Later, when Fitela was no longer with him, gmund killed a dragon and won a great treasure.

hen the lay was ended, they urged once more
heir racers fleet to fly o'er the plain.
s the morning sped, and the sun climbed higher,
lany went in, the marvellous sight
lore closely to scan. The king himself,
ith a troop of trusty retainers about him,
trode from his bower; the bestower-of-rings
ame, and with him the queen, in state,
he meadow-path trod, by her maidens attended.

## XIV

*Hrothgar's Praise of Beowulf, and Beowulf's Reply*

Hrothgar spoke when he reached the hall,
stood on the step, and stared at the roof
dorned with gold, and Grendel's hand:
"Prompt be my heart to praise the Almighty
For the sight I behold. Much harm have I suffered,
And grief from Grendel, but God still works
Wonder on wonder, the Warden of Glory.
But a little while since, I scarcely dared,
As long as I lived to look for escape
From my burden of sorrow, when blood-stained stood,
And dripping with slaughter, this stately hall.
Wide-spread woe my warriors scattered;
They never hoped this house to rid,
While life should last, this land-mark of people,
Of demons and devils. 'Tis done by the hero.
By the might of the Lord this man has finished
The feat that all of us failed to achieve
By wit or by war. And well may she say,
— Whoever she be, — that bore this son,
That the Ancient of Days dealt with her graciously,
And blest her in child-birth. Now Beowulf, hear!
I shall henceforth hold thee, hero beloved,
As child of my own, and cherish thee fondly
In kinship new. Thou shalt never lack
Meed of reward that is mine to give.
For deeds less mighty have I many times granted
Fullest reward to warriors feebler,
In battle less brave. Thy boldness and valor
Afar shall be known; thy fame shall live
To be great among men. Now God the Almighty
With honor reward thee, as ever he doth."

Beowulf spoke, the son of Ecgtheow
"Gladly we fought this good fight through,
Fearlessly faced the foe inhuman,
Grappled him gruesome; it grieves me sore
That the man-beast himself you may not see,
Dead in the hall, fordone in the fray.
I meant to master the monster quickly,
To his death-bed pin him by power of my grip,
Hold him hard till my hand could strangle him,
Bringing him low, but he broke away.
In vain I tried to prevent his escape.
The Lord was unwilling; I lost my hold
On the man-destroyer; too strong was the monster,
Too swift on his feet. But to save his life
He left behind him the whole of his fore-paw,
Arm and shoulder. 'Twas a useless shift,

Profiting nothing. He ne'er will prolong
His life by the loss, the loathly slayer,
Sunk in sin; but sorrow holds him,
Caught in the grasp of its grip relentless,
In woful bonds to await in anguish,
Guilty wretch, the rest of his doom,
As the Lord Almighty shall mete it to him."

More silent seemed the son of Ecglaf,[1]
Less boastful in bragging of brave deeds done,
When all of them, looking aloft, beheld
The hand on high, where it hung 'neath the roof,
The claw of the fiend; each finger was armed
With a steel-like spur instead of a nail,
The heathen's handspikes, the horrible paw
Of the evil fiend. They all declared
No iron blade could e'er have bit
On the monstrous bulk of the man-beast's hide,
Or hewn away that woful talon.

## XV

*The Feasting and Giving of Treasure in the Hall*

Now orders were given the guest-hall to cleanse,
And furnish it fresh. Forth went hurrying
Men and maids. To the mead-hall they went
And busily worked. Woven tapestries,
Glinting with gold, hung gay on the walls,
Marvellous wonders for men to look upon.
Ruin and wreck had been wrought in the building,
Though braced within by iron bands,
The hinges were wrenched, the roof alone stood
Undamaged and sound, when the sin-spotted wretch,
The demon destroyer, in despair of his life,
Turned and made off, — not easy it is
To escape from death, essay it who will.
(So each of us all to his end must come,
Forced by fate to his final abode
Where his body, stretched on the bier of death,
Shall rest after revel.) Now right was the hour
For Healfdene's heir to enter the hall;
The king himself would come to the feast.
I never have heard of nobler bearing
'Mongst ranks of liegemen surrounding their lord
As they took their seats, the trusty com rades,
And fell to feasting. Freely quaffed
Many a mead-cup the mighty kinsmen,
Hrothgar and Hrothulf, the high hall within
Heorot was filled with a friendly host.
(Far was the day when the Scylding host
Should treachery plot, betraying each other
Then Healfdene's son bestowed on Beowulf
A gold-adorned banner for battle-reward,
A rich-broidered standard, breast-plate and helmet.
The swordmen assembled saw the treasures
Borne before the hero. Beowulf drank
The health of Hrothgar, nor had reason to feel
Ashamed before shieldmen to show his re ward.
Never were offered by earls that I heard of,
In token of friendship four such treasures,
Never was equalled such ale-bench bounty.
Round the ridge of the helmet a rim of iron
Wound with wire, warded the head,
That the offspring of files, with fearful stroke
The hard-tempered sword-blade, might harm it not,
When fierce in the battle the foemen shoul join.
At a sign from the king, eight stallions proud
Bitted and bridled, were brought into hall.
On the back of one was a wondrous saddle,
Bravely wrought and bordered with jewels
The battle-seat bold of the best of kings,
When Hrothgar himself would ride to th sword-play.
(Nor flinched from the foe the famous war rior
In the front of the fight where fell the slain.
To the hero delivered the lord of the Scyld ings,
The heir of Ing, both armor and horses,
Gave them to Beowulf, and bade him enjo them.
Thus royally, the ruler famous,
The heroes' hoard-guard, heaped his bounty
Repaid the struggle with steeds and trophies
Praised by all singers who speak the truth.

## XVI

*The King's Gifts to Beowulf's Men, and the Gleeman's Lay of Finn*

The Lord of the earls then added gifts,
At the mead-bench remembered the men each one,
That Beowulf brought o'er the briny deep,
With ancient heirlooms and offered to pay

1 Unferth

n gold for the man that Grendel had slain,
s more of them surely the monster had killed
Had not holy God and the hero's courage
verted their doom. (So daily o'errules
he Father Almighty the fortunes of men.
herefore is insight ever the best,
nd prudence of mind; for much shall suffer
f lief and of loath who long endures
he days of his life in labor and toil.)
ow music and song were mingled together,
n the presence of Hrothgar, ruler in war.
Harp was struck and hero-lays told.
Along the mead-bench the minstrel spread
Cheer in hall, when he chanted the lay
f the sudden assault on the sons of Finn.

The episode which follows alludes obscurely to details f a feud between Frisians and Danes. The Finnsburg ragment contains a portion of the same story; and one of he heroes, Hnaef, is also mentioned in Widsith.

## XVII

*The Lay of Finn Ended. The Speech of the Queen*

The lay was ended,
The gleeman's song. Sound of revelry
Rose again. Gladness brightened
Along bench and board. Beer-thanes poured
From flagons old the flowing wine.
Wealhtheow the queen walked in state,
Under her crown, where uncle and nephew
Together sat, — they still were friends.
There too sat Unferth, trusted counsellor,
At Hrothgar's feet; though faith he had broken
With his kinsmen in battle, his courage was proved.
Then the queen of the Scyldings spoke these words:
"Quaff of this cup my king and my lord,
Gold-friend of men. To thy guests be kind,
To the men of the Jutes be generous with gifts.
Far and near thou now hast peace.
I have heard thou dost wish the hero for son,
To hold as thy own, now Heorot is cleansed,
The jewel-bright hall. Enjoy while thou mayest,
Allotment of wealth, and leave to thy heirs
Kingdom and rule when arrives the hour
That hence thou shalt pass to thy place appointed.
Well I know that my nephew Hrothulf
Will cherish in honor our children dear,
If thou leavest before him this life upon earth;
He will surely requite the kindness we showed him,
Faithfully tend our two young sons,
When to mind he recalls our care and affection,
How we helped him and housed him when *he* was a child."
She turned to the bench where her two boys sat,
Hrethric and Hrothmund, and the rest of the youth,
A riotous band, and right in their midst,
Between the two brothers, Beowulf sat.

## XVIII

*The Queen's Gifts to Beowulf*

With courteous bow the cup she offered,
Greeted him graciously and gave him to boot
Two armlets rare of twisted gold,
A robe and rings, and the rarest collar;
A better was never known among men,
Since Hama brought to his bright-built hall
The jewelled necklace, the gem of the Brisings.[1]
Before the warriors Wealhtheow spoke:
"Accept, dear Beowulf, this bright-gemmed collar;
Make happy use of this heirloom jewelled,
This ring and robe and royal treasure;
Be brave and bold. My boys instruct
In gentle manners; mine be the praise.
Thou hast done such a deed that in days to come
Men will proclaim thy might and valor
To the ends of the earth, where the ocean-wave
Washes the windy walls of the land.
I wish thee joy of thy jewelled treasure,
Long be thy life; enlarge thy prosperity,
Show thee a friend to my sons in deed.
Here each earl to the other is faithful,
True to his liege-lord, loyal and kind.
My warriors obey me, willing and prompt.
The Danes carousing, do as I bid.'
She went to her seat, the wine flowed free;
'Twas a glorious feast. The fate that impended,
None of them knew, though near to them all.

When darkness came, the king of the Danes
Went to his rest in the royal bower;
But a throng of his kinsmen kept the hall

Lines 1200–1214 interrupt the narrative to tell of the subsequent history of Wealhtheow's gift; how Beowulf gave it to Hygelac, who wore it on his famous raid against the Frisians, in which he was slain by the Franks.

1 This necklace belonged to the goddess Freyia.

As they used to do in the days of old.
They cleared the boards and covered the floor
With beds and bolsters. One beer-thane there
Lay down to sleep with his doom upon him.
They placed by their heads their polished shields,
Their battle-boards bright, on the bench nearby.
Above each earl, within easy reach,
Was his helmet high and his harness of mail
And the spear-shaft keen. 'Twas their custom so,
That always at rest they were ready for war
At home or abroad, where'er they might be,
At what hour soever for aid might call
Their lord and king; they were comrades true.

END OF THE FIRST ADVENTURE

## XIX

*The Coming of Grendel's Dam to Avenge her Son*

Then sank they to sleep, but sorely paid
One poor wretch for his sleep that night.
The same thing fell, as in former days
When Grendel his raids on the gold-hall made,
Before the fiend had found his match,
Caught in his sins. 'Twas seen that night
An avenger survived the villainous fiend,
Although they had ceased from their sorrow and care.
'Twas Grendel's mother, a monstrous hag.
She remembered her loss. She had lived in the deep,
In a water-hell cold, since Cain had become
The evil slayer of his only brother,
His kin by blood; accursed he fled,
Marked by murder, from men's delights,
Haunted the wilds; from him there sprung
Ghastly demon-shapes, Grendel was one.

The omitted lines break the narrative to turn back to the Grendel fight.

Now grim and vengeful
His mother set out on her errand of woe,
Damage to wreak for the death of her son.
Arrived at Heorot, the Ring-Danes she found
Asleep in the hall. Soon was to come
Surprise to the earls, when into the hall
Burst Grendel's dam. (Less grim was the terror,
As terror of woman in war is less,
— The fury of maidens, than full-armed men's,
When the blood-stained war-blade with wire-bound hilt,
Hard and hammer-forged, hurtling through air
Hews the boar from the helmet's crest.)
Many the swords that were suddenly drawn,
Blades from the benches; buckler and shield
Were tightly grasped; no time for the helmet,
For harness of mail, when the horror was on them.
The monster was minded to make for the open;
Soon as discovered, she sought to escape.
Quickly she seized a sleeping warrior,
Fast in her clutch to the fens she dragged him.
He was to Hrothgar of heroes the dearest,
Most trusted of liegemen between the two seas,
Comrade the nearest, killed in his sleep,
The bravest in battle. Nor was Beowulf there,
They had elsewhere quartered the earl that night,
After the giving of gifts in the hall.
There was shouting in Heorot; the hand she seized,
The bloody talon, she took away.
Sorrow was renewed in the nearby dwellings,
Bad was the bargain that both had made
To pay for their friends with further lives lost.
With grief overcome was the gray-haired king,
When he learned that his thane was alive no more,
His dearest comrade by death o'ertaken;
Quick from his bower was Beowulf fetched,
The hero brave. At break of dawn,
He with his comrades came to the place
Where the king in sorrow was waiting to see
Whether God the Wielder of All would grant him
A turn in his tide of trouble and woe.
Then entered the room the ready hero;
With his band of brave men the boards resounded.
He eagerly greeted the aged ruler,
Delayed not to ask the lord of the Ingwines
If his night had passed in peace and quiet.

## XX

*Hrothgar Describes the Haunt of the Monster and Asks Beowulf to Undertake a Second Adventure*

Hrothgar spoke, the Scylding defender:
"Speak not of peace for pain is renewed

longst all the Danes. Dead is Æschere,
der brother of Irmenlaf,
y comrade true and counsellor trusted,
y right-hand friend when in front of the combat
e stood shoulder to shoulder, when shield-burg broke,
id boar-crests crashed in battle together.
irls should ever like Æschere be.
n Heorot's floor he was foully slain
y warlock wild. I wot not whither
he prey-proud fury hath fled to cover,
lutted and gorged. With gruesome claws
id violence fierce she avenged thy deed,
he slaying of Grendel her son last night,
ecause too long my loyal thanes
e had hunted and hurt. In the hall he fell,
is life was forfeit. To the fray returned
nother as cruel, her kin to avenge;
aring from far, the feud re-opened.
ence many a thane shall mourn and think
f the giver of gifts with grief renewed,
nd heart-woe heavy. The hand lies low
hat fain would have helped and defended you all.
have heard my people, the peasant folk
Who house by the border and hold the fens,
ay they have seen two creatures strange,
uge march-stalkers, haunting the moor-land,
anderers outcast. One of the two
eemed to their sight to resemble a woman;
he other manlike, a monster misshapen,
ut huger in bulk than human kind,
rod an exile's track of woe.
he folk of the fen in former days
amed him Grendel. Unknown his father,
r what his descent from demons obscure.
onely and waste is the land they inhabit,
Wolf-cliffs wild and windy headlands,
edges of mist, where mountain torrents
Downward plunge to dark abysses,
nd flow unseen. Not far from here
O'er the moorland in miles, a mere expands:
pray-frosted trees o'erspread it, and hang
O'er the water with roots fast wedged in the rocks.
here nightly is seen, beneath the flood,
A marvellous light. There lives not the man
Has fathomed the depth of the dismal mere.
Though the heather-stepper, the strong-horned stag,
eek this cover, forspent with the chase,
racked by the hounds, he will turn at bay,
To die on the brink ere he brave the plunge,
Hide his head in the haunted pool.
Wan from its depths the waves are dashed,
When wicked storms are stirred by the wind,
And from sullen skies descends the rain.
In thee is our hope of help once more.
Not yet thou hast learned where leads the way
To the lurking-hole of this hatcher of outrage.
Seek, if thou dare, the dreaded spot!
Richly I pay thee for risking this fight,
With heirlooms golden and ancient rings,
As I paid thee before, if thou come back alive."

## XXI

*The Arrival of Hrothgar and Beowulf at Grendel's Mere*

Beowulf spoke, the son of Ecgtheow:
"Sorrow not, gray-beard, nor grieve o'er thy friend!
Vengeance is better than bootless mourning.
To each of us here the end must come
Of life upon earth: let him who may
Win glory ere death. I deem that best,
The lot of the brave, when life is over.
Rise, O realm-ward, ride we in haste,
To track the hag that whelped this Grendel.
I tell thee in truth, she may turn where she will,
No cave of ocean nor cover of wood,
No hole in the ground shall hide her from me.
But one day more thy woe endure,
And nurse thy hope as I know thou wilt."
Sprang to his feet the sage old king,
Gave praise to God for the promise spoken.
And now for Hrothgar a horse was bridled,
A curly-maned steed. The king rode on,
Bold on his charger. A band of shield-men
Followed on foot. Afar they saw
Footprints leading along the forest.
They followed the tracks, and found she had crossed
Over the dark moor, dragging the body
Of the goodliest thane that guarded with Hrothgar
Heorot Hall, and the home of the king.
The well-born hero held the trail;
Up rugged paths, o'er perilous ridges,
Through passes narrow, an unknown way,
By beetling crags, and caves of the nicors.
With a chosen few he forged ahead,
Warriors skilled, to scan the way.
Sudden they came on a cluster of trees
Overhanging a hoary rock,
A gloomy grove; and gurgling below,
A stir of waters all stained with blood.
Sick at heart were the Scylding chiefs,
Many a thane was thrilled with woe,

For there they beheld the head of Æschere
Far beneath at the foot of the cliff.
They leaned and watched the waters boil
With bloody froth. The band sat down,
While the war-horn sang its summons to battle.
They saw in the water sea-snakes a many,
Wave-monsters weird, that wallowed about.
At the base of the cliff lay basking the nicors,
Who oft at sunrise ply seaward their journey,
To hunt on the ship-trails and scour the main,
Sea-beasts and serpents. Sudden they fled,
Wrathful and grim, aroused by the hail
Of the battle-horn shrill. The chief of the Jutes,
With a bolt from his bow a beast did sunder
From life and sea-frolic; sent the keen shaft
Straight to his vitals. Slow he floated,
Upturned and dead at the top of the waves.
Eager they boarded their ocean-quarry;
With barb-hooked boar-spears the beast they gaffed,
Savagely broached him and brought him to shore,
Wave-plunger weird. The warriors viewed
The grisly stranger. But straightway Beowulf
Donned his corslet nor cared for his life. . . .

Lines 1443–1472 break the narrative with a description of Beowulf's armor and the sword Hrunting, lent him by Unferth.

## XXII

*Beowulf's Fight with Grendel's Dam*

To Hrothgar spoke the son of Ecgtheow:
"Remember O honored heir of Healfdene,
Now that I go, thou noble king,
Warriors' gold-friend, what we agreed on,
If I my life should lose in thy cause,
That thou wouldst stand in stead of my father,
Fulfil his office when I was gone.
Be guardian, thou, to my thanes and kinsmen,
My faithful friends, if I fail to return.
To Hygelac send, Hrothgar beloved,
The goodly gifts thou gavest to me.
May the lord of the Jutes, when he looks on this treasure,
May Hrethel's son, when he sees these gifts,
Know that I found a noble giver,
And joyed, while I lived, in a generous lord.
This ancient heirloom to Unferth give,
To the far-famed warrior, my wondrous sword
Of matchless metal, I must with Hrunting [1]
Glory gain, or go to my death."

After these words the Weder-Jute lord
Sprang to his task, nor staid for an answer.
Swiftly he sank 'neath the swirling flood;
'Twas an hour's time ere he touched the bottom.
Soon the sea-hag, savage and wild,
Who had roamed through her watery realms at will,
For winters a hundred, was 'ware from below,
An earthling had entered her ocean domain.
Quickly she reached and caught the hero;
Grappled him grimly with gruesome claws.
Yet he got no scratch, his skin was whole;
His battle-sark shielded his body from harm.
In vain she tried, with her crooked fingers,
To tear the links of his close-locked mail.
Away to her den the wolf-slut dragged
Beowulf the bold, o'er the bottom ooze.
Though eager to smite her, his arm was helpless.
Swimming monsters swarmed about him,
Dented his mail with dreadful tusks.
Sudden the warrior was 'ware they had come
To a sea-hall strange and seeming hostile,
Where water was not nor waves oppressed,
For the caverned rock all round kept back
The swallowing sea.[2] He saw a light,
A flicker of flame that flashed and shone.
Now first he discerned the sea-hag monstrous,
The water-wife wolfish. His weapon he raised,
And struck with his sword a swinging blow.
Sang on her head the hard-forged blade
Its war-song wild. But the warrior found
That his battle-flasher refused to bite,
Or maim the foe. It failed its master
In the hour of need, though oft it had cloven
Helmets, and carved the casques of the doomed
In combats fierce. For the first time now
That treasure failed him, fallen from honor.
But Hygelac's earl took heart of courage;
In mood defiant he fronted his foe.
The angry hero hurled to the ground,
In high disdain, the hilt of the sword,
The gaudy and jewelled; rejoiced in the strength
Of his arm unaided. So all should do
Who glory would find and fame abiding,
In the crash of conflict, nor care for their lives.

1 The sword which Unferth lends to Beowulf.
2 In the related story of the *Grettis Saga*, the cavern is behind a waterfall which empties into the mere.

he Lord of the Battle-Jutes braved the encounter;
he murderous hag by the hair he caught;
own he dragged the dam of Grendel
his swelling rage, till she sprawled on the floor.
uick to repay in kind what she got,
n her foe she fastened her fearful clutches;
nfolded the warrior weary with fighting;
he sure-footed hero stumbled and fell.
s helpless he lay, she leapt on him fiercely;
nsheathed her hip-knife, shining and broad,
er son to avenge, her offspring sole.
ut the close-linked corslet covered his breast,
oiled the stroke and saved his life.
l had been over with Ecgtheow's son,
nder the depths of the ocean vast,
ad not his harness availed to help him,
is battle-net stiff, and the strength of God.
he Ruler of battles aright decided it;
he Wielder all-wise awarded the victory:
ghtly the hero leaped to his feet.

## XXIII

*Beowulf's Victory and Return to Heorot*

e spied 'mongst the arms a sword surpassing,
uge and ancient, a hard-forged slayer,
eapon matchless and warriors' delight,
ve that its weight was more than another
ight bear into battle or brandish in war;
iants had forged that finest of blades.
hen seized its chain-hilt the chief of the Scyldings;
is wrath was aroused, reckless his mood,
s he brandished the sword for a savage blow.
it the blade in the back of her neck,
ut the neck-bone, and cleft its way
lean through her flesh; to the floor she sank;
he sword was gory; glad was the hero.
light flashed out from the inmost den,
ike heaven's candle, when clear it shines
rom cloudless skies. He scanned the cave,
alked by the wall, his weapon upraised;
rim in his hand the hilt he gripped.
ell that sword had served him in battle.
teadily onward he strode through the cave,
eady to wreak the wrongs untold,
hat the man-beast had wrought in the realm of Danes. . . .
le gave him his due when Grendel he found
tretched as in sleep, and spent with the battle.
ut dead was the fiend, the fight at Heorot

Had laid him low. The lifeless body
Sprang from the blows of Beowulf's sword,
As fiercely he hacked the head from the carcass.[1]

But the men who were watching the water with Hrothgar
Suddenly saw a stir in the waves,
The chop of the sea all churned up with blood
And bubbling gore. The gray-haired chiefs
For Beowulf grieved, agreeing together
That hope there was none of his home-returning,
With victory crowned, to revisit his lord.
Most of them feared he had fallen prey
To the mere-wolf dread in the depths of the sea.
When evening came, the Scyldings all
Forsook the headland, and Hrothgar himself
Turned homeward his steps. But sick at heart
The strangers[2] sat and stared at the sea,
Hoped against hope to behold their comrade
And leader again.
Now that goodly sword
Began to melt with the gore of the monster;
In bloody drippings it dwindled away.
'Twas a marvellous sight: it melted like ice,
When fetters of frost the Father unlocks,
Unravels the ropes of the wrinkled ice,
Lord and Master of months and seasons.
Beheld in the hall the hero from Juteland
Treasures unnumbered, but naught he took,
Save Grendel's head, and the hilt of the sword,
Bright and jewelled, — the blade had melted,
Its metal had vanished, so venomous hot
Was the blood of the demon-brute dead in the cave.

Soon was in the sea the slayer of monsters;
Upward he shot through the shimmer of waves;
Cleared was the ocean, cleansed were its waters,
The wolfish water-hag wallowed no more;
The mere-wife had yielded her miserable life.
Swift to the shore the sailors' deliverer
Came lustily swimming, with sea-spoil laden;
Rejoiced in the burden he bore to the land.
Ran to meet him his mailéd comrades,
With thanks to God who gave them their leader
Safe again back and sound from the deep.

1 Beowulf dismembers Grendel's dead body so that his ghost may not return to haunt the Hall.
2 Beowulf's band of retainers.

Quickly their hero's helmet they loosened,
Unbuckled his breastplate. The blood-stained waves
Fell to a calm 'neath the quiet sky.
Back they returned o'er the tracks with the footprints,
Merrily measured the miles o'er the fen,
Way they knew well, those warriors brave;
Brought from the holm-cliff the head of the monster;
'Twas toil and labor to lift the burden,
Four of their stoutest scarce could carry it
Swung from a spear-pole, a staggering load. . . .
Thus the fourteen of them, thanes adventurous,
Marched o'er the moor to the mead-hall of Hrothgar.
Tall in the midst of them towered the hero;
Strode among his comrades, till they came to the hall.
In went Beowulf, the brave and victorious,
Battle-beast hardy, Hrothgar to greet.
Lifting by the hair the head of Grendel,
They laid it in the hall, where the heroes were carousing,
Right before the king, and right before the queen;
Gruesome was the sight that greeted the Danes.

## XXIV, XXV

*Beowulf's Story of His Fight, and Hrothgar's Counsel*

Beowulf spoke, the son of Ecgtheow:
"Gladly we offer this ocean-booty,
That here thou lookest on, lord of the Scyldings,
For sign of victory, son of Healfdene.
Hard was the fight I fought under water;
That combat nearly cost me my life.
Soon had been ended the ocean-encounter,
Had God in his mercy not given me aid.
No help I got from the good blade Hrunting;
The well-tried weapon worthless proved.
By the grace of God, who guided me friendless,
A splendid old sword I spied on the wall,
Hanging there, huge; by the hilt I grasped it,
And seeing my chance, I struck amain
At the sea-cave's wardens, when sudden the blade
Melted and burned, as the blood gushed out,
The battle-gore hot. The hilt I saved
From the villainous fiends, and avenged their crimes,
The murder of the Danes, as was meet and due.
I promise thee now, in peace thou shalt slee
In Heorot hall, with the whole of thy band
Thou and thy thanes may throng within
As ye used of yore, both young and old.
Thou need'st not fear renewal of strife,
Harm to thy folk at the hands of the fiends.
The golden hilt was given to the king;
The jewelled work of the giants of old
Came into hand of the hoary warrior.
On the death of the demons, the Danish lor
kept it,
Wondersmiths' work. When the world wa
rid
Of the evil fiend, the enemy of God,
Guilty of murder, and his mother too,
The trophy passed to the peerless lord,
The goodliest king, that gave out treasure
Between the two seas on Scandia's isle.
Hrothgar gazed on the golden hilt,
Relic of old, where was writ the tale
Of a far-off fight, when the flood o'erwhelmed
The raging sea, the race of the giants
(They wantonly dared to war against God;
Then rose in his wrath the Ruler Eternal,
'Neath the heaving billows buried them all.
On the polished gold of the guard of the hilt
Runes were writ that rightly told,
To him that read them, for whom tha
weapon,
Finest of sword-blades, first was made,
The splendid hilt with serpents entwined.
All were silent, when the son of Healfdene,
The wise king spoke: "Well may he say,
The aged ruler, who aye upholds
Truth and right, 'mid the ranks of his people
Whose mind runs back to by-gone days,
This guest is born of a goodly breed.
Thy fame shall fly afar among men,
Beowulf my friend, firmly thou holdest
Both wisdom and might. My word will
keep,
The love that I proffered. Thou shal
prove a deliverer
To thy folk and followers in far-off years,
A help to the heroes. Not Heremod thus,
Ecgwela's heir, did offer at need
His strength to the Scyldings; instead, he
brought
Slaughter and death on the sons of the Danes
Swoln with wrath he slew his comrades,
His friends at the board and fled alone,
Ill-famed earl, an outcast from men.
Though God endowed him with gifts o
strength,
With boldness and might above all men,
And prospered him greatly, yet he grew to be

lood-thirsty and cruel. No bracelets he gave
o the Danes as was due, but dwelt in gloom,
eaped the reward of the woful strife,
nd wearisome feud. Take warning from him.

Hrothgar now delivers a long sermon to Beowulf on the ngers of pride, the fickleness of fortune, and the brevity life, and ends by asking him to sit down to the feast, omising more gifts on the morrow.

eowulf hastened, happy in mood,
o seek his bench as bid by the king.
nce more, as of old, for the earls in hall,
ne famous in battle, the board was set
or feasting anew. When night with its shadows
erwhelmed the world, the heroes arose.
he gray-haired ruler his rest would seek,
he Scylding his bed; and Beowulf too,
he lusty warrior, longed for his sleep.
oon an attendant showed the way
o the stranger from far, spent with his faring.
Vith courtly custom, he cared for his needs.
ll that to warriors, overseas wandering,
as due in those days, he did for the guest.
igh-gabled and gold-decked, the gift-hall towered;
he stout-hearted hero slept soundly within,
ill the raven black, with blithe heart hailed
he bliss of heaven, and bright the sun
ame gliding o'er earth. Then, eager to start,
he warriors wakened; they wished to set out
n their homeward journey. The hero brave
Vould board his ship, and back again sail.
he hardy one bade that Hrunting be brought
o the son of Ecglaf:[1] the sword he offered him;
hanked him for lending the lovely weapon;
alled it a war-friend, keen in the battle;
ot a word in blame of the blade he uttered,
reat-hearted hero. Now hastened the guests,
ager to part, and armed for their voyage.
heir dauntless leader, beloved of the Danes.
ame to the high-seat, and to Hrothgar the king
he bold-in-battle now bade farewell.

## XXVI

*Beowulf's Leave-Taking of Hrothgar*

eowulf spoke, the son of Ecgtheow:
Now we sea-farers would make known our desire;

1 Unferth.

Far-travelled wanderers, we wish to return
To Hygelac now. A hearty welcome
We here have found, thou hast harbored us well.
If ever on earth I may anywise win,
Master of men, more of thy love
Than now I have won, for another adventure
Of arms and war I am eager and willing.
If ever I hear, o'er the ocean-ways
That neighbor-tribes threaten annoyance or war,
As feud-seeking foemen afore time assailed thee,
A thousand thanes to thee will I bring,
Heroes to help thee. For Hygelac, I know,
Though young in years will yield me aid;
The people's Shepherd will surely help me
By word and deed to do thee service,
And bring thee spear-shafts to speed thee in battle,
Thy might to strengthen when men thou needest.
If ever Hrethric, heir of thy line,
Should come to sojourn at the court of the Jutes,
A host of friends he will find awaiting him.
Who boasts himself brave, abroad should travel."
The aged Hrothgar answering spoke:
"To utter these words, the All-wise Lord
Hath prompted thy heart; more prudent counsel
From one in years so young as thou,
I never have heard. Thou art hardy in strength,
And sage in spirit, and speakest well.
If ever it happen that Hrethel's heir
Be stricken by spear and slain in battle,
If sickness or sword assail thy lord,
And thou survive him, I think it likely
The Sea-Jutes in vain will seek for a better
As choice for their king, their chief to become
And rule o'er the thanes, if thou be willing
The lordship to hold. The longer I know thee
The better I like thee, Beowulf my friend.
Thou hast brought it about that both our peoples,
Jutes and the Spear-Danes, shall be joined in peace.
They shall cease from war, the strife shall be ended,
The feuds of aforetime, so fiercely waged.
While I rule this realm, our riches we share;
Many shall travel with treasure laden,
Each other to greet, o'er the gannet's bath;
O'er the rolling waves the ringéd prow
Tokens of friendship shall freely bring

And bind our people in peace together,
Toward friend and foe, in faith as of old."

Still other treasures, twelve in all,
Healfdene's heir in the hall bestowed
On Beowulf brave, and bade him take them
And seek his people, and soon return.
Then kissed the king, of kin renowned,
The thane beloved. The lord of the Scyldings
Fell on his neck. Fast flowed the tears
Of the warrior gray; he weighed both chances
But held to the hope, though hoary with years,
That each should see the other again,
And meet in the mead-hall. The man was so dear
That he could not restrain the storm in his breast.
Locked in his heart, a hidden longing
For the man he loved so, le/t him no peace,
And burnt in his blood. But Beowulf went;
The gold-decked hero the grass-way trod,
Proud of his booty. The boat awaited
Its owner and master, where at anchor it rode.
As they went on their way, the warriors praised
The bounty of Hrothgar, the blameless king.
None was his equal till age snatched away
The joy of his manhood,—no mortal it spares.

## XXVII

*Beowulf's Return Voyage to Hygelac*

Then came to the coast the comrades brave,
The lusty warriors, wearing their ring-nets,
Their chain-linked corslets. The coast-guard saw them,
The same that at first had spied them coming;
This time he chose not to challenge them harshly,
But gave them his greeting, galloping toward them.
Said the Weder-folk would welcome the sight of them,
Boarding their ship in shining armor.
Then by the sands, the seaworthy craft,
The iron-ringed keel, with arms was laden,
With horses and treasure. On high the mast
Towered above the treasures of Hrothgar.
To the man who had waited as watchman aboard,
Beowulf gave a gold-bound sword.
(Oft on the mead-bench that heirloom precious
Its owner would honor.) When all had embarked,
They drove for the deep, from Daneland shore.
Then soon did the mast its sea-suit wear,
A sail was unfurled, made fast with ropes,
The sea-wood sang as she sped o'er the ocean
No baffling head-wind hindered her course;
The foamy-necked floater flew o'er the billows,
The sea-craft staunch o'er the salt-sea wave
Till they came in sight of the cliffs of Jutland
The well known capes, and the wind-driven keel,
Grating the sand, stood still on the shore.
Soon was at hand the harbor-watch eager.
Long had he looked for his loved companions
Scanning the sea for their safe return.
The broad-bosomed boat to the beach moored
With anchor-ropes fast, lest the force of the waves
That comely craft should cast adrift.
Then Beowulf bade them bring ashore
His treasure-cargo of costly gold
And weapons fine; not far was the way
To Hygelac's hall, where at home he dwelt
The king and his comrades, close by the sea

END OF THE SECOND ADVENTURE

After the death of Hygelac and his son, Beowulf became king of the Jutes, and ruled over them fifty years. In his old age his people were harried by a fire-dragon, whom the hero went out to fight. It seems that an outlaw, banished and flying for shelter, had come upon a treasure hid in a deep cave or barrow, guarded by a dragon. Long years before, an earl, the last of his race, had buried the treasure. After his death the dragon, sniffing about the stones, had found it and guarded it three hundred years, until the banished man discovered the place, and carried off one of the golden goblets. In revenge the dragon made nightly raids on Beowulf's realm, flying through the air, spitting fire, burning houses and villages, even Beowulf's hall, the "gift-stool" of the Jutes. Beowulf had an iron shield made against the dragon's fiery breath, and with eleven companions, sought out the hill-vault near the sea. These events are related in Sections XXVIII–XXXV of the *Beowulf* MS.

## XXXV

*Beowulf's Fight with the Fire Dragon*

Before attacking the fire-dragon, Beowulf once more and for the last time, makes his "battle-boast" in the presence of his followers.

Beowulf said to them, brave words spoke he:
"Brunt of battles I bore in my youth,
One fight more I make this day.
I mean to win fame defending my people,
If the grim destroyer will seek me out,
Come at my call from his cavern dark."
Then he greeted his thanes each one,

or the last time hailed his helmeted warriors,
is comrades dear. "I should carry no sword,
o weapon of war 'gainst the worm should bear,
the foe I might slay by strength of my arm,
s Grendel I slew long since by my hand.
ut I look to fight a fiery battle,
Vith scorching puffs of poisonous breath.
or this I bear both breastplate and shield;
o foot will I flinch from the foe of the barrow.
Wyrd is over us, each shall meet
is doom ordained at the dragon-cliff!
old is my mood, but my boast I omit
Gainst the battle-flier. Abide ye here,
eroes in harness, hard by the barrow,
ased in your armor the issue await:
Vhich of us two his wounds shall survive.
ot yours the attempt, the task is mine.
is meant for no man but me alone
o measure his might 'gainst the monster fierce.
get you the gold in glorious fight,
r battle-death bitter shall bear off your lord."
Uprose with his shield the shining hero,
old 'neath his helmet. He bore his harness
n under the cliff; alone he went,
himself he trusted; no task for faint-heart.
hen saw by the wall the warrior brave,
lero of many a hard-fought battle,
rches of stone that opened a way;
rom the rocky gate there gushed a stream,
ubbling and boiling with battle-fire.
o great the heat no hope was there
o come at the hoard in the cavern's depth,
nscathed by the blast of the scorching dragon.
He let from his breast his battle-cry leap,
Swoln with rage was the royal Jute,
stormed the stout-heart; strong and clear
Through the gloom of the cave his cry went ringing.
Hate was aroused, the hoard-ward knew
The leader's hail. Too late 'twas now
To parley for peace.. The poisonous breath
Of the monster shot from the mouth of the cave,
Reeking hot. The hollow earth rumbled.
The man by the rock upraised his shield,
The lord of the Jutes, 'gainst the loathly dragon.
Now kindled for battle the curled-up beast;
The king undaunted with drawn sword stood,
('Twas an heirloom olden with edge of lightning)
Each was so fierce he affrighted the other.
Towering tall 'neath tilted shield,
Waited the king as the worm coiled back,
Sudden to spring: so stood he and waited.
Blazing he came in coils of fire
Swift to his doom. The shield of iron
Sheltered the hero too short a while, —
Life and limb it less protected
Than he hoped it would, for the weapon he held
First time that day he tried in battle;
Wyrd had not willed he should win the fight.
But the lord of the Jutes uplifted his arm,
Smote the scaly worm, struck him so fierce
That his ancient bright-edged blade gave way,
Bent on the bone, and bit less sure
Than its owner had need in his hour of peril.
That sword-stroke roused the wrath of the cave-guard;
Fire and flame afar he spirted,
Blaze of battle; but Beowulf there
No victory boasted: his blade had failed him,
Naked in battle, as never it should have,
Well-tempered iron. Nor easy it was
For Ecgtheow's heir,[1] honored and famous,
This earth to forsake, forever to leave it;
Yet he must go, against his will
Elsewhere to dwell. So we all must leave
This fleeting life. — Erelong the foes,
Bursting with wrath, the battle renewed.
The hoard-ward took heart, and with heaving breast
Came charging amain. The champion brave,
Strength of his people, was sore oppressed,
Enfolded by flame. No faithful comrades
Crowded about him, his chosen band,
All aethelings' sons, to save their lives,
Fled to the wood. One of them only
Felt surging sorrow; for nought can stifle
Call of kin in a comrade true;

## XXXVI

*Wiglaf's Reproach to his Comrades. Beowulf Mortally Wounded.*

The shield-thane beloved, lord of the Scylfings,
Wiglaf was called, 'twas Weohstan's son,
Ælfhere's kinsman. When his king he saw
Hard by the heat under helmet oppressed,
He remembered the gifts he had got of old,
Lands and wealth of the Waegmunding line,
The folk-rights all that his father's had been;
He could hold no longer, but hard he gripped

[1] Beowulf.

Linden shield yellow and ancient sword. . . .

The intervening lines tell the history of the sword and the feuds in which it has participated.

For the first time there the faithful thane,
Youthful and stalwart, stood with his leader,
Shoulder to shoulder in shock of battle.
Nor melted his courage, nor cracked his blade,
His war-sword true, as the worm found out
When together they got in grim encounter.

Wiglaf in wrath upbraided his comrades,
Sore was his heart as he spake these words:
"Well I mind when our mead we drank
In the princely hall, how we promised our lord
Who gave us these rings and golden armlets,
That we would repay his war-gifts rich,
Helmets and armor, if haply should come
His hour of peril; us hath he made
Thanes of his choice for this adventure;
Spurred us to glory, and gave us these treasures
Because he deemed us doughty spearmen,
Helmeted warriors, hardy and brave.
Yet all the while, unhelped and alone,
He meant to finish this feat of strength,
Shepherd of men and mightiest lord
Of daring deeds. The day is come, —
Now is the hour he needs the aid
Of spearmen good. Let us go to him now,
Help our hero while hard bestead
By the nimble flames. God knows that I
Had rather the fire should ruthlessly fold
My body with his, than harbor me safe.
Shame it were surely our shields to carry
Home to our lands, unless we first
Slay this foe and save the life
Of the Weder-king. Full well I know
To leave him thus, alone to endure,
Bereft of aid, breaks ancient right.
My helmet and sword shall serve for us both,
Shield and armor we share to-day."

Waded the warrior through welter and reek;
Buckler and helmet he bore to his leader;
Heartened the hero with words of hope:
"Do thy best now, dearest Beowulf,
Years ago, in youth, thou vowedst,
Living, ne'er to lose thine honor,
Shield thy life and show thy valor.
I stand by thee to the end!"
After these words the worm came on,
Snorting with rage, for a second charge;
All mottled with fire his foes he sought,
The warriors hated. But Wiglaf's shield
Was burnt to the boss by the billows of fire;
His harness helped not the hero young.
Shelter he found 'neath the shield of his kinsman,
When the crackling blaze had crumbled his own.
But mindful of glory, the mighty hero
Smote amain with his matchless sword.
Down it hurtled, driven by anger,
Till it stuck in the skull, then snapped the blade,
Broken was Naegling, Beowulf's sword,
Ancient and gray. 'Twas granted him never
To count on edge of iron in battle;
His hand was too heavy, too hard his strokes
As I have heard tell, for every blade
He brandished in battle: the best gave way,
And left him helpless and hard bestead.
Now for a third time neared the destroyer;
The fire-drake fierce, old feuds remembering,
Charged the warrior who wavered an instant.
Blazing he came and closed his fangs
On Beowulf's throat; and throbbing spirts
Of life-blood dark o'erdrenched the hero.

## XXXVII

*The Slaying of the Dragon*

Then in the hour of utmost peril,
The stripling proved what stock he came of.
Showed his endurance and dauntless courage.
Though burnt was his hand when he backed his kinsman,
With head unguarded the good thane charged,
Thrust from below at the loathly dragon,
Pierced with the point and plunged the blade in,
The gleaming-bright, till the glow abated
Waning low. Ere long the king
Came to himself, and swiftly drew
The war-knife that hung at his harness' side,
And cut in two the coiléd monster.
So felled they the foe and finished him bravely,
Together they killed him, the kinsmen two,
A noble pair. So needs must do
Comrades in peril. For the king it proved
His uttermost triumph, the end of his deeds
And work in the world. The wound began,
Where the cave-dragon savage had sunk his teeth,
To swell and fever, and soon he felt
The baleful poison pulse through his blood,
And burn in his breast. The brave old warrior
Sat by the wall and summoned his thoughts,
Gazed on the wondrous work of the giants:
Arches of stone, firm-set on their pillars,
Upheld that hill-vault hoar and ancient.

ow Beowulf's thane, the brave and faithful,
ashed with water his darling lord,
s comrade and king, all covered with blood
d faint with the fight; unfastened his helmet.
eowulf spoke despite his hurt,
s piteous wound; full well he knew
s years on earth were ended now,
s hours of glad life, gone for aye
s days alloted, and death was near:
Now would I gladly give to a son
ese weapons of war, had Wyrd but granted
hat heir of my own should after me come,
rung from my loins. This land have I ruled
fty winters. No folk-king dared,
one of the chiefs of the neighboring tribes,
o touch me with sword or assail me with terror
battle-threats. I bided at home,
eld my peace and my heritage kept,
eking no feuds nor swearing false oaths.
his gives me comfort, and gladdens me now,
hough wounded sore and sick unto death.
s I leave my life, the Lord may not charge me
ith killing of kinsmen. Now quickly go,
iglaf beloved, to look at the hoard,
here hidden it rests 'neath the hoary rock.
or the worm lies still, put asleep by his wound,
obbed of his riches. Then rise and haste!
ive me to see that golden hoard,
aze on the store of glorious gems,
he easier then I may end my life,
eave my lordship that long I held."

## XXXVIII

*The Rescue of the Hoard and the Death of Beowulf*

Swiftly, 'tis said, the son of Weohstan
beyed the words of his bleeding lord,
laimed in the battle. Through the mouth of the cave
oldly he bore his battle-net in.
lad of the victory, he gazed about him;
lany a sun-bright jewel he saw,
littering gold, strewn on the ground,
leaped in the den of the dragon hoary,
ld twilight-flier, — flagons once bright,
assail cups wondrous of warriors departed
tript of their mountings, many a helmet
ncient and rusted, armlets a many,
uriously woven. (Wealth so hoarded,
uried treasure, will taint with pride,
im that hides it, whoever it be.)
owering high o'er the hoard he saw
A gleaming banner with gold inwoven,
Of broidure rare, its radiance streamed
So bright, he could peer to the bounds of the cave,
Survey its wonders; no worm was seen.
Edge of the sword had ended his life.
Then, as they say, that single adventurer
Plundered the hoard that was piled by the giants;
Gathered together old goblets and platters,
Took what he liked; the towering banner,
Brightest of beacons, he brought likewise.
The blade of Beowulf, his brave old chief,
With edge of iron had ended the life
Of him that had guarded the golden hoard
For many a year, and at midnight hour
Had spread the terror of surging flames
In front of the den, till death o'ertook him.
So Wiglaf returned with treasure laden,
The high-souled hero hastened his steps,
Anxiously wondered if he should find
The lord of the Weders alive where he left him
Sapped of his strength and stretched on the ground.
As he came from the hill he beheld his comrade,
His lord of bounty, bleeding and faint,
Near unto death. He dashed him once more
Bravely with water, till burden of speech
Broke from his breast, and Beowulf spoke,
Gazing sad at the gold before him:
"For the harvest of gold that here I look on,
To the God of Glory I give my thanks.
To the Ruler Eternal I render praise
That ere I must go, he granted me this,
To leave to my people this priceless hoard.
'Twas bought with my life; now look ye well
To my people's need when I have departed.
No more I may bide among ye here.
Bid the battle-famed build on the foreland
A far-seen barrow when flames have burnt me.
High o'er the headland of whales it shall tower,
A beacon and mark to remind my people.
And sailors shall call it in years to come
Beowulf's Barrow, as back from afar
O'er the glooming deep they drive their keels."

The great-hearted king unclasped from his neck
A collar of gold and gave to his thane,
The brave young warrior, his bright-gilt helmet,
Breastplate and ring. So bade him farewell:
"Thou are the last to be left of our house.

Wyrd hath o'erwhelmed our Waegmunding line,
Swept my kinsmen swift to their doom.
Earls in their prime. I must follow them."
These words were the last that the warrior gray
Found, ere the funeral-flames he chose.
Swift from his bosom his soul departed
To find the reward of the faithful and true.

In lines 2821–2891, Section XXXIX of the MS., the narrative doubles back upon itself to repeat the description of Beowulf and the Dragon lying dead before the cave, and to report Wiglaf's second reproach to the deserters.

## XL

*Beowulf's Death Announced to the People. The Speech of the Herald.*

Then Wiglaf bade the battle-work tell
To the sorrowful troop that had sat all day
At the sea-cliff's edge, their shields in hand,
In dread and in hope, yet doubtful of either:
Their dear lord's return, or his death in the fight.
The herald that came to the headland riding,
Nought kept back of the news that befell,
But truthfully told them the tidings all:
"Now lies low the lord of the Weders;
The generous giver of gifts to the Jutes,
Sleeps his battle-sleep, slain by the worm.
At his side lies stretched his slaughterous foe,
Fordone by the dagger. The dragon fierce
Would take no wound from touch of sword;
Its blade would not bite. At Beowulf's side
Wiglaf sits, the son of Weohstan;
By the hero dead, the hero living
At his head keeps watch with woful heart
O'er friend and foe."
. . . . . .

The Herald now warns of renewed attacks on the Jutes by Franks and Frisians, and alludes to the origin of the feud in the famous raid in which Hygelac was slain. He further warns of renewed attacks by the Swedes, now that Beowulf is dead, and refers to the origin of the wars between Swedes and Jutes and to a famous battle at "Ravenswood." The episodic digression over, the herald returns to present events.

## XLI

*The Herald's Speech Concluded.*

"'Tis time we hasten
To see where lies our lord and king,
Our giver of bounty, and bear him away
To the funeral pyre; of precious gems
Not a few shall melt in the fire with him.
The hoard he won, the wealth untold,
The priceless treasure he purchased so dear,
And bought with his life at the bitter end,
The flame shall enfold it, the fire consume.
No warrior one keepsake shall carry away,
No necklace be worn by winsome maid.
In sorrow rather, and reft of her gold,
Alone she shall tread the track of an exile,
Now our lord lies low, his laughter stilled,
His mirth and revel. Now many a spear
Shall morning-cold be clasped in the hand
And held on high. No harp shall sound
The warriors to wake, but the wan-hued raven
Shall croak o'er the carcass and call to the eagle,
To tell how he fared at the feast after battle
When he and the gray wolf gorged on the slain."
Thus ended his tale, his tidings of woe,
The faithful thane, nor falsely reported
Wyrd or word. The warriors rose;
To the Eagles' Cliff they came in sadness,
With welling tears, the wonder to see.
Lying helpless, their lord they found
Stretched on the ground, the giver of rings.
The end had come to him, open-handed
King of the Weders, warrior brave.
That day a fearful death he had found.
A stranger thing they saw near by:
The loathsome monster lying dead
On the field where they fought, the fiery dragon,
The gruesome beast was burnt and charred.
Fifty feet in full he measured
In length, as he lay, along the ground.
'Twas his wont at night to wing aloft
And dip to earth as his den he sought;
Now he lay dead, his night-revels over.
Scattered about were bowls and flagons,
Golden platters, and priceless swords,
With rust eaten through, as though they had lain
Winters a thousand in the womb of the earth.
O'er that heritage huge, the hoard of aforetime,
A spell had been woven to ward off despoilers,
And none might touch the treasure-vault hidden;
Save that God alone, the Lord of victory,
The Guardian of men, might grant the power
To unlock the hoard, and lift the treasure,
To such a hero as to Him seemed meet.
. . . . . .

## XLII

*Beowulf's Body Carried to the Funeral Pyre and the Dragon Cast into the Sea.*

Wiglaf spoke, the son of Weohstan:
"Let us go once more to gaze at the marvels

till left 'neath the rock; I will lead you in
There your hands may touch great heaps of gold,
racelets and rings. Let the bier be ready
When out of the cave we come again,
o bear away the warrior brave,
ur lord beloved, where long he shall bide,
ept in the sheltering care of God."
he son of Weohstan, warrior brave,
alled on the folk-men, far and wide,
rom house and home to hasten and bring
ood for the pyre of the peerless man,
is funeral pile. "Now fire shall consume,
he wan flame wax o'er the warrior strong,
ho oft stood firm in the iron shower,
hen the storm of arrows, sent from the bow-string,
lew o'er the shield-wall, and the fleet-winged shaft,
eathered behind, pushed home the barb." 19
ow the wise young warrior, Weohstan's son,
even men called, of the king's own thanes,
he best of the band; the bravest he gathered,
imself the eighth, they sought the den
f the hateful beast; one bore in his hand
lighted torch and led the way. 25
o lots were drawn for the dragon's hoard,
hen they saw it lying, loose in the cave,
ncared for, unguarded, unclaimed by a soul;
here was none to hinder as they hurried away,
aden with spoils and splendid heirlooms. 30
'er the edge of the cliff they cast the dragon,
nto the sea, the scaly worm;
et the waves engulf the gold-hoard's keeper.
n a wagon they loaded the wondrous treasure,
old past counting. The gray-haired king
hey bore to the pyre, on the Point of Whales. 36

## XLIII

*The Burning of Beowulf's Body*

hen built for Beowulf the band of the Jutes
A funeral pyre; 'twas firmly based.
hey hung it with helmets as he had bidden,
With shining byrnies and battle-shields.
n the midst they laid, with loud lament, 5
heir lord beloved, their leader brave.
On the brow of the cliff they kindled the blaze,
Black o'er the flames the smoke shot up;
Cries of woe, in the windless air,
Rose and blent with the roar of the blast, 10
Till the frame of the body burst with the heat
Of the seething heart. In sorrowing mood
They mourned aloud their leader dead.
Joined in the wail a woman old,[1]
With hair upbound for Beowulf grieved, 15
Chanted a dreary dirge of woe,
Dark forebodings of days to come,
Thick with slaughter and throes of battle,
Bondage and shame. The black smoke rose.
High on the headland they heaped a barrow,
Lofty and broad 'twas built by the Weders,
Far to be seen by sea-faring men. 22
Ten days long they toiled to raise it,
The battle-king's beacon. They built a wall
To fence the brands of the funeral burning, 25
The choicest and best their chiefs could devise.
In the barrow they buried the bracelets and rings,
All those pieces of precious treasure
That bold-hearted men had brought from the cave,
Returned to earth the heirloom of heroes, 30
The gold to the ground, again to become
As useless to men as of yore it had been.

Around the barrow the battle-brave rode,
Twelve in the troop, all true-born aethelings,
To make their lament and mourn for the king; 35
To chant a lay their lord to honor.
They praised his daring; his deeds of prowess
They mentioned in song. For meet it is
That men should publish their master's praise,
Honor their chieftain, and cherish him dearly
When he leaves this life, released from the body. 41

Thus joined the men of the Jutes in mourning
Their hero's end. His hearth-companions
Called him the best among kings of the earth,
Mildest of men, and most beloved, 45
Kindest to kinsmen, and keenest for fame,

1 Perhaps his wife.

END OF BEOWULF

# THE VENERABLE BEDE (673–735)

The Venerable Bede, a scholarly monk in the Benedictine monastery at Jarrow in Northumbria, is the author of the *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, a work written in Latin which is our chief historical authority for the life and civilization of Anglo-Saxon England. In Book IV, Chapter XXIV, of his *History*, he tells the famous story of the poet Cædmon, the earliest English poet whose name has survived to us. Of his poetry, unfortunately, there has been preserved only the short hymn which Bede quotes. The poetical paraphrases of the Bible which long went under Cædmon's name are now known to be of later date.

The *Ecclesiastical History* was one of the works which King Alfred translated, or caused to be translated, into Old English. A good modern translation is that of J. A. Giles (Bohn Library). The selection here printed, translated by A. S. Cook, is by kind permission of Professor Cook and of Ginn & Co. taken from Cook and Tinker's *Select Translations from Old English Poetry*.

## BEDE'S ACCOUNT OF THE POET CÆDMON

*Translated by Albert S. Cook*

There was in the monastery of this abbess a certain brother especially distinguished by the grace of God, since he was wont to make poems breathing of piety and religion. Whatever he learned of Sacred Scripture by the mouth of interpreters, he in a little time gave forth in poetical language composed with the greatest sweetness and depth of feeling, in English, his native tongue; and the effect of his poems was ever and anon to incite the souls of many to despise the world and long for the heavenly life. Not but that there were others after him among the people of the Angles who sought to compose religious poetry; but none there was who could equal him, for he did not learn the art of song from men, nor through the means of any man; rather did he receive it as a free gift from God. Hence it came to pass that he never was able to compose poetry of a frivolous or idle sort; none but such as pertain to religion suited a tongue so religious as his. Living always the life of a layman until well advanced in years, he had never learned the least thing about poetry. In fact, so little did he understand of it that when at a feast it would be ruled that every one present should, for the entertainment of the others, sing in turn, he would, as soon as he saw the harp coming anywhere near him, jump up from the table in the midst of the banqueting, leave the place, and make the best of his way home.

This he had done at a certain time, and, leaving the house where the feast was in progress, had gone out to the stable where the care of the cattle had been assigned to him for that night. There, when it was time to go to sleep, he had lain down for that purpose. But while he slept some one stood by him in a dream, greeted him, called him by name, and said, "Cædmon, sing me something." To this he replied, "I know not how to sing, and that is the very reason why I left a feast and came here, because I could not sing." But the one who was talking with him answered, "No matter, you are to sing for me." "Well, then," said he, "what is it that I must sing?" "Sing," said the other, "the beginning of created things." At this reply he immediately began to sing verses in praise of God the Creator, verses that he had never heard, and whose meaning is as follows: "Now should we praise the Keeper of the heavenly kingdom, the might of the Creator and His counsel, the works of the Father of glory; how He, though God eternal, became the author of all marvels. He, the almighty Guardian of mankind, first created for the sons of men heaven as a roof, and afterwards the earth." This is the meaning, but not the precise order, of the words which he sang in his sleep; for no songs, however well they may be composed, can be rendered from one language into another without loss of grace and dignity. When he rose from sleep, he remembered all that he had sung while in that state, and shortly after added, in the same strain, many more words of a hymn befitting the majesty of God.

In the morning he went to the steward who was set over him, and showed him what gift he had acquired. Being led to the abbess, he was bidden to make known his dream and repeat his poem to the many learned men who were present, that they all might give their judgment concerning the thing which he related, and whence it was: and they were unanimously of the opinion that heavenly grace had been bestowed upon him by the Lord. They then set about expounding to him a piece of sacred history or teaching, bidding him, if he could, to turn it into the rhythm of poetry. This he under-

ok to do, and departed. In the morning
returned and delivered the passage as-
gned to him, converted into an excellent
oem. The abbess, honoring the grace of
od as displayed in the man, shortly after-
ard instructed him to forsake the condition
a layman and take upon himself the vows
a monk. She thereupon received him into
e monastery with his whole family, and
ade him one of the company of the bre-
ren, commanding that he should be taught
e whole course and succession of Biblical
story. He, in turn, calling to mind what
was able to learn by the hearing of the
r, and, as it were, like a clean animal,
hewing upon it as a cud, transformed it all
to most agreeable poetry; and, by echoing
back in a more harmonious form, made his
achers in turn listen to him. Thus he re-
earsed the creation of the world, the origin
man, and all the story of Genesis; the de-
arture of Israel from Egypt and their entry
to the Promised Land, together with many
ther histories from Holy Writ; the incarna-
on of our Lord, his passion, resurrection,
nd ascension into heaven; the coming of the
oly Ghost and the teaching of the Apostles;
oreover, he made many poems about the
rror of the future judgment, the awfulness
the pains of hell, and the joy of the hea-
enly kingdom, besides a great number about
e mercies and judgments of God. In all
ese he exerted himself to allure men from
e love of wickedness, and to impel them to
e love and practice of righteous living; for
e was a very devout man, humbly submis-
ve to the monastic rule, but full of consum-
g zeal against those who were disposed to
ct otherwise.

Hence it came to pass that he ended his
fe with a fair death. For when the hour of
is departure drew nigh, he was afflicted for
he space of a fortnight with a bodily weak-
ess which seemed to prepare the way; yet it
as so far from severe that he was able dur-
ng the whole of that time to walk about and
onverse. Near at hand there was a cottage,
o which those who were sick and appeared
igh unto death were usually taken. At the
approach of evening on the same night when he was to leave the world, he desired his attendant to make ready a place there for him to take his rest. The attendant did so, though he could not help wondering at the request, since he did not seem in the least like a person about to die. When he was placed in the infirmary, he was somehow full of good humor, and kept talking and joking with those who had already been brought there. Some time after midnight he asked whether they had the Eucharist at hand. "What do you need of the Eucharist?" they answered, "you aren't going to die yet, for you are just as full of fun in talking with us as if nothing were the matter with you." "Never mind," said he, "bring me the Eucharist." Taking it in his hand, he asked, "Are you all at peace with me, and free from any grudge or ill-will?" "Yes," they all responded, "we are perfectly at peace with you, and cherish no grievance whatever." "But are you," said they, "entirely at peace with us?" "Yes, my dear children," he answered without hesitation, "I am at peace with all the servants of God." And thus saying, he made ready for his entrance into the other life by partaking of the heavenly journey-bread. Not long after he inquired, "How near is it to the hour when the brethren are wakened for lauds?" "But a little while," was the reply. "Well then," said he, "let us wait for that hour," and, making over himself the sign of the cross, he laid his head on the pillow, and falling into a light slumber, ended his life in silence. And so it came to pass that, as he had served the Lord in simplicity and purity of mind, and with serene attachment and loyalty, so by a serene death he left the world, and went to look upon His face. And meet in truth it was that the tongue which had indited so many helpful words in praise of the Creator, should frame its very last words in His praise, while in the act of signing himself with the cross, and of commending his spirit into His hands. And that he foresaw his death is apparent from what has here been related.

# THE WANDERER

*Translated by J. Duncan Spaeth*[1]

The *Wanderer*, probably composed early in the eighth century, is one of the poems of the Exeter Book, a manuscript which has belonged continuously to the library of Exeter Cathedral since the time of the Norman Conquest. It presents with an intensity which suggests personal experience the thoughts of a wandering exile. His liege-lord is dead; his home has been laid waste; his friends are scattered. In the desolation which has come upon him he sees the type of the transitoriness of all human life.

## THE WANDERER

Many a lonely man at last comes to honor;
Merits God's mercy, though much he endured
On wintry seas, with woe in his heart,
Dragging his oar through drenching-cold brine,
Homeless and houseless and hunted by Wyrd.[1]

These are the words of a way-faring wanderer,
This is his song of the sorrow of life,
Slaughter of foemen, felling of kinsmen:

Oft in the dark, alone before dawning,
All to myself my sorrow I tell.
No friend have I here, to whom I may open
My heart's deep secret, my hidden spring of woe.
Well do I know 'tis the way of the high-born,
Fast in his heart to fetter his feelings,
Lock his unhappiness in the hold of his mind.
Spirit that sorrows withstandeth not destiny,
Heart that complaineth plucketh no help.
A haughty hero will hide his suffering,
Manfully master misery's pang.
Thus stricken with sorrow, stript of my heritage,
Far from kinsmen and country and friends,
Grimly I grappled my grief to my bosom,
Since long time ago, my giver of bounty
Was laid in the earth, and left me to roam
Watery wastes, with winter in my heart.
Forsaken I sought a shielder and protector;
Far and near I found none to greet the wanderer,
No master to make him welcome in his wine-hall;
None to cheer the cheerless, or the friendless to befriend.

He who has lost all his loved companions
Knoweth how bitter a bedfellow is sorrow.
Loneliness his lot, not lordly gold,
Heart-chilling frost, not harvest of plenty.
Oft he remembers the mirth of the mead-hall,
Yearns for the days of his youth, when his dear lord
Filled him with abundance. Faded are those joys!
He shall know them no more; no more shall he listen
To the voice of his lord, his leader and counsellor.
Sometimes sleep and sorrow together
Gently enfold the joyless wanderer:
Bright are his dreams, he embraces his lord again,
Kisses his liege, and lays on his knee
Head and hands as in happy days,
When he thanked for a boon his bountiful giver.
Wakes with a start the wanderer homeless;
Nought he beholds but the heaving surges,
Seagulls dipping and spreading their wings,
Scurries of snow and the scudding hail.
Then his heart is all the heavier,
Sore after sweet dreams sorrow reviveth.
Fain would he hold the forms of his kinsmen,
Longingly leans to them, lovingly greets them;
Slowly their faces swim into distance;
No familiar greeting comes from the fleeting
Companies of kinsmen. Care ever shadows
The way of the traveller, whose track is on the waters,
Whose path is on the billows of the boundless deep.

Behold I know not how I may keep
My heart from sinking, heavy with sorrow,
When all life's destiny deeply I ponder, —
Men that are suddenly snatched in their prime,
High-souled heroes; so the whole of this earth

1 Destiny.

1 *Old English Poetry*, Princeton University Press. 1921.

ty by day droopeth and sinketh to decay. . . .[1]
ow dread is the doom of the last desolation,
hen all the wealth of the world shall be waste,
e that is wise may learn, if he looks
road o'er this land, where lonely and ruinous,
ind-swept walls, waste are standing;
ttering towers, crusted with frost,
umbling wine-halls, bare to the sky.
ead is their revelry, dust are the revellers!
me they have fallen on far fields of battle,
me have gone down in ships on the sea;
me were the prey of the prowling gray-wolf,
me by their loved ones were laid in the earth.
ie Lord of the living hath levelled their mansions,
lenced the sound of the singing and laughter.
mpty and bare are all their habitations,
ondrous works of the giants of old.

e that considers this scene of desolation,
id this dark life deeply doth ponder, —
attle and blood-shed, burning and slaughter,
bringeth to mind, and mournfully he asks:
Where is the warrior, where is the war-horse?
Where is the giver of bounty, where are the boon-companions,
The "dream and the gleam" that gladden the hall?
Alas the bright ale-cup, alas the brave warrior!
Alas the pride of princes! Their prime is no more;
Sunk under night's shadow, as though it never had been!
Where lusty warriors thronged, this lone wall towers,
Weird with dragon-shapes, wondrously carven;
Storm of ash-spears hath stricken the heroes,
Blood-thirsty weapons, Wyrd the supreme.
Wintry blasts now buffet these battlements;
Dreary snow-storms drift up the earth,
The terror of winter when wild and wan
Down from the north with the darkness drives
The ruinous scourge of the ruthless hail.

All this life is labor and sorrow,
Doom of destiny darkens o'er earth.
Wealth is fleeting, friends are fleeting,
Man is fleeting, maid is fleeting,
All this earth's foundations utterly shall pass.[1]

[1] Ten lines are omitted in Professor Spaeth's translation.

[1] Five concluding lines of moralizing comment are omitted in Professor Spaeth's rendering.

## KING ALFRED THE GREAT (849–901)

Alfred, King of the West-Saxons from 871 to 901, having driven back the invading Danes, and established his people in security and peace, turned to the problem of their education. He welcomed at his court scholars from many lands. Finding that many, even of his high ecclesiastics, knew little Latin, he translated, or caused to be translated, into English five important books: the *Consolation of Philosophy* of Boethius, the *Pastoral Care* of Gregory the Great, the *Soliloquies* of St. Augustine, the *Ecclesiastical History* of Bede, and the *Universal History* of Orosius. Into this last translation he inserted two narratives brought to him by Ohthere, a Norwegian traveller and explorer, and by Wulfstan, who had voyaged into the pagan countries of the eastern Baltic.

The translation of these passages, by C. B. Tinker, is by kind permission of Ginn & Co. reproduced from Cook and Tinker's *Select Translations from Old English Prose.*

### THE VOYAGES OF OHTHERE AND WULFSTAN

*Translated by Chauncey B. Tinker*

#### OHTHERE'S FIRST VOYAGE

Ohthere[1] told King Alfred, his lord, that he, of all the Norwegians, dwelt farthest to the north. He said that he lived in the northern part of the country, by the shore of the West Sea. Notwithstanding, the land extended yet farther to the north; but it was all waste, save in a few places here and there where Finns dwell, attracted by the hunting in winter and the sea-fishing in summer. He said that at a certain time he wished to discover how far north the land extended and

[1] Pronounce *Ocht'-hair-e* (with the *ch* as in German).

whether anybody lived north of the waste. So he set out due north along the coast for three days, with the waste land to starboard and the high seas to larboard. By that time he was as far north as whale-fishers ever go. Upon this, he proceeded due north as far as he could sail in the next three days. At that point the land curved to the east — or the sea in on the land, he knew not which; all he knew was that there he waited for a wind from the west, or somewhat from the north-west, and so sailed east, close to land, as far as he could in four days. There he was obliged to wait for a wind from due north, for at that point the land curved due south — or the sea in on the land, he knew not which. Thence he sailed due south, close to land, as far as he could in five days. At that point a great river extended up into the land. Then they turned up into this river, for they durst not sail beyond it for dread of hostile treatment, the land being all inhabited on the other side of the river. He had not encountered any inhabited land since leaving his own home, for to the right the land was uninhabited all the way, save for fishermen, fowlers, and hunters, and these were all Finns; to the left there was always open sea. The Permians had cultivated their land very well, but they durst not enter it. The land of the Terfinns was all waste, save where hunters, fishers, or fowlers encamped.

The Permians told him many stories both about their own country and about countries which were round them, but he knew not what was true, because he did not see it himself. The Finns and the Permians, it seemed to him, spoke nearly the same language. He made this voyage, in addition to his purpose of seeing the country, chiefly for walruses, for they have very good bone in their teeth — they brought some of these teeth to the king — and their hides are very good for ship-ropes. This whale is much smaller than other whales, being not more than seven ells long; but the best whale-fishing is in his own country — those are eight and forty ells long, and the largest fifty ells long. He said he was one of a party of six who killed sixty of these in two days.

Ohthere was a very wealthy man in such possessions as constitute their wealth, that is, in wild beasts. He still, at the time when he came to the king, had six hundred tame deer that he had not sold. They call these reindeer. Six of these were decoy deer, which are very valuable among the Finns, for it is with them that they capture the wild reindeer. He was among the first men in th land, though he had not more than twent horned cattle, twenty sheep, and twent swine, and the little that he plowed h plowed with horses. But their income chiefly in the tribute that the Finns pa them — skins of animals, feathers of bird whalebone, and ship-ropes made of whale hide and seal's hide. Every one pays a cording to his means; the richest has to pa fifteen marten skins and five reindeer skin one bear skin, forty bushels of feathers, bear- or otter-skin kirtle, and two ship-rope each sixty ells long, one made of whale's hid and the other of seal's.

He said that the country of the Northme was very long and very narrow. All that hi man can use for either grazing or ploughin lies by the sea, and even that is very rocky i some places; and to the east, alongside th inhabited land, lie wild moors. In thes waste lands dwell the Finns. And the in habited land is broadest to the eastward growing ever narrower the farther north To the east it may be sixty miles broad, o even a little broader, and midway thirty o broader; and to the north, where it was nar rowest, he said it might be three miles broa up to the moor. Moreover the moor is s broad in some places that it would take a ma two weeks to cross it, in other places of such a breadth that a man can cross it in si days. . . .

## WULFSTAN'S VOYAGE

Wulfstan said that he set out from Haddeby,[1] arriving at Truso after seven days and nights, the ship running all the way under sail. He had Wendland [Mecklenburg and Pomerania] on the starboard, and Langland Laaland, Falster, and Sconey on the larboard; and all these lands belong to Denmark. And then we[2] had on our larboard the land of the Burgundians [Bornholmians], who have their own king. After the land of the Burgundians, we had on our left those lands that were first called Blekinge, and Meore,[3] and Öland, and Gothland; these lands belong to the Swedes. And we had Wendland [the country of the Wends] to the starboard all the way to the mouth of the Vistula. The Vistula is a very large river, separating Witland from Wendland; and Witland belongs to the Esthonians. The Vistula flows out of Wendland, and runs into

1 In Eastern Schleswig. 2 So the Old English.
3 The mainland of Sweden, opposite Öland.

he Frische Haff. The Frische Haff is about teen miles broad. Then the Elbing empties to the Frische Haff, flowing from the east ut of the lake [Drausen] on the shore of hich stands Truso; and there empty to- ether into the Frische Haff, the Elbing from he east, flowing out of Esthonia, and the istula from the south, out of Wendland. he Vistula gives its name to the Elbing, nning out of the mere [the Frische Haff] est and north into the sea; therefore it [the lace where it flows out of the Frische Haff] called the mouth of the Vistula.

Esthonia [Eastland] is very large, and any towns are there, and in every town here is a king. There is also very much oney, and fishing. The king and the richest hen drink mare's milk, but the poor and aves drink mead. There is much strife mong them. There is no ale brewed by the sthonians, but there is mead enough.

There is a custom among the Esthonians hat when a man dies he lies unburnt in his ouse, with his kindred and friends, a month – sometimes two; and the kings and other hen of high rank still longer, in proportion to heir wealth; it is sometimes half a year that hey remain unburnt, lying above ground, in heir houses. All the while that the body is ithin there is to be drinking and sports until he day he is burned. The same day on hich they are to bear him to the pyre they ivide his property, what is left after the rinking and sports, into five or six parts — ometimes into more, according to the amount of his goods. Then they lay the largest share about a mile from the town, then the second, then the third, till it is all laid within the one mile; and the smallest part must be nearest the town in which the dead man lies. Then there are assembled all the men in the land that have the swiftest horses, about five or six miles from the goods. Then they all run toward the goods, and the man who has the swiftest horse comes to the first and largest portion, and so one after another till it be all taken; and he who arrives at the goods nearest the town gets the smallest portion. Then each man goes his way with the goods, and he may keep them all; and for this reason swift horses are excessively dear in that country. When his property is thus all spent, they bear him out and burn him with his weapons and clothes. Usually they spend all his wealth, what with the long time that the corpse lies within and what with the goods that they lay along the roads, and that the strangers race for and carry off.

It is also a custom among the Esthonians to burn men of every tribe, and if any one finds a bone unburned they have to make great amends for it.

There is one tribe among the Esthonians that has the power of producing cold, and it is because they produce this cold upon them that the corpses lie so long without decaying. And if a man sets two vats full of ale or water, they cause both to be frozen over, whether it be summer or winter.

## THE BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH

*Translated by Tennyson*

In the year 937, Athelstan, son of Edward the Elder, grandson of Alfred the Great, and king of he West-Saxons and Mercians, defeated the allied armies of Constantine, king of the Scots, and Anlaf (or Olaf), leader of the Norsemen who a hundred years earlier had established themselves in reland. The poem which describes the battle is entered in the *Saxon Chronicle* under the year 937. It is in the same metrical form as *Beowulf* and the rest of Old English poetry; but Tennyson's ersion, based on a prose translation by his son Hallam, treats the half-line of two beats as the metrical unit.

### THE BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH

I

Athelstan King,
Lord among Earls,
Bracelet-bestower and
Baron of Barons,
He with his brother,
Edmund Atheling,
Gaining a lifelong
Glory in battle,
Slew with the sword-edge
There by Brunanburh,
Brake the shield-wall,
Hewed the linden-wood,[1]
Hacked the battle-shield,
Sons of Edward with hammered brands.

1 Shields of linden-wood.

II

Theirs was a greatness
Got from their grandsires —
Theirs that so often in
Strife with their enemies
Struck for their hoards and their hearths and their homes.

III

Bowed the spoiler,
Bent the Scotsman,
Fell the ship-crews
Doomed to the death.
All the field with blood of the fighters
Flowed, from when first the great
Sun-star of morning-tide,
Lamp of the Lord God
Lord everlasting,
Glode over earth till the glorious creature
Sank to his setting.

IV

There lay many a man
Marred by the javelin,
Men of the Northland
Shot over shield.
There was the Scotsman
Weary of war.

V

We the West-Saxons,
Long as the daylight
Lasted, in companies
Troubled the track of the host that we hated.
Grimly with swords that were sharp from the grindstone,
Fiercely we hacked at the flyers before us.

VI

Mighty the Mercian,
Hard was his hand-play,
Sparing not any of
Those that with Anlaf,
Warriors over the
Weltering waters
Borne in the bark's-bosom,
Drew to this island —
Doomed to the death.

VII

Five young kings put asleep by the sword-stroke,
Seven strong Earls of the army of Anlaf
Fell on the war-field, numberless numbers,
Shipmen and Scotsmen.

VIII

Then the Norse leader,
Dire was his need of it,
Few were his following,
Fled to his war-ship;
Fleeted his vessel to sea with the king in it,
Saving his life on the fallow flood.

IX

Also the crafty one,
Constantinus,
Crept to his North again,
Hoar-headed hero!

X

Slender warrant had
*He* to be proud of
The welcome of war-knives —
He that was reft of his
Folk and his friends that had
Fallen in conflict,
Leaving his son too
Lost in the carnage,
Mangled to morsels,
A youngster in war!

XI

Slender reason had
*He* to be glad of
The clash of the war-glaive —
Traitor and trickster
And spurner of treaties —
He nor had Anlaf
With armies so broken
A reason for bragging
That they had the better
In perils of battle
On places of slaughter —
The struggle of standards,
The rush of the javelins,
The crash of the charges,[1]
The wielding of weapons —
The play that they played with
The children of Edward.

XII

Then with their nailed prows
Parted the Norsemen, a
Blood-reddened relic of
Javelins over
The jarring breaker, the deep-sea billow,
Shaping their way toward Dyflen[2] again
Shamed in their souls.

1 Lit. "the gathering of men." 2 Dublin.

XIII

Also the brethren,
King and Atheling,
Each in his glory,
Went to his own in his own West-Saxonland,
Glad of the war.

XIV

Many a carcase they left to be carrion,
Many a livid one, many a sallow-skin —
Left for the white-tailed eagle to tear it, and
Left for the horny-nibbed raven to rend it, and
Gave to the garbaging war-hawk to gorge it, and
That gray beast, the wolf of the weald.

XV

Never had huger
Slaughter of heroes
Slain by the sword-edge —
Such as old writers
Have writ of in histories —
Hapt in this isle, since
Up from the East hither
Saxon and Angle from
Over the broad billow
Broke into Britain with
Haughty war-workers who
Harried the Welshman, when
Earls that were lured by the
Hunger of glory gat
Hold of the land.

# THE BATTLE OF MALDON

*Translated by J. Duncan Spaeth*[1]

The battle of Maldon was fought in the year 991 on the shores of a tidal river near the coast of Essex, where a marauding band of Vikings under the famous Olaf Tryggvason had made a landing. Byrhtnoth, alderman of Essex, and liegeman of King Æthelred the Redeless, hastily gathered an army and marched against him. He was killed in the battle, and his army was defeated. The poem is a spirited song of heroic defeat, written, apparently, by some one who had first-hand knowledge of the events, and who was also familiar with the Old English epic poetry of the seventh and eighth centuries.

## THE BATTLE OF MALDON

The beginning of the poem is lost. The first sixteen lines of the remaining portion describe how Byrhtnoth's men, arrived at the battle field, dismount and turn their horses loose, how one of them sends his hawk flying to the wood, and how the East Saxon alderman proceeds to marshal his band on the banks of the stream. The poem continues as follows:

Byrhtnoth encouraged his comrades heartily;
Rode through the ranks and roused their spirits;
Marshalled his men to meet the onset;
Showed them how they should hold their shields
Firm in their grip, and fearless stand.
When he had briskly whetted their courage,
He leaped from his steed and stood with his people,
His hearth-band beloved and household thanes.

Then strode to the strand a stalwart Northman,
The viking herald. They heard him shout,
Send o'er the tide the taunt of the pirates;
Hailing the earl, he hurled this challenge:

"Bold sea-rovers bade me tell thee
Straightway thou must send them tribute,
Rings for ransom, royal treasure;
Better with gifts ye buy us off,
Ere we deal hard blows and death in battle.
Why spill we blood when the bargain is easy?
Give us the pay and we grant ye peace.
If thou dost agree, who art greatest here,
To ransom thy folk with the fee we demand,
And give to the seamen the gold they ask,
Pay with tribute for treaty of peace,
We load the booty aboard our ships,
Haul to sea and hold the truce."
Byrhtnoth spake, he brandished his spear,
Lifted his shield and shouted aloud,
Grim was his wrath as he gave them his answer:
"Hearest thou, pirate, my people's reply?
Ancient swords they will send for ransom;
Poison-tipped points they will pay for tribute;
Treasure that scarce will serve you in battle.
Go back pirate, give them my answer;
Bring them this word of bitter defiance;
Tell them here standeth, stern and intrepid,
The earl with his folk, to defend his country,
Æthelred's realm, the rights of my lord,
His house and his home; the heathen shall fall,
Pirates and robbers. My people were shamed,

[1] *Old English Poetry*, Princeton University Press, 1921

If ye loaded our booty aboard your ships,
And floated them off unfought for, to sea,
Having sailed so far, to set foot on our soil.
Not all so easily earn ye our gold!
Sword-blades and spear-points we sell you first;
Battle-play grim, ere ye get our tribute!"

Forward he told his troop to come,
To step under shield and stand by the shore.
The breadth of the stream kept the bands asunder;
Strong came flowing the flood after ebb,
Filled the channel, and foamed between them.
Impatient stood by Panta stream,
East-Saxon host and horde of the pirates,
Longing to lock their lances in battle.
Neither could harass or harm the other,
Save that some fell by the flight of arrows.

Down went the tide, the Danes were ready;
Burned for battle the band of the Vikings;
On the bridge stood Wulfstan, and barred their way.
Byrhtnoth sent him, a seasoned warrior,
Ceola's son, with his kinsmen to hold it.
The first of the Vikings who ventured to set
Foot on the bridge, he felled with his spear.
Two sturdy warriors stood with Wulfstan,
Maccus and Ælfhere, mighty pair,
Kept the approach where the crossing was shallow;
Defended the bridge, and fought with the boldest,
As long as their hands could lift a sword.
When the strangers discovered and clearly saw
What bitter fighters the bridgewards proved,
They tried a trick, the treacherous robbers,
Begged they might cross, and bring their crews
Over the shallows, and up to the shore.
The earl was ready, in reckless daring,
To let them land too great a number.
Byrhthelm's son,[1] while the seamen listened,
Called across, o'er the cold water:
"Come ye seamen, come and fight us!
We give you ground, but God alone knows
Who to-day shall hold the field."

Strode the battle-wolves bold through the water;
West over Panta waded the pirates;
Carried their shields o'er the shining waves;
Safely their lindenwoods landed the sailors.
Byrhtnoth awaited them, braced for the onslaught,

1 Byrhtnoth.

Haughty and bold at the head of his band.
Bade them build the bristling war-hedge,
Shield against shield, to shatter the enemy.
Near was the battle, now for the glory,
Now for the death of the doomed in the field.
Swelled the war-cry, circled the ravens,
Screamed the eagle, eager for prey;
Sped from the hand the hard-forged spear-head,
Showers of darts, sharp from the grindstone.
Bows were busy, bolt stuck in buckler;
Bitter the battle-rush, brave men fell,
Heroes on either hand, hurt in the fray.
Wounded was Wulfmær, went to his battle-rest;
Cruelly mangled, kinsman of Byrhtnoth,
Son of his sister, slain on the field.

Pay of vengeance they paid the Vikings;
I heard of the deed of the doughty Edward:
He struck with his sword a stroke that was mighty,
Down fell the doomed man, dead at his feet.
For this the thane got the thanks of his leader,
Praise that was due for his prowess in fight.
Grimly they held their ground in the battle,
Strove with each other the stout-hearted heroes,
Strove with each other, eager to strike
First with their darts the foe that was doomed.
Warriors thronged, the wounded lay thick.
Stalwart and steady they stood about Byrhtnoth.
Bravely he heartened them, bade them to win
Glory in battle by beating the Danes.
Raising his shield, he rushed at the enemy;
Covered by buckler, he came at a Viking;
Charged him furious, earl against churl,
Each for the other had evil in store.
The sailorman sent from the south a javelin,
Sorely wounding the war-band's leader;
He shoved with his shield, the shaft snapped short;
The spear was splintered and sprang against him;
Wroth was Byrhtnoth, reached for his weapon;
Gored the Viking that gave him the wound.
Straight went the lance, strong was the leader;
Sheer through the throat of the pirate he thrust it.
His dart meant death, so deadly his aim.
Swiftly he sent him a second javelin,

That crashed through the corslet and cleft his bosom,
Wounded him sore through his woven mail;
The poisonous spear-head stood in his heart.
Blithe was the leader, laughed in his breast,
Thanked his Lord for that day's work.

Now one of the pirates poised his weapon;
Sped from his hand a spear that wounded
Through and through the thane of Æthelred.[1]
There stood at his side a stripling youth;
Brave was the boy; he bent o'er his lord,
Drew from his body the blood-dripping dart.
'Twas Wulfmær the youthful, Wulfstan's son;
Back he hurled the hard-forged spear.
In went the point, to earth fell the pirate
Who gave his master the mortal hurt.
A crafty seaman crept toward the earl,
Eager to rob him of armor and rings,
Bracelets and gear and graven sword.
Then Byrhtnoth drew his blade from the sheath,
Broad and blood-stained, struck at the breast-plate.
But one of the seamen stopped the warrior,
Beat down the arm of the earl with his lance.
Fell to the ground the gray-hilted sword;
No more he might grasp his goodly blade,
Wield his weapon; yet words he could utter;
The hoar-headed warrior heartened his men;
Bade them forward to fare and be brave.
When the stricken leader no longer could stand,
He looked to heaven and lifted his voice:
"I render Thee thanks, O Ruler of men,
For the joys Thou hast given, that gladdened my life.
Merciful Maker, now most I need,
Thy goodness to grant me a gracious end,
That my soul may swiftly speed to Thee,
Come to Thy keeping, O King of angels,
Depart in peace. I pray Thee Lord
That the fiends of hell may not harm my spirit."
The heathen pirates then hewed him to pieces,
And both the brave men that by him stood;
Ælfnoth and Wulfmær, wounded to death,
Gave their lives for their lord in the fight.

Then quitted the field the cowards and faint-hearts;
The son of Odda started the flight.
Godric abandoned his good lord in battle,
Who many a steed had bestowed on his thane.
Leaped on the horse that belonged to his leader,
Not *his* were the trappings, *he* had no right to them.
Both of his brothers basely fled with him,
Godwin and Godwy, forgetful of honor,
Turned from the fight, and fled to the woods,
Seeking the cover, and saving their lives.
Those were with them, who would have remained,
Had they remembered how many favors
Their lord had done them in days of old.
Offa foretold it, what time he arose
To speak where they met to muster their forces.
Many, he said, were mighty in words
Whose courage would fail when it came to fighting.
There lay on the field the lord of the people,
Æthelred's earl; all of them saw him,
His hearth-companions beheld him dead.
Forward went fighting the fearless warriors,
Their courage was kindled, no cowards were they;
Their will was fixed on one or the other:
To lose their life, or avenge their leader.
Ælfwiné spoke to them, son of Ælfric,
Youthful in years, but unyielding in battle;
Roused their courage, and called them to honor:
"Remember the time when we talked in the mead-hall,
When bold on our benches we boasted our valor,
Deeds of daring we'd do in the battle!
Now we may prove whose prowess is true.
My birth and my breeding I boldly proclaim:
I am sprung from a mighty Mercian line.
Aldhelm the alderman, honored and prosperous,
He was my grandsire, great was his fame:
My people who know me shall never reproach me,
Say I was ready to run from the battle,
Back to my home, and abandon my leader,
Slain on the field. My sorrow is double,
Both kinsman and lord I've lost in the fight."
Forward he threw himself, thirsting for vengeance;
Sent his javelin straight at a pirate.
Fell with a crash his foe to the earth,
His life-days ended. Then onward he strode,
Urging his comrades to keep in the thick of it.

[1] Byrhtnoth.

Up spake Offa, with ashen spear lifted:
"Well hast thou counselled us, well hast encouraged;
Noble Ælfwiné, needs must we follow thee.
Now that our leader lies low on the field,
Needs must we steadfastly stand by each other,
Close in the conflict keeping together,
As long as our hands can hold a weapon,
Good blade wield. Godric the coward,
Son of Odda, deceived us all.
Too many believed 'twas our lord himself,
When they saw him astride the war-steed proud.
His run-away ride our ranks hath broken,
Shattered the shield-wall. Shame on the dastard,
Who caused his comrades like cowards to fly!"
Up spake Leofsunu, lifted his linden-wood,
Answered his comrades from under his shield:
"Here I stand, and here shall I stay!
Not a foot will I flinch, but forward I'll go!
Vengeance I've vowed for my valiant leader.
Now that my friend is fallen in battle,
My people shall never reproach me, in Stourmere;
Call me deserter, and say I returned,
Leaderless, lordless, alone from the fight.
Better is battle-death; boldly I welcome
The edge and the iron." Full angry he charged,
Daring all danger, disdaining to fly.

Up spake Dunheré, old and faithful,
Shook his lance and shouted aloud,
Bade them avenge the valiant Byrhtnoth:
"Wreak on the Danes the death of our lord!
Unfit is for vengeance who values his life."
Fell on the foe the faithful body-guard,
Battle-wroth spearmen, beseeching God
That they might avenge the thane of Æthelred,
Pay the heathen with havoc and slaughter.
The son of Ecglaf, Æscferth by name,
Sprung from a hardy North-humbrian race,
— He was their hostage, — helped them manfully.
Never he faltered or flinched in the war-play;
Lances a plenty he launched at the pirates,
Shot them on shield, or sheer through the breast-plate;
Rarely he missed them, many he wounded,
While he could wield his weapon in battle.
Still Edward the long held out at the front;
Brave and defiant, he boasted aloud
That he would not yield a hair's breadth of ground,
Nor turn his back where his better lay dead.
He broke through the shield-wall, breasted the foe,
Worthily paid the pirate warriors
For the life of his lord ere he laid him down.
Near him Æthelric, noble comrade,
Brother of Sibryht, brave and untiring,
Mightily fought, and many another;
Hacked the hollow shields, holding their own.
Bucklers were broken, the breast-plate sang
Its gruesome song. The sword of Offa
Went home to the hilt in the heart of a Viking.
But Offa himself soon had to pay for it,
The kinsman of Gadd succumbed in the fight.
Yet ere he fell, he fulfilled his pledge,
The promise he gave to his gracious lord,
That both should ride to their burg together,
Home to their friends, or fall in the battle,
Killed in conflict and covered with wounds;
He lay by his lord, a loyal thane.
Mid clash of shields the shipmen came on,
Maddened by battle. Full many a lance
Home was thrust to the heart of the doomed.
Then sallied forth Wistan, Wigelin's son;
Three of the pirates he pierced in the throng,
Ere he fell, by his friends, on the field of slaughter.
Bitter the battle-rush, bravely struggled
Heroes in armor, while all around them
The wounded dropped and the dead lay thick.
Oswold and Eadwold all the while
Their kinsmen and comrades encouraged bravely,
Both of the brothers bade their friends
Never to weaken or weary in battle,
But keep up their sword-play, keen to the end.
Up spake Byrhtwold, brandished his ash-spear,
— He was a tried and true old hero, —
Lifted his shield and loudly called to them:
"Heart must be keener, courage the hardier,
Bolder our mood as our band diminisheth.
Here lies in his blood our leader and comrade,
The brave on the beach. Bitter shall rue it
Who turns his back on the battle-field now.
Here I stay; I am stricken and old;
My life is done; I shall lay me down
Close by my lord and comrade dear."

Six more lines and the MS. breaks off. There cannot have been much left. The battle is over.

# THE LATER MIDDLE AGES

# THE LATER MIDDLE AGES

Edward the Confessor (reigned 1042–66), the last English king before the Conquest, had spent
s youth in exile at the court of Normandy, and during his reign he surrounded himself with
ench-speaking courtiers and ecclesiastics. The Norman Conquest of 1066 determined for the
xt three centuries the predominance in England of French culture and French literature. There
s no conscious effort on the part of the conquerors to force their language on the country; but the
eat estates were in the hands of French-speaking nobles, and all the higher offices of the Church
re held by French-speaking ecclesiastics. French thus became the official and polite language of
e realm, and English was depressed into the position of an illiterate dialect, though it continued
thout interruption to be spoken by the great mass of the population. So far as the finer issues of
e were concerned, England was a province of France.

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries many books were written on English soil, for it was a
ne of eager intellectual activity; but they were written either in Latin, the language of the learned
roughout Western Europe, or in courtly French. Only rarely was English used for literary pur-
ses, as by Layamon in his long poem the *Brut* (about 1200), or in such graceful lyrics as "Sumer
icumen in."

Relegated almost exclusively to the everyday uses of unlettered speakers, English suffered
dical and rapid change. Careless speakers spoke it ungrammatically, with confusion in the use of
flected forms, with slipshod utterance; and there was no one who cared to set them right. Every
strict had its own dialect, and there was no standard by which to measure good speech and bad.
he rich vocabulary of Old English became impoverished through the disuse of all the words for
uch uneducated people have no need. When in the fourteenth century English became once
ore the language of literature, it had lost the elaborate inflections of King Alfred's speech, and
as almost as simple in its grammatical structure as it is to-day; and the losses in its vocabulary
d been made good by wholesale borrowings from French and Latin. The language of *Beowulf* is
r us to-day in effect a foreign language which we must laboriously learn; the language of Chaucer,
spite some unfamiliar and obsolete words and forms, is essentially our own speech.

The temper of English literature was also profoundly affected by the long supremacy of French.
he poetry of Anglo-Saxon England has both vigor and elevation, but lacks most of the lighter
aces. It is concerned with the serious, the grimmer aspects of life — with battle and storm and
dden death, the cold gray ocean and the wild moorland. There is not in the whole of it a single
ve-story. There is no wit or humor or delicate play of fancy. All these elements in which our
odern literature is so rich are part of what we have learned from the French.

Of all the forms of literature which flourished in medieval France and Anglo-Norman England
he most important was the romance of chivalrous adventure and courtly love. In these poems,
hich often extend themselves to inordinate length, knights, perfect in courtesy as in valor, pass
rough marvelous adventures and pay tribute of extravagant and despairing devotion to a noble
istress whose every wish is their supreme law. Very characteristic of them is this worship of
omanhood, which has its spiritual analogue in the deep devotion paid to the person of the Blessed
irgin. The matter of these romances is sometimes drawn from the stories of classical antiquity,
in the romances on which are founded Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and the Knight's tale of
alamon and Arcite; sometimes from the exploits of Charlemagne and his peers; and, chief source
all, from the cycle of romantic adventures which grew up about the legendary figure of King
rthur. Most perfect of all the romances in English is *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the action
which begins and ends in Arthur's court. In the fifteenth century, Sir Thomas Malory retold in
ately English prose the whole cycle of Arthurian romances, and made them an integral part of
nglish literature.

Another important type is the allegory, which most often takes the form of a dream-vision in
hich, as in the *Romance of the Rose* and in Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls*, the poet is transported
a lovely garden where he meets such abstract personages as Idleness, Fair-Welcome, Mirth, and
Vicked-Tongue. This form serves in the *Vision of Piers Plowman* as the vehicle of trenchant
ocial satire.

Romance and allegory, saint's legend and moral tale, the fable of beasts who talk like men, the
nort realistic tale of sordid realities, the *balade* and roundelay, these and other literary forms had
een developed in the French literature of the thirteenth century, and were ready for immediate
doption by the authors of the fourteenth century who discovered that English also was capable of
terary use. Gower had written a long poem in French, and another in Latin, before he wrote in
nglish his *Confessio Amantis*. Chaucer was steeped in the literature of France, and may well

have written French verses in his youthful days. Both Chaucer and Gower learned their art and the forms of their verse from French sources, though Chaucer drew inspiration also from the great writers of Italy and from the poetry of ancient Rome. But the tradition of the Old English alliterative unrhymed verse had lingered on, and *Piers Plowman* is written in a measure similar to that of *Beowulf*. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* uses the same measure combined with short quatrains of rhyming verse.

The fourteenth century in England is a period of great literary and intellectual activity. While Chaucer with his delicate irony and the poet of *Piers Plowman* with his grim humor and moral earnestness were showing how far practice had departed from the fair ideal of medieval society, the reformer Wiclif was openly questioning the fundamental theories of the medieval Church and was translating into English the Latin Vulgate Bible.

The fifteenth century, on the other hand, is for English literature a relatively barren period. Lydgate, Occleve, King James of Scotland, and many others tried with very indifferent success to carry on the poetical tradition of Chaucer and Gower. Much was written both in prose and verse; but, if we except the popular ballads some of which may date from the fifteenth century, nothing of first-rate importance remains except the splendid prose of Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte Darthur*.

An excellent account in brief compass of the literature of the period, French and Latin as well as English, is C. S. Baldwin's *English Medieval Literature* (Longmans). More detailed is W. H. Schofield's *History of English Literature from the Norman Conquest to Chaucer* (Macmillan). W. P. Ker's *Epic and Romance* (Macmillan) and *English Literature, Medieval* (Holt) are excellent guides. For a fuller body of selections than is possible in the present volume, see Neilson and Webster's *Chief British Poets of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Houghton Mifflin). An exhaustive scholarly bibliography of the period is J. E. Wells's *Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050–1400*.

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# EARLY ENGLISH LYRICS

## "SUMER IS ICUMEN IN"

This song, written about 1240, is found, with musical setting, in MS. Harleian 978 of the British Museum.

Sumer is icumen [1] in;
Lhude [2] sing, cuccu!
Groweth sed, and bloweth [3] med,[4]
And springth the wude [5] nu.
Sing, cuccu!
Awe [6] bleteth after lomb,
Lhouth [7] after calve cu;
Bulluc sterteth,[8] bucke verteth; [9]
Murie [10] sing, cuccu!
Cuccu! cuccu!
Wel singes thu, cuccu;
Ne swik [11] thu naver [12] nu.

1 come. 2 loudly. 3 bloometh. 4 meadow. 5 wood. 6 ewe. 7 loweth. 8 frisketh. 9 breaks wind. 10 merrily. 11 cease. 12 never.

## ALYSOUN

Bytuene Mersh and Averil,
When spray biginneth to springe,
The lutel foul hath hire wyl
On hyre lud [13] to synge.
Ic libbe [14] in love-longinge
For semlokest [15] of alle thinge;
He [16] may me blisse bringe;
Icham [1] in hire baundoun.[2]
An hendy hap ichabbe yhent; [3]
Ichot [4] from hevene it is me sent;
From alle wymmen mi love is lent,[5]
And lyht [6] on Alysoun.

On heu [7] hire her [8] is fayr ynoh,[9]
Hire browe broune, hire eye blake;
With lossum chere he on me loh, [10]
With middel [11] smal and wel ymake.
Bote [12] he me wolle to hire take,
For te buen [13] hire owen make,[14]
Longe to lyven ichulle [15] forsake,
And feye [16] fallen adoun.

Nihtes when I wende [17] and wake,
Forthi [18] myn wonges [19] waxeth won;
Levedi,[20] al for thine sake
Longinge is ylent me on.[21]
In world nis non so wyter mon,[22]
That al hire bounte telle con.
Hire swyre [23] is whittore then the swon,
And feyrest may [24] in toune.

13 language. 14 I live. 15 goodliest. 16 she.

1 I am. 2 power. 3 A kindly fate I have lighted on. 4 I know. 5 turned. 6 lighted. 7 color. 8 hair. 9 enough. 10 With loving mien she on me laughed. 11 waist. 12 unless. 13 be. 14 mate. 15 I shall. 16 death-stricken. 17 turn. 18 for this reason. 19 cheeks. 20 lady. 21 appointed to me. 22 wise man. 23 neck. 24 maid.

Icham for wowing al forwake,[1]
Wery so water in wore.[2]
Lest eny reve[3] me my make,
Ichabbe y-yerned yore.[4]
Beter is tholien whyle sore,[5]
Then mournen evermore.

Geynest under gore,[1]
Herkne to my roun.[2]
An hendy hap ichabbe yhent;
Ichot from hevene it is me sent;
From alle wymmen mi love is lent,
And lyht on Alysoun.

About 1310.

# PIERS THE PLOWMAN

*e Vision of William concerning Piers the Plowman* was very popular in its own day, and is document of great historical and literary interest. It has come down to us in three distinct ons. Version A, written soon after 1362, consists of a prologue and twelve "passus" or can- and contains nearly 2600 lines. Version B, written about 1377, contains the material of Ver- A with many revisions and additions, and adds ten new passus. It is nearly three times as as A. Version C, written between 1393 and 1398, is a revision of Version B, but a revision h does not add materially to the number of verses.

e poem consists of a series of dream-visions, allegorically interpreted as criticisms of human — the life of the individual and the life of society as a whole. The world of fourteenth-century and, the "fair field full of folk," as the dreamer sees it, is seriously out of joint. Many of the are the same which in the kindlier pages of Chaucer are exposed to good-natured laughter. author of *Piers the Plowman* is by no means lacking in humor; but it is a humor of a grimmer than Chaucer's. His satire is informed with moral indignation, with the reformer's zeal to call anity back to the ideals, religious and social, from which it has strayed.

ho was the author, we do not know. In all three of the versions the dreamer is called Will or iam; and tradition has called the author William Langland. But the authenticity of this tradi- is doubtful. Whether Versions B and C are the work of the original author, or of other men took up his work and carried it on in his spirit, is also matter of dispute.

he metre is the unrhymed, alliterating measure of *Beowulf*, the tradition of which survived the man Conquest and was revived by many English poets of the fourteenth century, at the very e when Chaucer and Gower were establishing the more regular rhymed verse of their French and ian models.

*iers the Plowman* has been edited by W. W. Skeat for the Oxford University Press. The selec- s here printed — the Prologue and Passus V of Version A — are from the translation into mod- English by Neilson and Webster printed in *Chief British Poets of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth turies* (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

## THE VISION OF WILLIAM CONCERNING PIERS THE PLOWMAN

### VERSION A

### PROLOGUE

a summer season, when soft was the sun,
lad me in rough clothing, a shepherd as I were;
habit of a hermit, unholy of works,
nt I wide in this world, wonders to hear.
t on a May morning on Malvern Hills
me befell a marvel, a fairy thing me-thought.
as weary of wandering and went me to rest
der a broad bank by a burn side;
And as I lay and leaned and looked on the waters,
I slumbered in a sleep, it sounded so pleasant.
Then did I dream a marvellous dream,
That I was in a wilderness, wist I not where;
And as I beheld into the east, on high to the sun,
I saw a tower on a hill-top, splendidly fashioned;
A deep dale beneath, a dungeon therein,
With a deep ditch and dark, and dreadful to see.
A fair field full of folk found I there between,
Of all manner of men, the mean and the rich,
Working and wandering, as the world requireth.
Some put them to the plow, and played full seldom,

I am, because of my yearning, exhausted by lying ke.
weir (?). 3 rob.
yearned long. 5 suffer for a while sorely.
1 loveliest alive (*lit.* in a dress). 2 song.

In plowing and sowing produced they full hardly
What many of these wasters in gluttony destroy.
And some gave themselves to pride, appareled them accordingly,
In fashion of clothing strangely disguised.
To prayer and to penance put themselves many,
For love of our Lord lived they full hard,
In hope to have the bliss of heaven's kingdom,
As anchorites and hermits that hold themselves in cells,
Covet not in the country to gad all about,
With luxurious living their body to please.
And some chose trade, to prosper the better,
As it seems to our sight that such men should;
And some mirth to make, as minstrels can,
And get gold with their glee, guiltless, I trow.
But jesters and buffoons, Judas's children,
Found for themselves fantasies and of themselves fools made,
Yet have their wits at command, to work if they will.
What Paul preached of them I dare not prove here;
*Qui loquitur turpiloquium*,[1] he is Lucifer's servant.
Askers and beggars fast about flitted,
Till their bags and their bellies brimful were crammed;
Feigned for their food, fought at the alehouse;
In gluttony, God wot, go they to bed
And rise up with ribaldry, these bullying beggar-knaves;
Sleep and sloth follow them ever.
Pilgrims and palmers pledge themselves together
To seek the shrine of St. James and saints at Rome;
Went forth in their way with many wise tales,
And had leave to lie all their life after.
Hermits in a band with hooked staves
Went to Walsingham, and their wenches after.
Great lubbers and long, that loath were to work,
Clothed themselves in capes to be known for brethren,
And some dressed as hermits their ease to have.

1 He who speaketh baseness.

I found there friars, all the four orders,
Preaching to the people for profit of the bellies,
Interpreting the gospel as they well please
For covetousness of capes construes it ill;
For many of these masters may clothe themselves at will,
For money and their merchandise meet together.
Since Charity hath turned trader, and shriven chiefly lords,
Many wonders have befallen in these few years.
Unless Holy Church now be better held together
The most mischief on earth will mount up fast.
There preached a pardoner, as he a priest were,
And brought up a bull with bishop's seals,
And said he himself would absolve them all
From breach of fasting and broken vows.
The laymen liked him well, believed his speech,
And came up kneeling and kissed his bull;
He banged them with his brevet,[1] and bleared their eyes,
And purchased with his parchment rings and brooches.
Thus ye give your gold gluttony to help,
And grant it to rascals that run after lechery.
Were the bishop holy and worth both his ears,
They should not be so brazen to deceive the people.
Yet it is not against the bishop that the knave preacheth;
But the parish priest and pardoner share the silver
That the poor parishioners should have but for them.
Parsons and parish priests complain to their bishops
That their parish hath been poor since the pestilence[2] time,
And ask leave and licence at London to dwell
To sing there for simony,[3] for silver is sweet.
There hang about a hundred in hoods of silk,
Sergeants, it seems, to serve at the bar;
Plead at the law for pence and for pounds,
Not for love of our Lord unloose their lips once.

1 letter of indulgence.
2 Probably the great plague of 1348–1349.
3 getting money singing anniversary masses for the dead.

u mightest better measure the mist on Malvern hills
n get a mum of their mouth till money be shown.
saw there bishops bold and bachelors of divinity
ome clerks of account, the king to serve;
ndeacons and deacons, that dignity have preach to the people and poor men to feed,
e leapt to London, by leave of their bishops,
be clerks of the King's Bench, to the country's hurt.
arons and burgesses, and husbandmen also,
aw in that assembly, as ye shall hear hereafter.
akers, butchers, and brewers many,
ollen weavers, and weavers of linen,
lors, tanners, and fullers also,
sons, miners, and many other crafts,
chers and delvers, that do their work ill,
d drive forth the long day with "Dieu vous sauve, dame Emma." [1]
ooks and their boys cry "Hot pies, hot!
od geese and pigs, go dine, go dine!"
verners to them told the same tale
th good wine of Gascony and wine of Alsace,
Rhine and of Rochelle, the roast to digest.
this I saw sleeping, and seven times more.

## PASSUS V

The king and his knights to the church went
hear matins and mass, and to the meat after.
hen waked I from my winking, I was woful withal
hat I had not heavier slept and seen more.
e I a furlong had fared, a faintness me seized,
hat further might I not a-foot, for default of sleep.
sat softly adown, and said my creed,
nd so I babbled on my beads that it brought me asleep.
hen saw I much more than I before told,
or I saw the field full of folk that I before showed,
nd Conscience with a cross came to preach.
He prayed the people to have pity on themselves,
nd proved that these pestilences were for pure sin,
And this southwestern wind on a Saturday at even
Was clearly for pride, and for no cause else,
Peartrees and plumtrees were dashed to the ground,
In ensample to men that we should do the better.
Beeches and broad oaks were blown to the earth.
And turned the tail upward in token of dread
That deadly sin ere Doomsday should destroy them all.
On this matter I might mumble full long,
But I say as I saw, so help me God!
How Conscience with a cross commenced to preach.
He bade wasters go work at what they best could,
And win what they wasted with some sort of craft.
He prayed Peronelle her fur-trimming to leave,
And keep it in her coffer for capital at need.
Thomas he taught to take two staves,
And fetch home Felice from the cucking-stool.
He warned Wat his wife was to blame,
That her head-dress was worth a mark and his hood worth a groat.
He charged merchants to chasten their children,
Let them lack no respect, while they are young.
He prayed priests and prelates together,
What they preach to the people to prove it in themselves —
"And live as ye teach us, we will love you the better."
And then he advised the orders their rule to obey —
"Lest the king and his council abridge your supplies,
And be steward in your stead, till ye be better ordered.
And ye that seek St. James, and saints at Rome,
Seek me Saint Truth, for He can save you all;
*Qui cum patre et filio*, fare you well!"
Then ran Repentance and rehearsed this theme,
And made William to weep water with his eyes.
**Pride** Pernel Proud-heart flung herself on the ground,
And lay long ere she looked up, and to Our Lady cried,

[1] "God save you, dame Emma" — apparently a popular song.

And promised to Him who all of us made
She would unsew her smock, and wear instead a hair shirt
To tame her flesh with, that frail was to sin:
"Shall never light heart seize me, but I shall hold me down
And endure to be slandered as I never did before.
And now I can put on meekness, and mercy beseech
Of all of whom I have had envy in my heart."

**Lust** Lecher said "Alas!" and to Our Lady cried
To win for him mercy for his misdeeds,
Between God himself and his poor soul,
Provided that he should on Saturday, for seven years,
Drink but with the duck and dine but once.

**Envy** Envy, with heavy heart, asketh after shrift,
And greatly his guiltiness beginneth to show.
Pale as a pellet, in a palsy he seemed,
Clothed in a coarse cloth, I could him not describe;
A kirtle and a short cloak, a knife by his side;
Of a friar's frock were the fronts of his sleeves.
As a leek that had lain long in the sun
So looked he with lean cheeks; foully he frowned.
His body was swollen; for wrath he bit his lips.
Wrathfully he clenched his fist, he thought to avenge himself
With works or with words, when he saw his time.
"Venom, or varnish, or vinegar, I trow,
Boils in my belly, or grows there, I ween.
Many a day could I not do as a man ought,
Such wind in my belly welleth ere I dine.
I have a neighbor nigh me, I have annoyed him oft,
Blamed him behind his back, to bring him in disgrace,
Injured him by my power, punished him full oft,
Belied him to lords, to make him lose silver,
Turned his friends to foes, with my false tongue;
His grace and his good luck grieve me full sore.
Between him and his household I have made wrath;
Both his life and his limb were lost through my tongue.
When I met in the market him I most hate,
I hailed him as courteously as if I were his friend.
He is doughtier than I, I dare do him harm.
But had I mastery and might, I had mu dered him for ever!
When I come to the church, and kneel befo the rood,
And should pray for the people, as the pri teacheth us,
Then I cry upon my knees that Christ gi them sorrow
That have borne away my bowl and broad sheet.
From the altar I turn mine eye and hold
How Henry hath a new coat, and his wi another;
Then I wish it were mine, and all the w with it.
At his losing I laugh, in my heart I like it
But at his winning I weep, and bewail t occasion.
I deem that men do ill, yet I do mu worse,
For I would that every wight in this wor were my servant,
And whoso hath more than I, maketh m heart angry.
Thus I live loveless, like an ill-tempere dog,
That all my breast swelleth with the bitte ness of my gall;
No sugar is sweet enough to assuage it all,
Nor no remedy drive it from my heart;
If shrift then should sweep it out, a gre wonder it were."
"Yes, surely," quoth Repentance, and a vised him to good,
"Sorrow for their sins saveth full many."
"I am sorry," quoth Envy, "I am seldo other,
And that maketh me so mad, for I may n avenge me."

**Covetousness** Then came Covetousness, could not describe hi
So hungry and so hollow Sir Harvey looke
He was beetle-browed with two bleare eyes,
And like a leathern purse flapped his cheek
In a torn tabard of twelve winters' age;
Unless a louse could leap, I can not believe
That she could wander on that walk, it w so threadbare.
"I have been covetous," quoth this Caitif "I admit it here;
For some time I served Sim at 'The Oak'
And was his pledged apprentice, his prof to watch.

st I learned to lie, in a lesson or two,
d wickedly to weigh was my second lesson.
Winchester and to Weyhill I went to the fair
ith many kinds of merchandise, as my master bade;
t had not the grace of guile gone among my ware,
had been unsold these seven year, so help me God!
Then I betook me to the drapers, my grammar to learn,
draw the list[1] along, to make it seem longer.
nong these rich striped cloths learned I a lesson,
erced them with a pack-needle, and pleated them together,
t them in a press, and fastened them therein
ll ten yards or twelve were drawn out to thirteen.
And my wife at Westminster, that woollen cloth made,
ake to the spinners to spin it soft.
he pound that she weighed by, weighed a quarter more
nan my balance did, when I weighed true.
I bought her barley, she brewed it to sell;
enny-ale and white perry, she poured it together,
r laborers and low folk, that work for their living.
he best in the bed-chamber lay by the wall,
hoso tasted thereof bought it ever after,
gallon for a groat, God wot, no less
hen it came in cups. Such tricks I used.
ose the retailer is her right name;
e hath been a huckster these eleven winters.
But I swear now soothly that sin will I quit,
nd never wickedly weigh, nor false trade practise,
ut wend to Walsingham, and my wife also,
nd pray the Rood of Bromholm to bring me out of debt."

**luttony** Now beginneth the Glutton to go to the shrift,

nd wanders churchwards, his shrift to tell,
hen Bet the brewster bade him good morrow,
nd then she asked him whither he would go.
To holy church," quoth he, "to hear mass,
Since I shall be shriven, and sin no more."
"I have good ale, gossip," quoth she; "Glutton, what say you?"
"Hast aught in thy purse," quoth he, "any hot spices?"
"Yea, Glutton, gossip," quoth she, "God wot, full good;
I have pepper and peony-seeds, and a pound of garlick,
A farthing worth of fennel-seed, for these fasting days."
Then goeth Glutton in, and great oaths after;
Cis the shoemaker's wife sat on the bench,
Wat the ward of the warren, and his wife both,
Tomkin the tinker and twain of his servants;
Hick the hackney-man, and Hogg the needle seller,
Clarice of Cock's-Lane, and the clerk of the church,
Sir Piers of Prie-Dieu, and Pernel of Flanders,
Dawe the ditcher, and a dozen others.
A fiddler, a rat-catcher, a scavenger of Cheapside,
A rope-maker, a riding-boy, and Rose the dish-maker,
Godfrey of Garlickshire, and Griffin the Welshman,
And of tradesmen a band, early in the morning
Stand Glutton, with good-will, a treat in good ale.
Then Clement the cobbler cast off his cloak,
And at "the new fair" made offer to barter it;
And Hick the ostler flung his hood after,
And bade Bett the butcher act on his behalf.
Then were chapmen chosen, the articles to value;
Whoso had the hood should have something to boot.
They rose up rapidly, and whispered together,
And appraised the penny-worths, and parted them by themselves;
There were oaths a-plenty, whoso might hear them.
They could not, in conscience, accord together,
Till Robin the rope-maker was chosen to arise,
And named for an umpire, to avoid all debate,

[1] edge of the cloth, in measuring.

For he should appraise the pennyworths, as seemed good to him.
Then Hick the ostler had the cloak,
On condition that Clement should have his cup filled,
And have Hick the ostler's hood, and hold him well served;
And he that first repented should straight arise
And greet Sir Glutton with a gallon of ale.
There was laughing and cheating and "Let go the cup!"
Bargains and beverages began to arise,
And they sat so till evensong, and sang some while,
Till Glutton had gulped down a gallon and a gill.
. . . . . .
He had no strength to stand, till he his staff had;
Then 'gan he to go like a gleeman's bitch,
Sometimes to the side, sometimes to the rear,
Like a man laying lines to catch birds with.
When he drew to the door, then his eyes grew dim,
He stumbled at the threshold, and threw to the ground.
Clement the cobbler caught Glutton by the middle,
And to lift him up he laid him on his knees;
And Glutton was a great churl, and grim in the lifting,
And coughed up a caudle in Clement's lap,
That the hungriest hound in Hertfordshire
Durst not lap that loathsomeness, so unlovely it smacketh;
So that, with all the woe in the world, his wife and his wench
Bore him home to his bed, and brought him therein.
And after all this surfeit, a sickness he had,
That he slept Saturday and Sunday, till sun went to rest.
Then he waked from his winking, and wiped his eyes;
The first word that he spake was, "Where is the cup?"
His wife warned him then, of wickedness and sin.
Then was he ashamed, that wretch, and scratched his ears,
And 'gan to cry grievously, and great dole to make
For his wicked life, that he had lived.
"For hunger or for thirst, I make my vow,
Shall never fish on Friday digest in my maw,
Till Abstinence, my aunt, have given [me] leave;
And yet I have hated her all my life-time.
**Sloth** Sloth for sorrow fell down swooning,
Till *Vigilate*, the watcher, fetched water his eyes,
Let it flow on his face, and fast to him cried
And said, "Beware of despair, that will thee betray.
'I am sorry for my sins,' say to thyself,
And beat thyself on the breast, and pray God for grace,
For there is no guilt so great that His mercy is not more."
Then Sloth sat up and sighed sore,
And made a vow before God, for his foul sloth,
"There shall be no Sunday this seven year (save sickness it cause)
That I shall not bring myself ere day to the dear church,
And hear matins and mass, as I a monk were.
No ale after meat shall withhold me thence
Till I have heard evensong, I promise by the rood.
And[1] yet I shall yield again — if I have so much —
All that I wickedly won, since I had wit.
And though I lack a livelihood I will not stint
Till each man shall have his own, ere I hence wend:
And with the residue and the remnant, by the rood of Chester,
I shall seek Saint Truth, ere I see Rome!"
Robert the robber, on *Reddite*[2] he looked
And because there was not wherewith, he wept full sore.
But yet the sinful wretch said to himself:
"Christ, that upon Calvary on the cross died'st,
Though Dismas[3] my brother besought grace of thee,
And thou hadst mercy on that man for *mi memento*[4] sake,
Thy will be done upon me, as I have well deserved
To have hell for ever if no hope there were.
So rue on me, Robert, that no counsel have,
Nor ever ween to win by any craft that I know.

1 Ll. 236–259, dealing with the restitution of stole goods, appear in C in connection with Avarice. The a taching of them to Sloth in A and B seems to point t some confusion in the text. Note that in A the sin Wrath is omitted.

2 Make restitution, *Romans*, xiii, 7.

3 The name given to the penitent thief in the apo ryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus*.

4 Remember me, *Luke*, xxiii, 42.

ut, for thy much mercy, mitigation I beseech;
amn me not on Doomsday because I did so ill."
it what befell this felon, I cannot well show,
it well I know he wept hard, water with his eyes,
nd acknowledged his guilt to Christ again thereafter,
hat the pikestaff of Penitence he should polish anew,
And leap with it o'er the land, all his lifetime,
For he hath lain by *Latro*,[1] Lucifer's brother.
A thousand of men then throng together,
Weeping and wailing for their wicked deeds,
Crying up to Christ, and to His clean Mother
To give grace to seek Saint Truth, God grant they so might!

1 Latin for "thief."

## GEOFFREY CHAUCER (?1340–1400)

Chaucer was born in London about the year 1340. His father, a prosperous wine-merchant, had fluence enough to secure for his son an appointment as page in the household of a great noble, and er as valet of the king's household, a position ordinarily open only to young men of noble birth. haucer's whole life was spent in the service of his royal masters, Edward III and Richard II, under hom he held various offices of trust and responsibility, among others that of Comptroller of Customs for the Port of London. In 1359 he saw military service in France, where he was taken prisier by the French. In 1373, and again in 1378, he was sent on the king's business to Italy. There learned to read Italian, and became acquainted with the writings of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccio, by whom his own writing was profoundly influenced. In the latter part of his life he lived itside of London, at Greenwich on the road to Canterbury. In 1386 he was elected Member of arliament for the shire of Kent, a fact which suggests that he was a landowner in the county. He as married to a lady named Philippa, who seems also to have been connected with the court. haucer died in 1400, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

His principal writings are: the *Book of the Duchess*, an elegy on the death of Blanche, Duchess Lancaster, in the form of the dream-vision so popular in Old French poetry, written about 1369; ie *House of Fame*, also a dream-vision poem, but showing the influence of Chaucer's reading of alian literature; the *Parliament of Fowls; Troilus and Criseyde*, in many ways its author's greatest asterpiece, a poem of over 8000 lines, finished about 1385, which, modelled on Boccaccio's poem, *Filostrato*, tells the story of Troilus, son of King Priam of Troy, and his love for Criseyde, who in ie end plays him false; the *Legend of Good Women*, begun about 1386 but never finished, which ter a very lovely dream-vision prologue, gives the stories of various heroines of antiquity who ere faithful to their faithless lovers; the *Canterbury Tales*, begun about 1387 but never finished.

Chaucer is one of the greatest poets of our literature. If Shakespeare stands apart as our greatst, only Milton can dispute with Chaucer the honor of second place. *Troilus and Criseyde*, with s vivid dramatic power, its subtle analysis of character, and its poetic style at the same time gracous and noble, is the outstanding masterpiece of English narrative verse. The *Canterbury Tales* resent in varied pageantry the whole range of medieval life — its religious aspiration, its chivalric leals, its intellectual interests, its every-day realities. And despite the difference of external apearance, the life so brilliantly depicted in Chaucer's pages has much in common with our own. hen one gets accustomed to the unfamiliar forms of the language, one feels that Chaucer, like hakespeare, is not of an age but for all time.

His prevailing manner is that of high comedy. Everywhere about him he sees the contrast beween what men profess and what they practice, between what they hope for and what they get; ut he sees it not with the eyes of the reformer but of the kindly critic, ready to find good in the orst of us, disposed to laugh rather than weep at the perpetual irony of human life.

The standard edition of Chaucer is by W. W. Skeat in six volumes (Oxford Press). The best ngle-volume edition is Skeat's *Student's Chaucer* (Oxford Press); but the edition now in preparaon by F. N. Robinson (Houghton Mifflin) will probably displace it. Useful critical studies are *haucer and his Poetry* by G. L. Kittredge (Harvard University Press, 1915); and *The Poetry of haucer* by R. K. Root (Houghton Mifflin, revised ed. 1922).

The poems of Chaucer included in this volume are all in five-stress iambic verse, rhymed either couplets or in the seven-line stanza known as rhyme royal. Chaucer had an exacting ear for etre; but the music of his verse will be lost unless the reader learns to pronounce it with some pproach to Chaucer's pronunciation, which was in many respects different from our own. A full tatement of these differences is not possible in brief compass, and a correct pronunciation requires uch practice; but observance of the following rules will produce a pronunciation near enough to hat of Chaucer to preserve the effect of his metre and rhyme.

1. Long vowels are to be given their so-called Continental values, the values which they have in Latin, French, German, Spanish, or Italian: *a* as in *father; e* as in *café; i* (or *y*) as in *machine; o* as in *bone; u* as in French *du*. Short vowels are to be given the same sounds spoken more rapidly; but unaccented *e* has the sound of *a* in *China*.

2. Diphthongs: *ai* (or *ay*) as in *play*; *au* (or *aw*) like *ow* in *brow; ei* (or *ey*) as in *rein; oi* (or *oy*) as in *boy; ou* (or *ow*) as in *croup*.

3. There are no silent letters. Every letter is to be pronounced, except that final unaccented *e* is usually elided when the following word begins with a vowel (or with *h*). Doubling a vowel indicates that the vowel is long, but does not alter its value; *oo* never has the sound of modern English *moon*.

4. Consonants are in general pronounced as in modern English; but *gh* has the sound of German *ch*.

## THE CANTERBURY TALES

The *Canterbury Tales* is a collection of stories set in the framework of a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket at Canterbury. Lines 791–94 of the Prologue show that at one time Chaucer had intended that each of the thirty pilgrims should tell two stories on the road to Canterbury and two on the journey back to London. Connecting links were to bind the stories into a whole and to give the happenings along the way. But of this ambitious plan he completed only the fragments; and there is, in the connecting links which we have, clear indication that his final plan contemplated only a single tale from each pilgrim on each of the two journeys.

The Prologue introduces the pilgrims, met at the Tabard Inn at Southwark, just across London Bridge, ready to start the next morning. It is a masterly set of portraits; each pilgrim is typical of a class, and yet individualized as a real human being. There is the Prioress, with all the proprieties of the head-mistress of a school for young ladies, and the coarse but genial Wife of Bath; the rascally Pardoner and the ideal Parson of a parish. Both town and country life are represented. Together the company is representative of the whole social fabric of fourteenth-century England, from the Knight to the Plowman.

### THE PROLOGUE

*Here biginneth the Book of the Tales of Caunterbury*

Whan that Aprille with his shoures sote [1]
The droghte of Marche hath perced to the rote,
And bathed every veyne in swich [2] licour,
Of which vertu [3] engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne,[4]
And smale fowles maken melodye,
That slepen al the night with open yë,
(So priketh hem nature in hir corages): [5]
Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimages
(And palmers for to seken straunge strondes)
To ferne halwes,[6] couthe [7] in sondry londes;
And specially, from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wende,
The holy blisful martir [8] for to seke,
That hem hath holpen, whan that they were seke.

Bifel that, in that seson on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay
Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,
At night was come in-to that hostelrye
Wel nyne and twenty in a companye,
Of sondry folk, by aventure y-falle
In felawshipe, and pilgrims were they alle,
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde;
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
And wel we weren esed [1] atte beste.
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
So hadde I spoken with hem everichon,
That I was of hir felawshipe anon,
And made forward [2] erly for to ryse,
To take our wey, ther as I yow devyse.

But natheles, whyl I have tyme and space,
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thinketh it acordaunt to resoun,
To telle yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
And whiche they weren, and of what degree;
And eek in what array that they were inne:
And at a knight than wol I first biginne.

A KNIGHT ther was, and that a worthy man,
That fro the tyme that he first bigan

1 sweet. 2 such. 3 by virtue of which.
4 i.e. the time of year is mid-April.
5 dispositions. 6 distant saints.
7 famous. 8 St. Thomas à Becket.

1 accommodated. 2 agreement.

ryden out, he loved chivalrye,
louthe [1] and honour, fredom [2] and curteisye.
l worthy was he in his lordes werre,
d therto hadde he riden (no man ferre) [3]
wel in Cristendom as hethenesse,
d ever honoured for his worthinesse.
At Alisaundre he was, whan it was wonne;
l ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne [4]
boven alle naciouns in Pruce.[5]
Lettow [6] hadde he reysed [7] and in Ruce,
Cristen man so ofte of his degree.
Gernade [8] at the sege eek hadde he be
Algezir,[9] and riden in Belmarye.[10]
Lyeys [11] was he, and at Satalye,[12]
han they were wonne; and in the Grete See [13]
many a noble armee [14] hadde he be.
mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,
d foughten for our feith at Tramissene [15]
listes thryes, and ay slayn his fo.
his ilke [16] worthy knight had been also
mtyme with the lord of Palatye,[17]
geyn [18] another hethen in Turkye:
d evermore he hadde a sovereyn prys.[19]
d though that he were worthy, he was wys,
d of his port as meke as is a mayde.
e never yet no vileinye [20] ne sayde
al his lyf, un-to no maner wight.
e was a verray parfit gentil knight.
t for to tellen yow of his array,
is hors were gode, but he was nat gay.
fustian [21] he wered a gipoun [22]
bismotered with his habergeoun; [23]
or he was late y-come from his viage,
nd wente for to doon his pilgrimage.
With him ther was his sone, a yong SQUYER,
lovyere, and a lusty bacheler,[24]
ith lokkes crulle, as they were leyd in presse.[25]
f twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.
f his stature he was of evene [26] lengthe,
nd wonderly deliver,[27] and greet of strengthe.
nd he had been somtyme in chivachye,[28]
Flaundres, in Artoys, and Picardye,

1 loyalty. 2 generosity. 3 farther.
4 sat at the head of the table.
5 Prussia, i.e. East Prussia. 6 Lithuania.
7 made a campaign. 8 Grenada.
9 Algeciras, taken from the Moors in 1344.
0 A district in northern Africa.
1 A town in Armenia. 12 A town in Asia Minor.
3 Mediterranean. 14 expedition.
5 A district in northern Africa. 16 same.
7 A district in Asia Minor. 18 against.
9 high praise. 20 discourtesy.
1 coarse heavy cloth. 22 doublet.
3 stained by his coat of mail.
4 aspirant to knighthood.
5 curly as though artificially curled.
6 medium. 27 active. 28 military expeditions.

And born him wel, as of so litel space,
In hope to stonden in his lady grace.
Embrouded was he, as it were a mede
Al ful of fresshe floures, whyte and rede.
Singinge he was, or floytinge,[1] al the day;
He was as fresh as is the month of May.
Short was his goune, with sleves longe and wyde.
Wel coude he sitte on hors, and faire ryde.
He coude songes make and wel endyte,[2]
Juste and eek daunce, and wel purtreye and wryte.
So hote he lovede, that by nightertale [3]
He sleep namore than dooth a nightingale.
Curteys he was, lowly, and servisable,
And carf [4] biforn his fader at the table.
A YEMAN [5] hadde he, and servaunts namo
At that tyme, for him liste ryde so;
And he was clad in cote and hood of grene;
A sheef of pecok-arwes brighte and kene
Under his belt he bar ful thriftily;
(Wel coude he dresse his takel yemanly:
His arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe),
And in his hand he bar a mighty bowe.
A not-heed [6] hadde he, with a broun visage.
Of wode-craft wel coude [7] he al the usage.
Upon his arm he bar a gay bracer,[8]
And by his syde a swerd and a bokeler,
And on that other syde a gay daggere,
Harneised [9] wel, and sharp as point of spere;
A Cristofre [10] on his brest of silver shene.[11]
An horn he bar, the bawdrik was of grene;
A forster [12] was he, soothly, as I gesse.
Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE,
That of hir smyling was ful simple and coy [13]
Hir gretteste ooth was but by sëynt Loy;
And she was cleped madame Eglentyne.
Ful wel she song the service divyne,
Entuned in hir nose ful semely;
And Frensh she spak ful faire and fetisly,[14]
After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,[15]
For Frensh of Paris was to hir unknowe.
At mete wel y-taught was she with-alle;
She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
Ne wette hir fingres in hir sauce depe.
Wel coude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe,
That no drope ne fille up-on her brest.
In curteisye was set ful muche hir lest.[16]

1 whistling. 2 compose words and music.
3 night-time. 4 carved. 5 yeoman.
6 close-cropped head. 7 knew.
8 guard for the arm. 9 equipped.
10 image of St. Christopher, as protection against accidents.
11 bright. 12 forester. 13 coy. 14 elegantly.
15 A convent-school near London. 16 desire.

Hir over lippe wyped she so clene,
That in hir coppe was no ferthing [1] sene
Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte.
Ful semely after hir mete she raughte,[2]
And sikerly she was of greet disport,[3]
And ful plesaunt, and amiable of port,
And peyned hir to countrefete chere [4]
Of court, and been estatlich of manere,
And to ben holden digne [5] of reverence.
But, for to speken of hir conscience,
She was so charitable and so pitous,
She wolde wepe, if that she sawe a mous
Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.
Of smale houndes had she, that she fedde
With rosted flesh, or milk and wastel-breed.[6]
But sore weep she if oon of hem were deed,
Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte: [7]
And al was conscience and tendre herte.
Ful semely hir wimpel pinched [8] was;
Hir nose tretys; [9] hir eyen greye as glas;
Hir mouth ful smal, and ther-to softe and reed;
But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed;
It was almost a spanne brood, I trowe;
For, hardily,[10] she was nat undergrowe.
Ful fetis [11] was hir cloke, as I was war.
Of smal coral aboute hir arm she bar
A peire [12] of bedes, gauded al with grene; [13]
And ther-on heng a broche of gold ful shene,
On which ther was first write a crowned A,
And after, *Amor vincit omnia.*

Another NONNE with hir hadde she,
That was hir chapeleyne, and PREESTES THREE.

A MONK ther was, a fair for the maistrye,[14]
An out-rydere,[15] that lovede venerye [16];
A manly man, to been an abbot able.
Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable:
And, whan he rood, men mighte his brydel here
Ginglen in a whistling wind as clere,
And eek as loude as dooth the chapel-belle
Ther as this lord was keper of the celle.[17]

1 smallest trace. 2 reached.
3 And certainly she was full of pleasantry.
4 imitate the manners. 5 worthy.
6 cake-bread. 7 with a stick smartly.
8 pleated. 9 well formed.
10 certainly. 11 handsome. 12 string.
13 i.e. every eleventh bead was green. These larger green beads in her rosary marked Paternosters. The smaller coral beads marked Aves.
14 preëminently fine.
15 an inspector of the properties of his monastery.
16 hunting. 17 subordinate monastery.

The reule [1] of seint Maure or of seint Benei
By-cause that it was old and som-del strei
This ilke monk leet olde thinges pace,
And held after the newe world the space.
He yaf nat of that text a pulled [3] hen,
That seith, that hunters been nat holy me
Ne that a monk, whan he is cloisterlees,
Is lykned til a fish that is waterlees;
This is to seyn, a monk out of his cloistre.
But thilke text held he nat worth an oistre
And I seyde, his opinioun was good.
What sholde he studie, and make himselve wood,[4]
Upon a book in cloistre alway to poure,
Or swinken [5] with his handes, and laboure,
As Austin bit? [6] How shal the world b served?
Lat Austin have his swink to him reserved.
Therfore he was a pricasour [7] aright;
Grehoundes he hadde, as swifte as fowel i flight;
Of priking [8] and of hunting for the hare
Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare.
I seigh his sleves purfiled [9] at the hond
With grys,[10] and that the fyneste of a lond
And, for to festne his hood under his chin,
He hadde of gold y-wroght a curious pin:
A love-knotte in the gretter ende ther was.
His heed was balled,[11] that shoon as any glas
And eek his face, as he had been anoint.
He was a lord ful fat and in good point; [12]
His eyen stepe,[13] and rollinge in his heed,
That stemed as a forneys of a leed; [14]
His botes souple, his hors in greet estat.
Now certeinly he was a fair prelat;
He was nat pale as a for-pyned [15] goost.
A fat swan loved he best of any roost.
His palfrey was as broun as is a berye.

A FRERE ther was, a wantown and merye,
A limitour,[16] a ful solempne man.
In alle the ordres foure [17] is noon that can [18]
So muche of daliaunce and fair langage.
He hadde maad ful many a mariage
Of yonge wommen, at his owne cost.
Un-to his ordre he was a noble post.[19]
Ful wel biloved and famulier was he
With frankeleyns [20] over-al in his contree,
And eek with worthy wommen of the toun:
For he had power of confessioun,

1 The monastic regulations of the Benedictine order.
2 somewhat strict. 3 plucked. 4 crazy.
5 labor. 6 as St. Augustine bids.
7 man fond of riding. 8 riding. 9 trimmed.
10 fur. 11 bald. 12 physical condition.
13 bright. 14 shone like the fire under a cauldron.
15 tormented.
16 A friar licensed to beg in a limited district.
17 Dominican, Franciscan, Carmelite, Augustinian.
18 knows. 19 pillar. 20 well-to-do land-owners.

seyde him-self, more than a curat,
r of his ordre he was licentiat.
l swetely herde he confessioun,
d plesaunt was his absolucioun;
was an esy man to yeve penaunce
er as he wiste to han [1] a good pitaunce;
r unto a povre ordre for to yive
signe that a man is wel y-shrive.
r if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt,[2]
wiste that a man was repentaunt.
r many a man so hard is of his herte,
may nat wepe al-thogh him sore smerte.
erfore, in stede of weping and preyeres,
en moot [3] yeve silver to the povre freres.
s tipet was ay farsed [4] ful of knyves
d pinnes, for to yeven faire wyves.
d certeinly he hadde a mery note;
el coude he singe and pleyen on a rote.[5]
yeddinges [6] he bar utterly the prys.
s nekke whyt was as the flour-de-lys;
er-to he strong was as a champioun.
knew the tavernes wel in every toun,
d everich hostiler and tappestere
t than a lazar or a beggestere; [7]
r un-to swich a worthy man as he
orded nat, as by his facultee,[8]
have with seke lazars aqueyntaunce.
is nat honest, it may nat avaunce
r to delen with no swich poraille,[9]
t al with riche and sellers of vitaille.
d over-al, ther as [10] profit sholde aryse,
rteys he was, and lowly of servyse.
er nas no man no-wher so vertuous.[11]
was the beste beggere in his hous;
r thogh a widwe hadde noght a sho,[12]
plesaunt was his "*In principio*," [13]
t wolde he have a ferthing, er he wente.
is purchas was wel bettre than his rente.[14]
d rage [15] he coude, as it were right a whelpe.[16]
love-dayes [17] ther coude he muchel helpe.
r there he was nat lyk a cloisterer,[18]
ith a thredbar cope, as is a povre scoler,
t he was lyk a maister or a pope.
double worsted was his semi-cope,[19]
hat rounded as a belle out of the presse.[20]
mwhat he lipsed, for his wantownesse,

1 Where he knew he should have. 2 boast.
3 one should. 4 stuffed. 5 fiddle. 6 songs.
7 Better than he did any leper or beggar-woman.
8 It was not fitting to a man of his importance.
9 poor trash. 10 And everywhere where.
11 of such ability. 12 shoe.
13 The first words of St. John's gospel.
14 His occasional winnings amounted to more than his regular income.
15 romp. 16 young dog.
17 days for settling minor disputes.
18 recluse. 19 short cape. 20 clothes-press.

To make his English swete up-on his tonge;
And in his harping, whan that he had songe,
His eyen twinkled in his heed aright,
As doon the sterres in the frosty night.
This worthy limitour was cleped Huberd.

A MARCHANT was ther with a forked berd,
In mottelee,[1] and hye on horse he sat,
Up-on his heed a Flaundrish bever hat;
His botes clasped faire and fetisly.
His resons he spak ful solempnely,
Souninge [2] alway th'encrees of his winning.
He wolde the see were kept for any thing [3]
Bitwixe Middleburgh and Orewelle.[4]
Wel coude he in eschaunge sheeldes selle.[5]
This worthy man ful wel his wit bisette; [6]
Ther wiste no wight that he was in dette,
So estatly was he of his governaunce,
With his bargaynes, and with his chevisaunce.[7]
For sothe he was a worthy man with-alle,
But sooth to seyn, I noot how men him calle.

A CLERK ther was of Oxenford also,
That un-to logik hadde longe y-go.
As lene was his hors as is a rake,
And he nas nat right fat, I undertake;
But loked holwe, and ther-to soberly.
Ful thredbar was his overest courtepy; [8]
For he had geten him yet no benefyce,
Ne was so worldly for to have offyce.
For him was lever [9] have at his beddes heed
Twenty bokes, clad in blak or reed,
Of Aristotle and his philosophye,
Than robes riche, or fithele,[10] or gay sautrye.[11]
But al be that he was a philosophre,
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre; [12]
But al that he mighte of his freendes hente,[13]
On bokes and on lerninge he it spente,
And bisily gan for the soules preye
Of hem that yaf him wher-with to scoleye.[14]
Of studie took he most cure [15] and most hede.
Noght o word spak he more than was nede,
And that was seyd in forme and reverence,
And short and quik, and ful of hy sentence.[16]
Souninge in [17] moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.

1 cloth of a mixed color.
2 relating to. 3 guarded at all costs.
4 Ports in Holland and England.
5 sell currency at exchange. 6 employed.
7 financial dealings. 8 short overcoat.
9 he preferred. 10 fiddle.
11 psaltery (musical instrument).
12 His scientific knowledge (philosophy) did not include alchemy.
13 get. 14 go to school. 15 care.
16 lofty maxims. 17 tending towards.

A Sergeant of the Lawe, war and wys,
That often hadde been at the parvys,[1]
Ther was also, ful riche of excellence.
Discreet he was, and of greet reverence:
He semed swich, his wordes weren so wyse.
Justyce he was ful often in assyse,
By patente, and by pleyn commissioun;
For his science, and for his heigh renoun
Of fees and robes hadde he many oon.
So greet a purchasour[2] was no-wher noon.
Al was fee simple to him in effect,[3]
His purchasing mighte nat been infect.[4]
No-wher so bisy a man as he ther nas,
And yet he semed bisier than he was.
In termes hadde he caas and domes alle,[5]
That from the tyme of king William were falle.
Therto he coude endyte, and make a thing,[6]
Ther coude no wight pinche at his wryting;
And every statut coude he pleyn by rote.[7]
He rood but hoomly in a medlee cote
Girt with a ceint[8] of silk, with barres smale;
Of his array telle I no lenger tale.

A Frankeleyn[9] was in his companye;
Whyt was his berd, as is the dayesye.
Of his complexioun[10] he was sangwyn.
Wel loved he by the morwe a sop in wyn.[11]
To liven in delyt was ever his wone,[12]
For he was Epicurus owne sone,
That heeld opinioun, that pleyn delyt
Was verraily felicitee parfyt.
An housholdere, and that a greet, was he;
Seint Julian[13] he was in his contree.
His breed, his ale, was alwey after oon;[14]
A bettre envyned[15] man was no-wher noon.
With-oute bake mete[16] was never his hous,
Of fish and flesh, and that so plentevous,
It snewed[17] in his hous of mete and drinke,
Of alle deyntees that men coude thinke.
After the sondry sesons of the yeer,
So chaunged he his mete and his soper.
Ful many a fat partrich hadde he in mewe,[18]
And many a breem and many a luce in stewe.[19]

1 The porch of St. Paul's, where lawyers met for consultation.
2 conveyancer.
3 He could set aside any entail, and convey the property as though it were held in fee simple.
4 invalidated.
5 He could cite cases and decisions word for word.
6 compose and write out a legal document.
7 knew he fully by heart. 8 girdle.
9 rich land-owner. 10 temperament.
11 wine with bread or cake in it. 12 custom.
13 Patron saint of hospitality.
14 i.e. it never varied in quality.
15 provided with wine. 16 cooked food.
17 snowed. 18 a coop. 19 fish-pond.

Wo was his cook,[1] but-if his sauce were
Poynaunt and sharp, and redy al his gere.
His table dormant[2] in his halle alway
Stood redy covered al the longe day.
At sessiouns ther was he lord and sire;
Ful ofte tyme he was knight of the shire.[3]
An anlas[4] and a gipser[5] al of silk
Heng at his girdel, whyt as morne milk.
A shirreve hadde he been, and a countour;
Was no-wher such a worthy vavasour.[7]

An Haberdassher and a Carpenter,
A Webbe, a Dyere, and a Tapicer,[8]
Were with us eek, clothed in o liveree,[9]
Of a solempne and greet fraternitee.[10]
Ful fresh and newe hir gere apyked was;
Hir knyves were y-chaped[12] noght with bra
But al with silver, wroght ful clene and we
Hir girdles and hir pouches every-deel.
Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys,
To sitten in a yeldhalle on a deys.[13]
Everich, for the wisdom that he can,
Was shaply for to been an alderman.
For catel[14] hadde they y-nogh and rente,
And eek hir wyves wolde it wel assente;
And elles certein were they to blame.
It is ful fair to been y-clept "*ma dame*,"
And goon to vigilyës[15] al bifore,
And have a mantel royalliche y-bore.

A Cook they hadde with hem for the non
To boille the chiknes with the marybones,
And poudre-marchant tart,[16] and galingale.
Wel coude he knowe a draughte of Londo ale.
He coude roste, and sethe, and broille, a frye,
Maken mortreux,[18] and wel bake a pye.
But greet harm was it, as it thoughte me,
That on his shine a mormal[19] hadde he;
For blankmanger,[20] that made he with t beste.

A Shipman was ther, woning fer b weste:[21]
For aught I woot, he was of Dertemouthe.
He rood up-on a rouncy,[22] as he couthe,[23]
In a gowne of falding[24] to the knee.
A daggere hanging on a laas[25] hadde he
Aboute his nekke under his arm adoun.
The hote somer had maad his hewe al brou

1 It was a bad day for his cook.
2 permanent dining-table — not boards on trestles.
3 member of Parliament for the county.
4 dagger. 5 purse. 6 auditor.
7 A feudal tenant ranking immediately below a baro
8 upholsterer. 9 distinctive dress.
10 guild. 11 trimmed. 12 mounted.
13 in a guild-hall on a dais. 14 property.
15 eves of festival days. 16 tart flavoring-powder.
17 A variety of spice. 18 stews. 19 sore.
20 creamed chicken. 21 dwelling far in the we
22 an awkward nag. 23 as well as he knew ho
24 coarse cloth. 25 cord.

d, certeinly, he was a good felawe.
l many a draughte of wyn had he y-drawe
om Burdeux-ward, whyl that the chapman sleep.[1]
nyce conscience took he no keep.
that he faught, and hadde the hyer hond,
water he sente hem hoom to every land.[2]
t of his craft to rekene wel his tydes,
s stremes [3] and his daungers him bisydes,
s herberwe [4] and his mone, his lodemenage,[5]
er nas noon swich from Hulle to Cartage.[6]
rdy he was, and wys to undertake;
th many a tempest hadde his berd been shake.
knew wel alle the havenes, as they were,
om Gootlond [7] to the cape of Finistere,
d every cryke in Britayne and in Spayne;
s barge y-cleped was the Maudelayne.
With us ther was a DOCTOUR OF PHISYK,
al this world ne was ther noon him lyk
speke of phisik and of surgerye;
r he was grounded in astronomye.
kepte his pacient a ful greet del
houres, by his magik naturel.[8]
el coude he fortunen the ascendent
his images [9] for his pacient.
knew the cause of everich maladye,
ere it of hoot or cold, or moiste, or drye,[10]
d where engendred, and of what humour;
was a verrey parfit practisour.
he cause y-knowe, and of his harm the rote,
non he yaf the seke man his bote.[11]
l redy hadde he his apothecaries,
sende him drogges and his letuaries,[12]
r ech of hem made other for to winne;
r frendschipe nas nat newe to biginne.
el knew he th'olde Esculapius,
d Deiscorides, and eek Rufus,
d Ypocras, Haly, and Galien;
rapion, Razis, and Avicen;
errois, Damascien, and Constantyn;
ernard, and Gatesden, and Gilbertyn.[13]
his diete mesurable was he,
r it was of no superfluitee,
t of greet norissing and digestible.
s studie was but litel on the bible.

In sangwin and in pers [1] he clad was al,
Lyned with taffata and with sendal; [2]
And yet he was but esy of dispence; [3]
He kepte that he wan in pestilence.
For gold in phisik is a cordial,[4]
Therfore he lovede gold in special
A good WYF was ther of bisyde BATHE,
But she was som-del [5] deef, and that was scathe.[6]
Of clooth-making she hadde swiche an haunt,[7]
She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt.
In al the parisshe wyf ne was ther noon
That to th' offring bifore hir sholde goon;
And if ther dide, certeyn, so wrooth was she,
That she was out of alle charitee.
Hir coverchiefs ful fyne were of ground; [8]
I dorste swere they weyeden ten pound
That on a Sonday were upon hir heed.
Hir hosen weren of fyn scarlet reed,
Ful streite y-teyd, and shoos ful moiste and newe.
Bold was hir face, and fair, and reed of hewe.
She was a worthy womman al hir lyve.
Housbondes at chirche-dore [9] she hadde fyve,
Withouten [10] other companye in youthe;
But therof nedeth nat to speke as nouthe.[11]
And thryes hadde she been at Jerusalem;
She hadde passed many a straunge streem;
At Rome she hadde been, and at Boloigne,
In Galice at seint Jame,[12] and at Cologne.
She coude muche of wandring by the weye:
Gat-tothed [13] was she, soothly for to seye.
Up-on an amblere [14] esily she sat,
Y-wimpled [15] wel, and on hir heed an hat
As brood as is a bokeler or a targe;
A foot-mantel aboute hir hipes large,
And on hir feet a paire of spores sharpe.
In felawschip wel coude she laughe and carpe.[16]
Of remedyes of love she knew perchaunce,
For she coude of that art the olde daunce.[17]
A good man was ther of religioun,
And was a povre PERSOUN [18] of a toun;
But riche he was of holy thoght and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche;
His parisshens [19] devoutly wolde he teche.

1 He had stolen many a drink of the wine which he was nging from Bordeaux, while the supercargo was asleep.
2 made them walk the plank.
3 currents. 4 harborage.
5 steersmanship. 6 Carthaginia in Spain.
7 The island of Gottland in the Baltic.
8 He knew which hours were astrologically favorable giving medicine.
9 He devised magic images at a moment when astrically fortunate planets were rising.
10 The four primary elements which composed all tter.
11 remedy. 12 syrups.
13 The chief authorities on medieval medicine.

1 blood-red and light blue. 2 thin silk.
3 careful about spending. 4 heart-stimulant.
5 somewhat. 6 a pity. 7 skill.
8 of very fine texture.
9 Weddings were celebrated in the porch of the church.
10 Besides. 11 just now.
12 Compostella, a great pilgrim shrine in Spain.
13 With teeth set wide apart. 14 ambling nag.
15 provided with a pleated head-covering. 16 talk.
17 She knew all the tricks in the game of love.
18 parson. 19 parishioners.

Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversitee ful pacient;
And swich he was y-preved ofte sythes.[1]
Ful looth were him to cursen for his tythes,
But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,
Un-to his povre parisshens aboute
Of his offring, and eek of his substaunce.
He coude in litel thing han suffisaunce.
Wyd was his parisshe, and houses fer a-sonder,
But he ne lafte nat, for reyn ne thonder,
In siknes nor in meschief,[2] to visyte
The ferreste in his parisshe, muche and lyte,[3]
Up-on his feet, and in his hand a staf.
This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf,
That first he wroghte, and afterward he taughte;
Out of the gospel[4] he tho wordes caughte;
And this figure he added eek ther-to,
That if gold ruste, what shal iren do?
For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,
No wonder is a lewed[5] man to ruste;
And shame it is, if a preest take keep,[6]
A shiten shepherde and a clene sheep.
Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive,
By his clennesse, how that his sheep shold live.
He sette nat his benefice to hyre,
And leet his sheep encombred in the myre,
And ran to London, un-to sëynt Poules,
To seken him a chaunterie for soules,[7]
Or with a bretherhed to been withholde;[8]
But dwelte at hoom, and kepte wel his folde,
So that the wolf ne made it nat miscarie;
He was a shepherde and no mercenarie.
And though he holy were, and vertuous,
He was to sinful man nat despitous,
Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne,[9]
But in his teching discreet and benigne.
To drawen folk to heven by fairnesse
By good ensample, was his bisinesse:
But it were any persone obstinat,
What-so he were, of heigh or lowe estat,
Him wolde he snibben[10] sharply for the nones.
A bettre preest, I trowe that nowher noon is.
He wayted after no pompe and reverence,
Ne maked him a spyced conscience,[11]
But Cristes lore, and his apostles twelve,
He taughte, and first he folwed it himselve.

1 times. 2 misfortune.
3 of high estate and low. 4 St. Matthew, v, 19.
5 lay. 6 heed.
7 To seek the easy work of merely saying masses for the repose of departed souls.
8 to be chaplain for a guild.
9 overbearing nor haughty. 10 rebuke.
11 He did not exaggerate small peccadillos.

With him ther was a PLOWMAN, was his brother,
That hadde y-lad of dong ful many fother,[1]
A trewe swinker[2] and a good was he,
Livinge in pees and parfit charitee.
God loved he best with al his hole herte
At alle tymes, thogh him gamed or smerte,
And thanne his neighebour right as himselve.
He wolde thresshe, and ther-to dyke and delve,
For Cristes sake, for every povre wight,
Withouten hyre, if it lay in his might.
His tythes payed he ful faire and wel,
Bothe of his propre swink and his catel.[4]
In a tabard[5] he rood upon a mere.
Ther was also a Reve[6] and a Millere,
A Somnour[7] and a Pardoner[8] also,
A Maunciple,[9] and my-self; ther were nam
The MILLER was a stout carl, for t
nones,
Ful big he was of braun, and eek of bones
That proved wel,[10] for over-al ther he cam
At wrastling he wolde have alwey the ram
He was short-sholdred, brood, a thik
knarre,[12]
Ther nas no dore that he nolde heve
harre,[13]
Or breke it, at a renning, with his heed.
His berd as any sowe or fox was reed,
And ther-to brood, as though it were spade.
Up-on the cop[14] right of his nose he hade
A werte, and ther-on stood a tuft of heres,
Reed as the bristles of a sowes eres;
His nose-thirles[15] blake were and wyde.
A swerd and bokeler bar he by his syde;
His mouth as greet was as a greet forneys.
He was a janglere and a goliardeys,[16]
And that was most of sinne and harlotryes
Wel coude he stelen corn, and tollen thryes;
And yet he hadde a thombe of gold,[19] parde
A whyt cote and a blew hood wered he.
A baggepype wel coude he blowe a
sowne,
And ther-with-al he broghte us out of town

1 load. 2 worker.
3 though his lot was pleasant or unpleasant.
4 by giving both personal services and property.
5 a sleeveless jerkin.
6 steward of a landed estate.
7 An officer who summoned offenders to the ecclesiastical courts.
8 a hawker of papal indulgences.
9 steward of a college.
10 that was clearly proved.
11 i.e. the prize. 12 knotty muscled fellow.
13 hinge. 14 tip. 15 nostrils.
16 an idle talker and teller of coarse stories.
17 ribaldries. 18 take triple toll.
19 i.e. he was expert in judging the quality of flour.

A gentil MAUNCIPLE was ther of a temple,[1]
which achatours [2] mighte take exemple
to be wyse in bying of vitaille
whether that he payde, or took by taille,[3]
ate he wayted so in his achat,[4]
at he was ay biforn and in good stat.
w is nat that of God a ful fair grace,
at swich a lewed mannes wit shal pace
e wisdom of an heep of lerned men?
maistres hadde he mo than thryes ten,
at were of lawe expert and curious;
which ther were a doseyn in that hous
orthy to been stiwardes of rente and lond
any lord that is in Engelond,
make him live by his propre good,
honour dettelees, but he were wood,[5]
live as scarsly as him list desire;
d able for to helpen al a shire
any cas that mighte falle or happe;
d yit this maunciple sette hir aller cappe.[6]
The REVE was a sclendre colerik man,
s berd was shave as ny as ever he can.
s heer was by his eres round y-shorn.
s top was dokked lyk a preest biforn.[7]
l longe were his legges, and ful lene,
lyk a staf, ther was no calf y-sene.
el coude he kepe a gerner and a binne;
er was noon auditour coude on him winne.[8]
el wiste he, by the droghte, and by the reyn,
e yelding of his seed, and of his greyn.
s lordes sheep, his neet,[9] his dayerye,
s swyn, his hors, his stoor,[10] and his pultrye,
as hoolly in this reves governing,
d by his covenaunt yaf the rekening,
n that his lord was twenty yeer of age;
er coude no man bringe him in arrerage.[11]
er nas baillif, ne herde,[12] ne other hyne,[13]
hat he ne knew his sleighte and his covyne;[14]
ey were adrad of him, as of the deeth.
s woning [15] was ful fair up-on an heeth,
ith grene treës shadwed was his place.
e coude bettre than his lord purchace.
l riche he was astored prively,
is lord wel coude he plesen subtilly,
o yeve and lene him of his owne good,
d have a thank, and yet a cote and hood.

In youthe he lerned hadde a good mister;[1]
He was a wel good wrighte, a carpenter.
This reve sat up-on a ful good stot,[2]
That was al pomely [3] grey, and highte Scot.
A long surcote of pers up-on he hade,
And by his syde he bar a rusty blade.
Of Northfolk was this reve, of which I telle,
Bisyde a toun men clepen Baldeswelle.
Tukked he was, as is a frere, aboute,
And ever he rood the hindreste of our route.
A SOMNOUR was ther with us in that place,
That hadde a fyr-reed cherubinnes face,
For sawcefleem [4] he was, with eyen narwe.[5]
As hoot he was, and lecherous, as a sparwe;
With scalled [6] browes blake, and piled [7] berd;
Of his visage children were aferd.
Ther nas quik-silver, litarge, ne brimstoon,
Boras, ceruce, ne oille of tartre noon,
Ne oynement that wolde clense and byte,
That him mighte helpen of his whelkes [8] whyte,
Nor of the knobbes sittinge on his chekes.
Wel loved he garleek, oynons, and eek lekes,
And for to drinken strong wyn, reed as blood.
Than wolde he speke, and crye as he were wood.[9]
And whan that he wel dronken hadde the wyn,
Than wolde he speke no word but Latyn.
A fewe termes hadde he, two or three,
That he had lerned out of som decree;
No wonder is, he herde it al the day;
And eek ye knowen wel, how that a jay
Can clepen "Watte," [10] as well as can the pope.
But who-so coude in other thing him grope,[11]
Thanne hadde he spent al his philosophye;
Ay "*Questio quid iuris*" wolde he crye.
He was a gentil harlot [12] and a kinde;
A bettre felawe sholde men noght finde.
He wolde suffre, for a quart of wyn,
A good felawe to have his concubyn
A twelf-month, and excuse him atte fulle:
Ful prively a finch eek coude he pulle.[13]
And if he fond o-wher a good felawe,
He wolde techen him to have non awe,
In swich cas, of the erchedeknes [14] curs,
But-if a mannes soule were in his purs;
For in his purs he sholde y-punisshed be.
"Purs is the erchedeknes helle," seyde he.

1 One of the inns of court, a college of lawyers.
2 buyers. 3 on account.
4 He always looked out so well for his purchase.
5 unless he were crazy. 6 made fools of them all.
7 His hair was cut short in front like a priest's.
8 get the better of him. 9 cattle. 10 stock.
11 catch him in arrears 12 herdsman.
13 hired laborer. 14 deceitfulness. 15 dwelling.

1 trade. 2 horse. 3 dappled.
4 pimpled. 5 set close together. 6 scabby.
7 thin and uneven. 8 pimples. 9 crazy.
10 Wat, short for Walter, was a common name for jays, as Polly for modern parrots.
11 examine. 12 rogue. 13 fleece a gull.
14 The archdeacon presided over the bishop's court.

But wel I woot he lyed right in dede;
Of cursing[1] oghte ech gilty man him drede —
For curs wol slee, right as assoilling[2] saveth —
And also war him of a *significavit*.[3]
In daunger[4] hadde he at his owne gyse
The yonge girles[5] of the diocyse,
And knew hir counseil, and was al hir reed.
A gerland hadde he set up-on his heed,
As greet as it were for an ale-stake;[6]
A bokeler hadde he maad him of a cake.
With him ther rood a gentil PARDONER
Of Rouncival,[7] his freend and his compeer,
That streight was comen fro the court of Rome.
Ful loude he song, "Com hider, love, to me."
This somnour bar to him a stif burdoun,[8]
Was never trompe of half so greet a soun.
This pardoner hadde heer as yelow as wex,
But smothe it heng, as dooth a strike of flex;
By ounces[9] henge his lokkes that he hadde,
And ther-with he his shuldres overspradde;
But thinne it lay, by colpons[10] oon and oon;
But hood, for jolitee, ne wered he noon,
For it was trussed up in his walet.
Him thoughte, he rood al of the newe jet;[11]
Dischevele, save his cappe, he rood al bare.
Swiche glaringe eyen hadde he as an hare.
A vernicle[12] hadde he sowed on his cappe.
His walet lay biforn him in his lappe,
Bret-ful[13] of pardoun come from Rome al hoot.
A voys he hadde as smal as hath a goot.
No berd hadde he, ne never sholde have,
As smothe it was as it were late y-shave;
I trowe he were a gelding or a mare.
But of his craft, fro Berwik into Ware,
Ne was ther swich another pardoner.
For in his male[14] he hadde a pilwe-beer,[15]
Which that, he seyde, was our lady[16] veyl:
He seyde, he hadde a gobet of the seyl
That sëynt Peter hadde, whan that he wente
Up-on the see, til Jesu Crist him hente.
He hadde a croys of latoun,[17] ful of stones,
And in a glas he hadde pigges bones.

1 ecclesiastical condemnation. 2 absolution.
3 A writ of excommunication.
4 under his power. 5 young people of both sexes.
6 sign of an ale-house. 7 A hospital in London.
8 bass accompaniment. 9 small portions.
10 shreds. 11 the latest fashion.
12 A copy of the handkerchief of St. Veronica, on which was miraculously imprinted the face of Christ.
13 brim-full. 14 bag. 15 pillowslip.
16 i.e. the blessed Virgin's
17 latten. a composition metal similar to brass.

But with thise relikes, whan that he fond
A povre person[1] dwelling up-on lond,
Up-on a day he gat him more moneye
Than that the person gat in monthe tweye.
And thus, with feyned flaterye and japes,[2]
He made the person and the peple his apes.
But trewely to tellen, atte laste,
He was in chirche a noble ecclesiaste.
Wel coude he rede a lessoun or a storie,
But alderbest[3] he song an offertorie;
For wel he wiste, whan that song was songe,
He moste preche, and wel affyle[4] his tonge
To winne silver, as he ful wel coude;
Therefore he song so meriely and loude.
Now have I told you shortly, in a clause,
Th'estat, th'array, the nombre, and eek the cause
Why that assembled was this companye
In Southwerk, at this gentil hostelrye,
That highte the Tabard, faste by the Belle.
But now is tyme to yow for to telle
How that we baren us that ilke night,
Whan we were in that hostelrye alight.
And after wol I telle of our viage,
And al the remenaunt of our pilgrimage.
But first I pray yow, of your curteisye,
That ye n'arette it nat my vileinye,[5]
Thogh that I pleynly speke in this matere,
To telle yow hir wordes and hir chere;
Ne thogh I speke hir wordes properly.
For this ye knowen al-so wel as I,
Who-so shal telle a tale after a man,
He moot reherce, as ny as ever he can,
Everich a word, if it be in his charge,
Al speke he never so rudeliche and large;[6]
Or elles he moot telle his tale untrewe
Or feyne thing, or finde wordes newe.
He may nat spare, al-thogh he were his brother;
He moot as wel seye o word as another.
Crist spak him-self ful brode in holy writ,
And wel ye woot, no vileinye is it.
Eek Plato seith, who-so that can him rede,
The wordes mote be cosin to the dede.
Also I prey yow to foryeve it me,
Al have I nat set folk in hir degree[7]
Here in this tale, as that they sholde stonde;
My wit is short, ye may wel understonde.
Greet chere made our hoste us everichon,
And to the soper sette us anon;

1 parson. 2 tricks. 3 best of all. 4 polish
5 That you do not attribute it to lack of good manners on my part.
6 broadly. 7 in order of social rank.

d served us with vitaille at the beste.
ong was the wyn, and wel to drinke us
leste.[1]
emely man our hoste was with-alle
r to han been a marshal in an halle;
arge man he was with eyen stepe,[2]
airer burgeys is ther noon in Chepe:[3]
ld of his speche, and wys, and wel
y-taught,
d of manhod him lakkede right naught.
k therto he was right a mery man,
d after soper pleyen he bigan,
d spak of mirthe amonges othere thinges,
nan that we hadde maad our reken-
inges;
d seyde thus: "Now, lordinges, trewely,
been to me right welcome hertely:
r by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,
ie saugh this yeer so mery a companye
ones in this herberwe[4] as is now.
yn wolde I doon yow mirthe, wiste I how.
d of a mirthe I am right now bithoght,
doon yow ese, and it shal coste noght.
Ye goon to Caunterbury; God yow spede,
e blisful martir quyte yow your mede.[5]
d wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,
shapen yow to talen[6] and to pleye;
r trewely, confort ne mirthe is noon
ryde by the weye doumb as a stoon;
d therfore wol I maken yow disport,
I seyde erst,[7] and doon yow som confort.
d if yow lyketh alle, by oon assent,
ow for to stonden at my jugement,
d for to werken as I shal yow seye,
-morwe, whan ye ryden by the weye,
ow, by my fader soule, that is deed,
it ye be merye, I wol yeve yow myn heed.
ld up your hond, withouten more speche."
Our counseil was nat longe for to seche;[8]
thoughte it was noght worth to make it
wys,[9]
nd graunted him withouten more avys,
d bad him seye his verdit, as him leste.
"Lordinges," quod he, "now herkneth
for the beste;
it tak it not, I prey yow, in desdeyn;
is is the poynt, to speken short and
pleyn,
at ech of yow, to shorte with your weye,
this viage, shal telle tales tweye,
Caunterbury-ward, I mene it so,
d hom-ward he shal tellen othere two,
aventures that whylom han bifalle.
nd which of yow that bereth him best of alle,

1 we were disposed. 2 bright.
3 Cheapside, London. 4 inn.
5 give you your reward. 6 tell stories.
7 before. 8 It did not take us long to agree.
9 to be particular about.

That is to seyn, that telleth in this cas
Tales of best sentence and most solas,[1]
Shal have a soper at our aller cost[2]
Here in this place, sitting by this post,
Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury.
And for to make yow the more mery,
I wol my-selven gladly with yow ryde,
Right at myn owne cost, and be your gyde.
And who-so wol my jugement withseye[3]
Shal paye all that we spenden by the weye.
And if ye vouche-sauf that it be so,
Tel me anon, with-outen wordes mo,[4]
And I wol erly shape me[5] therfore."
This thing was graunted, and our othes
swore
With ful glad herte, and preyden him also
That he wold vouche-sauf for to do so,
And that he wolde been our governour,
And of our tales juge and reportour
And sette a soper at a certeyn prys;
And we wold reuled been at his devys,
In heigh and lowe;[6] and thus, by oon assent,
We been acorded to his jugement.
And ther-up-on the wyn was fet[7] anon;
We dronken, and to reste wente echon,
With-outen any lenger taryinge.
A-morwe, whan that day bigan to springe,
Up roos our host, and was our aller cok,[8]
And gadrede us togidre, alle in a flok,
And forth we riden, a litel more than pas,[9]
Un-to the watering of seint Thomas.[10]
And there our host bigan his hors areste,
And seyde; "Lordinges, herkneth, if yow
leste.
Ye woot your forward,[11] and I it yow
recorde.
If even-song and morwe-song acorde,[12]
Lat see now who shal telle the firste tale.
As ever mote I drinke wyn or ale,
Who-so be rebel to my jugement
Shal paye for al that by the weye is spent.
Now draweth cut, er that we ferrer
twinne;[13]
He which that hath the shortest shal biginne.
Sire knight," quod he, "my maister and my
lord,
Now draweth cut, for that is myn acord.
Cometh neer," quod he, "my lady prioresse;
And ye, sir clerk, lat be your shamfast-
nesse,

1 most instructive and entertaining.
2 at the cost of us all. 3 dispute.
4 more. 5 make my arrangements.
6 i.e. in everything. 7 fetched in.
8 the cock who waked us all.
9 faster than a walk.
10 A place two miles from Southwark.
11 agreement.
12 If you sing the same tune now that you did last evening.
13 Now draw lots before we get any further from town.

Ne studieth noght; ley hond to, every man."
Anon to drawen every wight bigan,
And shortly for to tellen, as it was,
Were it by aventure, or sort, or cas,[1]
The sothe is this, the cut fil to the knight,
Of which ful blythe and glad was every wight;
And telle he moste his tale, as was resoun,
By forward and by composicioun,[2]
As ye han hard; what nedeth wordes mo?
And whan this gode man saugh it was so,
As he that wys was and obedient
To kepe his forward by his free assent,
He seyde: "Sin I shal beginne the game,
What, welcome be the cut, a Goddes name!
Now lat us ryde, and herkneth what I seye."
And with that word we riden forth our weye;
And he bigan with right a mery chere
His tale anon, and seyde in this manere.

*Here endeth the prolog of this book*

## THE NUN'S PRIEST'S TALE

This tale of the Cock and the Fox is a beast-fable, from the great medieval cycle of *Reynard the Fox*, told to impress the moral: "Beware of flatterers." In Chaucer's hands it has become much more than this — a mock-heroic epic, elaborated with the most delicious wit and humor. Chauntecleer is a royal prince, whose predestined fate is foretold by a warning dream, the significance of which he pedantically expounds with full medieval dialectic for the benefit of his favorite wife. But the scene is laid at the humble dwelling of a poor peasant woman, who owns this princely bird; and Chaucer never lets the reader forget that his hero is after all only a very "cocky" cock.

*Here biginneth the Nonne Preestes Tale of the Cok and Hen, Chauntecleer and Pertelote.*

A povre widwe, somdel stape[3] in age,
Was whylom dwelling in a narwe cotage,
Bisyde a grove, stonding in a dale.
This widwe, of which I telle yow my tale,
Sin thilke day that she was last a wyf,
In pacience ladde a ful simple lyf,
For litel was hir catel[4] and hir rente;
By housbondrye,[5] of such as God hir sente,
She fond[6] hir-self, and eek hir doghtren two.
Three large sowes hadde she, and namo,
Three kyn, and eek a sheep that highte Malle,
Ful sooty was hir bour, and eek hir halle,
In which she eet ful many a sclendre meel.
Of poynaunt sauce hir neded never a deel.
No deyntee morsel passed thurgh hir throte;
Hir dyete was accordant to hir cote.
Repleccioun ne made hir never syk;
Attempree[1] dyete was al hir phisyk,
And exercyse, and hertes suffisaunce.
The goute lette hir no-thing[2] for to daunce,
N'apoplexye shente[3] nat hir heed;
No wyn ne drank she, neither whyt ne reed.
Hir bord was served most with whyt and blak,
Milk and broun breed, in which she fond no lak,
Seynd[4] bacoun, and somtyme an ey[5] or tweye,
For she was as it were a maner deye.[6]
A yerd she hadde, enclosed al aboute
With stikkes, and a drye dich with-oute,
In which she hadde a cok, hight Chauntecleer,
In al the land of crowing nas his peer.
His vois was merier than the mery orgon
On messe-dayes that in the chirche gon;
Wel sikerer[7] was his crowing in his logge,
Than is a clokke, or an abbey orlogge.[8]
By nature knew he ech ascencioun
Of equinoxial in thilke toun;
For whan degrees fiftene were ascended,[9]
Thanne crew he, that it mighte nat ben amended.
His comb was redder than the fyn coral,
And batailed, as it were a castel-wal.
His bile was blak, and as the jeet it shoon;
Lyk asur were his legges, and his toon;
His nayles whytter than the lilie flour,
And lyk the burned gold was his colour.
This gentil cok hadde in his governaunce
Sevene hennes, for to doon al his plesaunce,
Whiche were his sustres and his paramours,
And wonder lyk to him, as of colours.
Of whiche the faireste hewed on hir throte
Was cleped faire damoysele Pertelote.
Curteys she was, discreet, and debonaire,
And compaignable, and bar hir-self so faire,
Sin thilke day that she was seven night old,
That trewely she hath the herte in hold
Of Chauntecleer loken in every lith;[10]
He loved hir so, that wel was him therwith.
But such a joye was it to here hem singe,
Whan that the brighte sonne gan to springe,
In swete accord, "my lief is faren in londe."
For thilke tyme, as I have understonde,

1 by hap, or fate, or chance.
2 agreement and contract.
3 advanced.
4 property.
5 economy.
6 provided for.

1 temperate.
2 did not hinder her at all.
3 injured.
4 broiled.
5 egg.
6 dairywoman.
7 more reliable.
8 time-piece.
9 i.e. every hour.
10 limb.

estes and briddes coude speke and singe.
And so bifel, that in a daweninge,
s Chauntecleer among his wyves alle
t on his perche, that was in the halle,
nd next him sat this faire Pertelote,
his Chauntecleer gan gronen in his throte,
s man that in his dreem is drecched[1] sore.
nd whan that Pertelote thus herde him rore,
he was agast, and seyde, "O herte dere,
hat eyleth yow, to grone in this manere?
e been a verray sleper, fy for shame!"
nd he answerde and seyde thus, "madame,
pray yow, that ye take it nat a-grief:
y god, me mette[2] I was in swich meschief
ight now, that yet myn herte is sore afright.
low god," quod he, "my swevene recche[3] aright,
nd keep my body out of foul prisoun!
e mette, how that I romed up and doun
Vithinne our yerde, wher-as I saugh a beste,
as lyk an hound, and wolde han maad areste
pon my body, and wolde han had me deed.
is colour was bitwixe yelwe and reed;
nd tipped was his tail, and bothe his eres,
Vith blak, unlyk the remenant of his heres;
is snowte smal, with glowinge eyen tweye.
et of his look for fere almost I deye;
his caused me my groning, doutelees."
"Avoy!" quod she, "fy on yow, hertelees!
llas!" quod she, "for, by that god above,
ow han ye lost myn herte and al my love;
can nat love a coward, by my feith.
or certes, what so any womman seith,
e alle desyren, if it mighte be,
o han housbondes hardy, wyse, and free,[4]
nd secree, and no nigard, ne no fool,
e him that is agast of every tool,[5]
e noon avauntour,[6] by that god above!
ow dorste ye seyn for shame unto your love,
hat any thing mighte make yow aferd?
ave ye no mannes herte, and han a berd?
llas! and conne ye been agast of swevenis?
o-thing, god wot, but vanitee,[7] in sweven is.
wevenes engendren of replecciouns,[8]
nd ofte of fume,[9] and of complecciouns,[10]
Vhan humours been to habundant in a wight.
ertes this dreem, which ye han met to-night,

1 troubled. 2 I dreamed. 3 interpret my dream.
4 generous. 5 weapon. 6 boaster.
7 emptiness. 8 Dreams come from over-eating.
9 gas on the stomach.
10 mixtures of the humors which compose the body.

Cometh of the grete superfluitee
Of youre rede colera,[1] pardee,
Which causeth folk to dreden in here dremes
Of arwes, and of fyr with rede lemes,[2]
Of grete bestes, that they wol hem byte,
Of contek,[3] and of whelpes grete and lyte;
Right as the humour of malencolye[4]
Causeth ful many a man, in sleep, to crye,
For fere of blake beres, or boles blake,
Or elles, blake develes wole hem take.
Of othere humours coude I telle also,
That werken many a man in sleep ful wo;
But I wol passe as lightly as I can.
Lo Catoun, which that was so wys a man,
Seyde he nat thus, ne do no fors[5] of dremes?
Now, sire," quod she, "whan we flee fro the bemes,
For Goddes love, as tak som laxatyf;
Up peril of my soule, and of my lyf,
I counseille yow the beste, I wol nat lye,
That bothe of colere and of malencolye
Ye purge yow; and for ye shul nat tarie,
Though in this toun is noon apotecarie,
I shal my-self to herbes techen yow,
That shul ben for your hele, and for your prow;[6]
And in our yerd tho herbes shal I finde,
The whiche han of hir propretee, by kinde,[7]
To purgen yow binethe, and eek above.
Forget not this, for goddes owene love!
Ye been ful colerik of compleccioun.
Ware the sonne in his ascencioun
Ne fynde yow nat repleet of humours hote;
And if it do, I dar wel leye a grote,
That ye shul have a fevere terciane,
Or an agu, that may be youre bane.
A day or two ye shul have digestyves
Of wormes, er ye take your laxatyves,
Of lauriol,[8] centaure,[9] and fumetere,[10]
Or elles of ellebor, that groweth there,
Of catapuce,[11] or of gaytres beryis,[12]
Of erbe yve,[13] growing in our yerd, that mery is;
Pekke hem up right as they growe, and ete hem in.
Be mery, housbond, for your fader kin!
Dredeth no dreem; I can say yow namore."
"Madame," quod he, "*graunt mercy*[14] of your lore.
But nathelees, as touching daun Catoun,
That hath of wisdom such a greet renoun,
Though that he bad no dremes for to drede,
By god, men may in olde bokes rede

1 red bile, one of the four humors. 2 flames.
3 strife. 4 black bile. 5 pay no attention to.
6 advantage. 7 nature. 8 spurge-laurel.
9 centaury. 10 fumitory. 11 caper-spurge.
12 dogwood. 13 ground ivy. 14 many thanks.

Of many a man, more of auctoritee
Than ever Catoun was, so mote I thee,[1]
That al the revers seyn of his sentence,
And han wel founden by experience,
That dremes ben significaciouns,
As wel of joye as tribulaciouns
That folk enduren in this lyf present.
Ther nedeth make of this noon argument;
The verray preve sheweth it in dede.
Oon of the gretteste auctours that men rede[2]
Seith thus, that whylom two felawes wente
On pilgrimage, in a ful good entente;
And happed so, thay come into a toun,
Wher-as ther was swich congregacioun
Of peple, and eek so streit of herbergage[3]
That they ne founde as muche as o cotage
In which they bothe mighte y-logged be.
Wherfor thay mosten, of necessitee,
As for that night, departen compaignye;
And ech of hem goth to his hostelrye,
And took his logging as it wolde falle.
That oon of hem was logged in a stalle,
Fer in a yerd, with oxen of the plough;
That other man was logged wel y-nough,
As was his aventure, or his fortune,
That us governeth alle as in commune.
And so bifel, that, longe er it were day,
This man mette[4] in his bed, ther-as he lay,
How that his felawe gan up-on him calle,
And seyde, 'allas! for in an oxes stalle
This night I shal be mordred ther I lye.
Now help me, dere brother, er I dye;
In alle haste com to me,' he sayde.
This man out of his sleep for fere abrayde;[5]
But whan that he was wakned of his sleep,
He turned him, and took of this no keep;[6]
Him thoughte his dreem nas but a vanitee.
Thus twyës in his sleping dremed he.
And atte thridde tyme yet his felawe
Cam, as him thoughte, and seide, 'I am now slawe;
Bihold my blody woundes, depe and wyde!
Arys up erly in the morwe-tyde,
And at the west gate of the toun,' quod he,
'A carte ful of dong ther shaltow see,
In which my body is hid ful prively;
Do thilke carte aresten boldely.
My gold caused my mordre, sooth to sayn;'
And tolde him every poynt how he was slayn,
With a ful pitous face, pale of hewe.
And truste wel, his dreem he fond ful trewe;
For on the morwe, as sone as it was day,
To his felawes in he took the way;
And whan that he cam to this oxes stalle,
After his felawe he bigan to calle.
The hostiler answered him anon,
And seyde, 'sire, your felawe is agon,
As sone as day he wente out of the toun.'
This man gan fallen in suspecioun,
Remembring on his dremes that he mette,
And forth he goth, no lenger wolde he lette,
Unto the west gate of the toun, and fond
A dong-carte, as it were to donge lond,
That was arrayed in the same wyse
As ye han herd the dede man devyse;
And with an hardy herte he gan to crye
Vengeaunce and justice of this felonye: —
'My felawe mordred is this same night,
And in this carte he lyth gapinge upright.
I crye out on the ministres,' quod he,
'That sholden kepe and reulen this citee;
Harrow! allas! her lyth my felawe slayn!'
What sholde I more un-to this tale sayn?
The peple out-sterte, and caste the cart grounde,
And in the middel of the dong they founde
The dede man, that mordred was al newe.
O blisful god, that art so just and trewe!
Lo, how that thou biwreyest[2] mordre alway!
Mordre wol out, that see we day by day.
Mordre is so wlatsom[3] and abhominable
To god, that is so just and resonable,
That he ne wol nat suffre it heled[4] be;
Though it abyde a yeer, or two, or three,
Mordre wol out, this my conclusioun.
And right anoon, ministres of that toun
Han hent the carter, and so sore him pyned,
And eek the hostiler so sore engyned,[6]
That thay biknewe[7] hir wikkednesse anoon,
And were an-hanged by the nekke-boon.
Here may men seen that dremes been drede.
And certes, in the same book I rede,
Right in the nexte chapitre after this,
(I gabbe[8] nat, so have I joye or blis,)
Two men that wolde han passed over see,
For certeyn cause, in-to a fer contree,
If that the wind ne hadde been contrarie,
That made hem in a citee for to tarie,
That stood ful mery upon an haven-syde.
But on a day, agayn the even-tyde,
The wind gan chaunge, and blew right as hem leste.
Jolif and glad they wente un-to hir reste,
And casten hem ful erly for to saille;
But to that oo man fil a greet mervaille.
That oon of hem, in sleping as he lay,
Him mette a wonder dreem, agayn the day

1 prosper. 2 Cicero.
3 so limited in its lodging places. 4 dreamed.
5 started up in fright. 6 paid no attention to it.

1 delay. 2 revealest. 3 disgusting.
4 concealed. 5 tortured. 6 racked.
7 confessed. 8 speak idly.

m thoughte a man stood by his beddes syde,
d him comaunded, that he sholde abyde,
d seyde him thus, 'if thou to-morwe wende,
hou shalt be dreynt;[1] my tale is at an ende.'
wook, and tolde his felawe what he mette,
d preyde him his viage for to lette;[2]
for that day, he preyde him to abyde.
s felawe, that lay by his beddes syde,
n for to laughe, and scorned him ful faste.
o dreem,' quod he, 'may so myn herte agaste,
at I wol lette for to do my thinges.
ette not a straw by thy dreminges,
r swevenes been but vanitees and japes.[3]
en dreme al-day of owles or of apes,
d eke of many a mase[4] therwithal;
en dreme of thing that never was ne shal.
t sith I see that thou wolt heer abyde,
d thus for-sleuthen[5] wilfully thy tyde,
d wot it reweth me;[6] and have good day.'
d thus he took his leve, and wente his way.
t er that he hadde halfe his cours y-seyled,
ot I nat why, ne what mischaunce it eyled,
t casuelly the shippes botme rente,
d ship and man under the water wente
sighte of othere shippes it byside,
at with hem seyled at the same tyde.
d therfor, faire Pertelote so dere,
swiche ensamples olde maistow lere,
at no man sholde been to recchelees
dremes, for I sey thee, doutelees,
at many a dreem ful sore is for to drede.
Lo, in the lyf of seint Kenelm, I rede,
at was Kenulphus sone, the noble king
Mercenrike,[7] how Kenelm mette a thing;
lyte er he was mordred, on a day,
s mordre in his avisioun he say.
s norice him expouned every del
is sweven, and bad him for to kepe him wel
r traisoun; but he nas but seven yeer old,
d therfore litel tale hath he told
any dreem, so holy was his herte.
y god, I hadde lever than my sherte
at ye had rad his legende, as have I.
ame Pertelote, I sey yow trewely,
acrobeus,[8] that writ th'avisioun
Affrike of the worthy Cipioun,
ermeth dremes, and seith that they been
arning of thinges that men after seen.

And forther-more, I pray yow loketh wel
In th'olde testament, of Daniel,
If he held dremes any vanitee.
Reed eek of Joseph, and ther shul ye see
Wher dremes ben somtyme (I sey nat alle)
Warning of thinges that shul after falle.
Loke of Egipt the king, daun[1] Pharao,
His bakere and his boteler also,
Wher they ne felte noon effect in dremes.
Who-so wol seken actes of sondry remes,[2]
May rede of dremes many a wonder thing.
Lo Cresus, which that was of Lyde king,
Mette he nat that he sat upon a tree,
Which signified he sholde anhanged be?
Lo heer Andromacha, Ectores wyf,
That day that Ector sholde lese his lyf,
She dremed on the same night biforn,
How that the lyf of Ector sholde be lorn,
If thilke day he wente in-to bataille;
She warned him, but it mighte nat availle;
He wente for to fighte nathelees,
But he was slayn anoon of Achilles.
But thilke tale is al to long to telle,
And eek it is ny day, I may nat dwelle.
Shortly I seye, as for conclusioun,
That I shal han of this avisioun
Adversitee; and I seye forther-more,
That I ne telle of laxatyves no store,
For they ben venimous, I woot it wel;
I hem defye, I love hem never a del.
Now let us speke of mirthe, and stinte al this;
Madame Pertelote, so have I blis,
Of o thing god hath sent me large grace;
For whan I see the beautee of your face,
Ye ben so scarlet-reed about your yën,
It maketh al my drede for to dyen;
For, also siker[3] as *In principio*,[4]
*Mulier est hominis confusio;*
Madame, the sentence of this Latin is —
Womman is mannes joye and al his blis.
For whan I fele a-night your softe syde,
Al-be-it that I may nat on you ryde,
For that our perche is maad so narwe, alas!
I am so ful of joye and of solas
That I defye bothe sweven and dreem."
And with that word he fley doun fro the beem,
For it was day, and eek his hennes alle;
And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,
For he had founde a corn, lay in the yerd.
Royal he was, he was namore aferd;
He fethered Pertelote twenty tyme,
And trad as ofte, er that it was pryme.

1 drowned. 2 delay. 3 jokes.
4 confused matter. 5 waste in idleness.
6 I lament it. 7 Mercia, i.e. central England.
8 Author of a commentary on Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*

1 lord. 2 realms. 3 just as sure.
4 The first words of St. John's Gospel. The following line means, "woman is man's undoing." Chauntecleer deliberately mistranslates it.

He loketh as it were a grim leoun;
And on his toos he rometh up and doun,
Him deyned not to sette his foot to grounde.
He chukketh, whan he hath a corn y-founde,
And to him rennen thanne his wyves alle.
Thus royal, as a prince is in his halle,
Leve I this Chauntecleer in his pasture;
And after wol I telle his aventure.
Whan that the month in which the world bigan,[1]
That highte March, whan god first maked man,
Was complet, and passed were also,
Sin March bigan, thritty dayes and two,[2]
Bifel that Chauntecleer, in al his pryde,
His seven wyves walking by his syde,
Caste up his eyen to the brighte sonne,
That in the signe of Taurus hadde y-ronne
Twenty degrees and oon, and somewhat more;
And knew by kynde,[3] and by noon other lore,
That it was pryme,[4] and crew with blisful stevene.
"The sonne," he sayde, "is clomben up on hevene
Fourty degrees and oon, and more, y-wis.
Madame Pertelote, my worldes blis,
Herkneth thise blisful briddes how they singe,
And see the fresshe floures how they springe;
Ful is myn herte of revel and solas."
But sodeinly him fil a sorweful cas;
For ever the latter ende of joye is wo.
God woot that worldly joye is sone ago;
And if a rethor[5] coude faire endyte,
He in a cronique saufly mighte it wryte,
As for a sovereyn notabilitee.
Now every wys man, lat him herkne me;
This storie is al-so trewe, I undertake,
As is the book of Launcelot de Lake,[6]
That wommen holde in ful gret reverence.
Now wol I torne agayn to my sentence.
A col-fox,[7] ful of sly iniquitee,
That in the grove hadde woned yeres three,
By heigh imaginacioun forn-cast,[8]
The same night thurgh-out the hegges brast
Into the yerd, ther Chauntecleer the faire
Was wont, and eek his wyves, to repaire;
And in a bed of wortes[9] stille he lay,
Til it was passed undern[10] of the day,
Wayting his tyme on Chauntecleer to falle,
As gladly doon thise homicydes alle,
That in awayt liggen to mordre men.
O false mordrer, lurking in thy den!
O newe Scariot, newe Genilon![1]
False dissimilour, O Greek Sinon,
That broghtest Troye al outrely to sorwe!
O Chauntecleer, acursed be that morwe,
That thou into that yerd flough fro the bemes!
Thou were ful wel y-warned by thy dreme
That thilke day was perilous to thee.
But what that god forwoot mot nedes be,[2]
After the opinioun of certeyn clerkis.
Witnesse on him, that any perfit clerk is,
That in scole is gret altercacioun
In this matere, and greet disputisoun,
And hath ben of an hundred thousand me
But I ne can not bulte it to the bren,
As can the holy doctour Augustyn,
Or Boëce,[3] or the bishop Bradwardyn,[4]
Whether that goddes worthy forwiting
Streyneth[5] me nedely for to doon a thing,
(Nedely clepe I simple necessitee);
Or elles, if free choys be graunted me
To do that same thing, or do it noght,
Though god forwoot it, er that it was wroght;
Or if his witing streyneth nevere a del
But by necessitee condicionel.
I wol not han to do of swich matere;
My tale is of a cok, as ye may here,
That took his counseil of his wyf, with sorwe
To walken in the yerd upon that morwe
That he had met the dreem, that I yow telde.
Wommennes counseils been ful ofte colde;[6]
Wommannes counseil broghte us first to wo,
And made Adam fro paradys to go,
Ther-as he was ful mery, and wel at ese.
But for I noot, to whom it mighte displese,
If I counseil of wommen wolde blame,
Passe over, for I seyde it in my game.
Rede auctours, wher they trete of swich matere,
And what thay seyn of wommen ye may here
Thise been the cokkes wordes, and nat myne;
I can noon harm of no womman divyne.
Faire in the sond, to bathe hir merily,
Lyth Pertelote, and alle hir sustres by,
Agayn the sonne; and Chauntecleer so free
Song merier than the mermayde in the see;
For Phisiologus[7] seith sikerly,
How that they singen wel and merily.
And so bifel that, as he caste his yë,
Among the wortes, on a boterflye,

1 The earth was created at the spring equinox.
2 i.e. it was May 3. 3 nature.
4 nine A.M. 5 master of rhetoric.
6 One of the Arthurian romances.
7 fox with black markings.
8 Predestined by the mind of God.
9 vegetables. 10 middle of the morning.

1 Judas Iscariot, and Ganelon, traitor in the Song of Roland.
2 What God foreknows must needs be. 3 Boethius
4 English theologian of fourteenth century.
5 constraineth. 6 disastrous.
7 A fabulous book on the habits of animals.

was war of this fox that lay ful lowe.
thing ne liste him thanne for to crowe,
cryde anon, "cok, cok," and up he sterte,
man that was affrayed in his herte.
naturelly a beest desyreth flee
his contrarie, if he may it see,
ough he never erst had seyn it with his yë.
his Chauntecleer, whan he gan him espye,
wolde han fled, but that the fox anon
de, "Gentil sire, allas! wher wol ye gon?
ye affrayed of me that am your freend?
w certes, I were worse than a feend,
to yow wolde harm or vileinye.
n nat come your counseil for t'espye;
trewely, the cause of my cominge
s only for to herkne how that ye singe.
trewely ye have as mery a stevene
eny aungel hath, that is in hevene;
erwith ye han in musik more felinge
an hadde Boëce, or any that can singe.
lord your fader (god his soule blesse!)
l eek your moder, of hir gentilesse,
n in myn hous y-been, to my gret ese;
l certes, sire, ful fayn wolde I yow plese.
t for men speke of singing, I wol saye,
mote I brouke [1] wel myn eyen tweye,
e yow, I herde never man so singe,
dide your fader in the morweninge;
tes, it was of herte, al that he song.
l for to make his voys the more strong,
wolde so peyne him, that with bothe his yën
moste winke, so loude he wolde cryen,
l stonden on his tiptoon ther-with-al,
l strecche forth his nekke long and smal.
l eek he was of swich discrecioun.
at ther nas no man in no regioun
at him in song or wisdom mighte passe.
ave wel rad in daun Burnel the Asse,[2]
ong his vers, how that ther was a cok,
that a preestes sone yaf him a knok
on his leg, whyl he was yong and nyce,[3]
made him for to lese his benefyce.
t certeyn, ther nis no comparisoun
wix the wisdom and discrecioun
youre fader, and of his subtiltee.
w singeth, sire, for seinte Charitee,
see, conne ye your fader countrefete?'[4]
is Chauntecleer his winges gan to bete,
man that coude his tresoun nat espye,
was he ravisshed with his flaterye.
Allas! ye lordes, many a fals flatour
in your courtes, and many a losengeour,[5]
at plesen yow wel more, by my feith,
an he that soothfastnesse unto yow seith.

have the use of.
A Latin satirical poem of the twelfth century.
foolish. 4 imitate. 5 flatterer.

Redeth Ecclesiaste [1] of flaterye;
Beth war, ye lordes, of hir trecherye.
This Chauntecleer stood hye up-on his toos,
Strecching his nekke, and heeld his eyen cloos,
And gan to crowe loude for the nones;[2]
And daun Russel the fox sterte up at ones,
And by the gargat [3] hente Chauntecleer,
And on his bak toward the wode him beer,
For yet ne was ther no man that him sewed.[4]
O destinee, that mayst nat been eschewed!
Allas, that Chauntecleer fleigh fro the bemes!
Allas, his wyf ne roghte nat of dremes!
And on a Friday fil al this meschaunce.
O Venus, that art goddesse of plesaunce,
Sin that thy servant was this Chauntecleer,
And in thy service dide al his poweer,
More for delyt, than world to multiplye,
Why woldestow suffre him on thy day [5] to dye?
O Gaufred,[6] dere mayster soverayn,
That, whan thy worthy king Richard was slayn
With shot,[7] compleynedest his deth so sore,
Why ne hadde I now thy sentence and thy lore,
The Friday for to chyde, as diden ye?
(For on a Friday soothly slayn was he.)
Than wolde I shewe yow how that I coude pleyne
For Chauntecleres drede, and for his peyne.
Certes, swich cry ne lamentacioun
Was never of ladies maad, whan Ilioun
Was wonne, and Pirrus with his streite swerd,
Whan he hadde hent [8] king Priam by the berd,
And slayn him (as saith us *Eneydos*),
As maden alle the hennes in the clos,
Whan they had seyn of Chauntecleer the sighte.
But sovereynly dame Pertelote shrighte,
Ful louder than dide Hasdrubales wyf,
Whan that hir housbond hadde lost his lyf,
And that the Romayns hadde brend Cartage;
She was so ful of torment and of rage,
That wilfully into the fyr she sterte,
And brende hir-selven with a stedfast herte.
O woful hennes, right so cryden ye,
As, whan that Nero brende the citee
Of Rome, cryden senatoures wyves,
For that hir housbondes losten alle hir lyves;

1 The book of Ecclesiasticus in the Apocrypha.
2 for the nonce. 3 throat. 4 pursued.
5 Friday is *dies Veneris*.
6 Geoffrey of Vinsauf, author of a Latin treatise on the art of poetry, which contains a rhetorical lament for Richard I. Chaucer is laughing at his bombastic style.
7 an arrow. 8 seized.

Withouten gilt this Nero hath hem slayn.
Now wol I torne to my tale agayn: —
This sely[1] widwe, and eek hir doghtres two,
Herden thise hennes crye and maken wo,
And out at dores sterten they anoon,
And syen the fox toward the grove goon,
And bar upon his bak the cok away;
And cryden, "Out! harrow! and weyla-way!
Ha, ha, the fox!" and after him they ran,
And eek with staves many another man;
Ran Colle our dogge, and Talbot, and Gerland,
And Malkin, with a distaf in hir hand;
Ran cow and calf, and eek the verray hogges
So were they fered for berking of the dogges
And shouting of the men and wimmen eke,
They ronne so, hem thoughte hir herte breke.
They yelleden as feendes doon in helle;
The dokes cryden as men wolde hem quelle;[2]
The gees for fere flowen over the trees;
Out of the hyve cam the swarm of bees;
So hidous was the noyse, a! *benedicite!*
Certes, he Jakke Straw,[3] and his meynee,
Ne made never shoutes half so shrille,
Whan that they wolden any Fleming[4] kille,
As thilke day was maad upon the fox.
Of bras thay broghten bemes,[5] and of box,
Of horn, of boon, in whiche they blewe and pouped,
And therwithal thay shryked and they houped;
It semed as that heven sholde falle.
Now, gode men, I pray yow herkneth alle!
Lo, how fortune turneth sodeinly
The hope and pryde eek of hir enemy!
This cok, that lay upon the foxes bak,
In al his drede, un-to the fox he spak,
And seyde, "sire, if that I were as ye,
Yet sholde I seyn (as wis[6] god helpe me),
Turneth agayn, ye proude cherles alle!
A verray pestilence up-on yow falle!
Now am I come un-to this wodes syde,
Maugree[7] your heed, the cok shal heer abyde;
I wol him ete in feith, and that anon." —
The fox answerde, "in feith, it shal be don," —
And as he spak that word, al sodeinly
This cok brak from his mouth deliverly,[8]
And heighe up-on a tree he fleigh anon.
And whan the fox saugh that he was y-gon,
"Allas!" quod he, "O Chauntecleer, allas
I have to yow," quod he, "y-doon trespas,
In-as-muche as I maked yow aferd,
Whan I yow hente, and broghte out of
yerd;
But, sire, I dide it in no wikke entente;
Com doun, and I shal telle yow what
mente.
I shal seye sooth to yow, god help me so."
"Nay than," quod he, "I shrewe[1] us bo
two,
And first I shrewe my-self, bothe blood a
bones,
If thou bigyle me ofter than ones.
Thou shalt na-more, thurgh thy flaterye,
Do me to singe and winke with myn yë.
For he that winketh, whan he sholde see,
Al wilfully, god lat him never thee!"[2]
"Nay," quod the fox, "but god yeve h
meschaunce,
That is so undiscreet of governaunce,
That jangleth[3] whan he sholde holde h
pees."
Lo, swich it is for to be recchelees,
And necligent, and truste on flaterye.
But ye that holden this tale a folye,
As of a fox, or of a cok and hen,
Taketh the moralitee, good men.
For seint Paul seith, that al that writen is
To our doctryne it is y-write, y-wis.
Taketh the fruyt, and let the chaf be still
Now, gode god, if that it be thy wille,
As seith my lord, so make us alle go
men;
And bringe us to his heighe blisse. Amen

*Here is ended the Nonne Preestes Tale.*

1 hapless. 2 kill.
3 Leader of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381.
4 Many of the London merchants were natives of Flanders.
5 trumpets. 6 surely. 7 in spite of. 8 nimbly.

1 curse. 2 prosper. 3 talketh.

## THE PARDONER'S TALE

The *Pardoner's Tale* is a sermon on the tex
"The love of money is the root of all evil
The dramatic story, full of tragic irony, whi
serves as *exemplum* for this text, is found
varying forms in many languages. It seems
have started in India, and to have come
Europe *via* Persia and Arabia. A modern ve
sion, brought direct from India, is *The King
Ankus* in Kipling's *Second Jungle Book.*

In the Prologue to his tale, the shamele
Pardoner, seated in a wayside tavern, cynicall
describes to his fellow pilgrims his methods
making money by playing on the superstitio
credulity of the ignorant. At the end of his se
mon-tale, which denounces his own besettin
sins of avarice and riotous living, he has th
audacity to recommend his spurious relics
the very company which has listened to th
*exposé.*

## THE PROLOGUE OF THE PARDONER'S TALE

*Here folweth the Prologe of the Pardoners Tale*

*Radix malorum est Cupiditas: Ad Thimotheum, sexto.*

"Lordings," quod he, "in chirches whan I preche,
Peyne me to han an hauteyn speche,[1]
And ringe it out as round as gooth a belle,
For I can al by rote[2] that I telle.
My theme is alwey oon, and ever was —
*Radix malorum est Cupiditas.*'[3]
First I pronounce whennes that I come,
And than my bulles shewe I, alle and somme.
Our lige lordes seel on my patente,[4]
That shewe I first, my body to warente,
That no man be so bold, ne preest ne clerk,
Me to destourbe of Cristes holy werk;
And after that than telle I forth my tales,
Bulles of popes and of cardinales,
Of patriarkes, and bishoppes I shewe;
And in Latyn I speke a wordes fewe,
To saffron with my predicacioun,[5]
And for to stire men to devocioun.
Than shewe I forth my longe cristal stones,
Ycrammed ful of cloutes and of bones;
Relikes been they, as wenen they echoon.
Than have I in latoun[6] a sholder-boon
Which that was of an holy Jewes shepe.
'Good men,' seye I, 'tak of my wordes kepe;[7]
If that this boon be wasshe in any welle,
If cow, or calf, or sheep, or oxe swelle
That any worm[8] hath ete, or worm y-stonge,
Tak water of that welle, and wash his tonge,
And it is hool anon; and forthermore,
Of pokkes and of scabbe, and every sore
Shal every sheep be hool, that of this welle
Drinketh a draughte; tak kepe eek what I telle.
If that the good-man, that the bestes oweth,[9]
Wol every wike,[10] er that the cok him croweth,
Fastinge, drinken of this welle a draughte,
As thilke holy Jewe our eldres taughte,
His bestes and his stoor shal multiplye.
And, sirs, also it heleth jalousye;
For, though a man be falle in jalous rage,
Let maken with this water his potage,
And never shal he more his wyf mistriste,
Though he the sooth of hir defaute wiste;
Al had she taken preestes two or three.
Heer is a miteyn eek, that ye may see.
He that his hond wol putte in this miteyn,
He shal have multiplying of his greyn,
Whan he hath sowen, be it whete or otes,
So that he offre pens, or elles grotes.
Good men and wommen, o thing warne I yow,
If any wight be in this chirche now,
That hath doon sinne horrible, that he
Dar nat, for shame, of it y-shriven be,
Or any womman, be she yong or old,
That hath y-maad hir housbond cokewold,
Swich folk shul have no power ne no grace
To offren to my reliks in this place.
And who-so findeth him out of swich blame,
He wol com up and offre in goddes name,
And I assoille[1] him by the auctoritee
Which that by bulle y-graunted was to me.'
By this gaude[2] have I wonne, yeer by yeer,
An hundred mark sith I was Pardoner.
I stonde lyk a clerk in my pulpet,
And whan the lewed[3] peple is doun y-set,
I preche, so as ye han herd bifore,
And telle an hundred false japes more.
Than peyne I me to strecche forth the nekke,
And est and west upon the peple I bekke,[4]
As doth a dowve sitting on a berne.
Myn hondes and my tonge goon so yerne,[5]
That it is joye to see my bisinesse.
Of avaryce and of swich cursednesse
Is al my preching, for to make hem free
To yeve her pens, and namely[6] un-to me.
For my entente is nat but for to winne,
And no-thing for correccioun of sinne.
I rekke never, whan that they ben beried,
Though that her soules goon a-blake-beried![7]
For certes, many a predicacioun
Comth ofte tyme of yvel entencioun;
Som for plesaunce of folk and flaterye,
To been avaunced by ipocrisye,
And som for veyne glorie, and som for hate.
For, whan I dar non other weyes debate,[8]
Than wol I stinge him with my tonge smerte
In preching, so that he shal nat asterte[9]
To been defamed falsly, if that he
Hath trespased to my brethren or to me.
For, though I telle noght his propre name,
Men shal wel knowe that it is the same
By signes and by othere circumstances.
Thus quyte I folk that doon us displesances;
Thus spitte I out my venim under hewe
Of holynesse, to seme holy and trewe.

1 I take pains to speak in a lofty manner.
2 know all by heart. 3 1 Timothy, VI, 10.
4 letter of authority.
5 To give my preaching more color and flavor.
6 latten, a composition of copper and zinc.
7 heed. 8 snake. 9 owneth 10 week.

1 absolve. 2 trick. 3 ignorant. 4 nod.
5 briskly. 6 especially. 7 go blackberrying.
8 quarrel. 9 escape.

But shortly myn entente I wol devyse;
I preche of no-thing but for coveityse.
Therfor my theme is yet, and ever was —
'*Radix malorum est cupiditas.*'
Thus can I preche agayn that same vyce
Which that I use, and that is avaryce.
But, though my-self be gilty in that sinne
Yet can I maken other folk to twinne
From avaryce, and sore to repente.
But that is nat my principal entente.
I preche no-thing but for coveityse;
Of this matere it oughte y-nogh suffyse.
Than telle I hem ensamples many oon
Of olde stories, longe tyme agoon:
For lewed peple loven tales olde;
Swich thinges can they wel reporte and holde.
What? trowe ye, the whyles I may preche,
And winne gold and silver for I teche,
That I wol live in povert wilfully?
Nay, nay, I thoghte it never trewely!
For I wol preche and begge in sondry londes;
I wol not do no labour with myn hondes,
Ne make baskettes, and live therby,
Because I wol nat beggen ydelly.
I wol non of the apostles counterfete;[2]
I wol have money, wolle, chese, and whete,
Al were it yeven of the povrest page,
Or of the povrest widwe in a village,
Al sholde hir children sterve for famyne.
Nay! I wol drinke licour of the vyne,
And have a joly wenche in every toun.
But herkneth, lordings, in conclusioun;
Your lyking is that I shal telle a tale.
Now, have I dronke a draughte of corny ale,
By god, I hope I shal yow telle a thing
That shal, by resoun, been at your lyking.
For, though myself be a ful vicious man,
A moral tale yet I yow telle can,
Which I am wont to preche, for to winne.
How holde your pees, my tale I wol beginne."

## THE PARDONER'S TALE

*Here biginneth the Pardoners Tale*

In Flaundres whylom was a companye
Of yonge folk, that haunteden[3] folye,
As ryot, hasard, stewes,[4] and tavernes,
Wher-as, with harpes, lutes, and giternes,
They daunce and pleye at dees bothe day and night,
And ete also and drinken over hir might,
Thurgh which they doon the devel sacrifyse
With-in that develes temple, in cursed wyse,
By superfluitee abhominable;
Hir othes been so grete and so dampnable,
That it is grisly for to here hem swere;
Our blissed lordes body they to-tere;[1]
Hem thoughte Jewes rente him noghy-nough;
And ech of hem at otheres sinne lough.
And right anon than comen tombesteres[2]
Fetys[3] and smale, and yonge fruytesteres,[4]
Singers with harpes, baudes, wafereres,[5]
Whiche been the verray develes officeres
To kindle and blowe the fyr of lecherye,
That is annexed un-to glotonye;
The holy writ take I to my witnesse,
That luxurie is in wyn and dronkenesse.
Lo, how that dronken Loth, unkindely,[6]
Lay by his doghtres two, unwitingly;
So dronke he was, he niste what he wroghte.
Herodes, (who-so wel the stories soghte),
Whan he of wyn was replet at his feste,
Right at his owene table he yaf his heste
To sleen the Baptist John ful giltelees.
Senek seith eek a good word doutelees;
He seith, he can no difference finde
Bitwix a man that is out of his minde
And a man which that is dronkelewe,[7]
But that woodnesse, y-fallen in a shrewe,[8]
Persevereth lenger than doth dronkenesse.
O glotonye, ful of cursednesse,
O cause first of our confusioun,
O original of our dampnacioun,
Til Crist had boght us with his blood agayn!
Lo, how dere, shortly for to sayn,
Aboght was thilke cursed vileinye;
Corrupt was all this world for glotonye!
Adam our fader, and his wyf also,
Fro Paradys to labour and to wo
Were driven for that vyce, it is no drede;[9]
For whyl that Adam fasted, as I rede,
He was in Paradys; and whan that he
Eet of the fruyt defended[10] on the tree,
Anon he was out-cast to wo and peyne.
O glotonye, on thee wel oghte us pleyne!
O, wiste a man how many maladyes
Folwen of excesse and of glotonyes,
He wolde been the more mesurable
Of his diete, sittinge at his table.
Allas! the shorte throte, the tendre mouth,
Maketh that, Est and West, and North and South,
In erthe, in eir, in water men to-swinke[11]
To gete a glotoun deyntee mete and drinke!

1 separate. 2 imitate. 3 practised. 4 brothels.

1 i.e. they swear by various parts of Christ's body.
2 girl acrobats. 3 well shaped.
4 girls who sell fruit. 5 peddlers of cakes.
6 against nature. 7 drunken.
8 insanity, when it attacks a wicked man.
9 without doubt. 10 forbidden. 11 work hard.

this matere, o Paul, wel canstow trete,
Mete un-to wombe, and wombe eek un-to mete,
"ual god destroyen bothe," as Paulus seith.[1]
Alas! a foul thing is it, by my feith,
o seye this word, and fouler is the dede,
han man so drinketh of the whyte and rede,
hat of his throte he maketh his privee,
hurgh thilke cursed superfluitee.
The apostel weping seith ful pitously,
Ther walken many of whiche yow told have I,
seye it now weping with pitous voys,
hat they been enemys of Cristes croys,
f whiche the ende is deeth, wombe is her god." [2]
wombe! O bely! O stinking cod,[3]
ulfild of donge and of corrupcioun!
t either ende of thee foul is the soun.
ow greet labour and cost is thee to finde! [4]
hise cokes, how they stampe, and streyne, and grinde,
nd turnen substance in-to accident,[5]
o fulfille al thy likerous talent! [6]
ut of the harde bones knokke they
he mary,[7] for they caste noght a-wey
hat may go thurgh the golet softe and swote;
f spicerye, of leef, and bark, and rote
hal been his sauce y-maked by delyt,
o make him yet a newer appetyt.
ut certes, he that haunteth swich delyces
s deed, whyl that he liveth in tho vyces.
A lecherous thing is wyn, and dronkenesse
s ful of stryving and of wrecchednesse.
O dronke man, disfigured is thy face,
our is thy breeth, foul artow to embrace,
nd thurgh thy dronke nose semeth the soun
As though thou seydest ay "Sampsoun, Sampsoun";
And yet, god wot, Sampsoun drank never no wyn.
Thou fallest, as it were a stiked swyn;
hy tonge is lost, and al thyn honest cure; [8]
or dronkenesse is verray sepulture
f mannes wit and his discrecioun.
n whom that drinke hath dominacioun,
e can no conseil kepe, it is no drede.[9]
Now kepe yow fro the whyte and fro the rede,

And namely [1] fro the whyte wyn of Lepe,[2]
That is to selle in Fish-strete or in Chepe.[3]
This wyn of Spayne crepeth subtilly
In othere wynes, growing faste by,[4]
Of which ther ryseth swich fumositee,[5]
That whan a man hath dronken draughtes three,
And weneth that he be at hoom in Chepe,
He is in Spayne, right at the toune of Lepe,
Nat at the Rochel, ne at Burdeux toun; [6]
And thanne wol he seye, "Sampsoun, Sampsoun."
But herkneth, lordings, o word, I yow preye,
That alle the sovereyn actes, dar I seye,
Of victories in th'olde testament,
Thurgh verray god, that is omnipotent,
Were doon in abstinence and in preyere;
Loketh the Bible, and ther ye may it lere.
Loke, Attila, the grete conquerour,
Deyde in his sleep, with shame and dishonour,
Bledinge ay at his nose in dronkenesse;
A capitayn sholde live in sobrenesse.
And over [7] al this, avyseth yow right wel
What was comaunded un-to Lamuel — [8]
Nat Samuel, but Lamuel, seye I —
Redeth the Bible, and finde it expresly
Of wyn-yeving to hem that han justyse.
Na-more of this, for it may wel suffyse.
And now that I have spoke of glotonye,
Now wol I yow defenden hasardrye.[9]
Hasard is verray moder of lesinges,[10]
And of deceite, and cursed forsweringes,
Blaspheme of Crist, manslaughtre, and wast also
Of catel [11] and of tyme; and forthermo,
It is repreve [12] and contrarie of honour
For to ben holde a commune hasardour.
And ever the hyër he is of estaat,
The more is he holden desolaat.
If that a prince useth hasardrye,
In alle governaunce and policye
He is, as by commune opinioun,
Y-holde the lasse in reputacioun.
Stilbon, that was a wys embassadour,
Was sent to Corinthe, in ful greet honour,
Fro Lacidomie, to make hir alliaunce.
And whan he cam, him happede, par chaunce,
That alle the grettest that were of that lond,
Pleyinge atte hasard he hem fond.

1 1 Corinthians, VI, 13. 2 Philippians, III, 18–19.
3 bag. 4 provide for.
5 In scholastic philosophy, "substance" means essential nature as opposed to the "accidents" of color, taste, etc.
6 luxurious taste. 7 marrow.
8 care about decency. 9 doubt.

1 specially. 2 A town in Spain.
3 Cheapside in London.
4 The light wines of France were adulterated with the heavier Spanish wines.
5 fumes. 6 La Rochelle and Bordeaux in France.
7 in addition to. 8 See Proverbs, XXXI, 4.
9 forbid gambling. 10 lies.
11 property. 12 reproach.

For which, as sone as it mighte be,
He stal him hoom agayn to his contree,
And seyde, "ther wol I nat lese my name;
N' I wol nat take on me so greet defame,
Yow for to allye un-to none hasardours.
Sendeth othere wyse embassadours;
For, by my trouthe, me were lever dye,
Than I yow sholde to hasardours allye.
For ye that been so glorious in honours
Shul nat allyen yow with hasardours
As by my wil, ne as by my tretee."
This wyse philosophre thus seyde he.
Loke eek that, to the king Demetrius
The king of Parthes, as the book seith us,
Sente him a paire of dees [1] of gold in scorn,
For he hadde used hasard ther-biforn;
For which he heeld his glorie or his renoun
At no value or reputacioun.
Lordes may finden other maner pley
Honeste y-nough to dryve the day awey.
Now wol I speke of othes false and grete
A word or two, as olde bokes trete.
Gret swering is a thing abhominable,
And false swering is yet more reprevable.
The heighe god forbad swering at al,
Witnesse on Mathew; [2] but in special
Of swering seith the holy Jeremye,[3]
"Thou shalt seye sooth thyn othes, and nat lye,
And swere in dome, and eek in rightwisnesse;"
But ydel swering is a cursednesse.
Bihold and see, that in the firste table
Of heighe goddes hestes honurable,
How that the seconde [4] heste of him is this —
"Tak nat my name in ydel or amis."
Lo, rather [5] he forbedeth swich swering
Than homicyde or many a cursed thing;
I seye that, as by ordre, thus it stondeth;
This knowen, that his hestes understondeth,
How that the second heste of god is that.
And forther over, I wol thee telle al plat,[6]
That vengeance shal nat parten from his hous,
That of his othes is to outrageous.
"By goddes precious herte, and by his nayles,
And by the blode of Crist, that it is in Hayles,[7]
Seven is my chaunce, and thyn is cink and treye; [8]
By goddes armes, if thou falsly pleye,
This dagger shal thurgh-out thyn herte go" —
This fruyt cometh of the bicched bones two,
Forswering, ire, falsnesse, homicyde.
Now, for the love of Crist that for us dyde,
Leveth your othes, bothe grete and smale;
But, sirs, now wol I telle forth my tale.

Thise ryotoures three, of whiche I telle,
Longe erst er pryme [2] rong of any belle,
Were set hem in a taverne for to drinke;
And as they satte, they herde a belle clinke
Biforn a cors, was caried to his grave;
That oon of hem gan callen to his knave,[3]
"Go bet," [4] quod he, "and axe redily,
What cors is this that passeth heer forby;
And look that thou reporte his name wel."
"Sir," quod this boy, "it nedeth never-a-del.
It was me told, er ye cam heer, two houres;
He was, pardee, an old felawe of youres;
And sodeynly he was y-slayn to-night,[5]
For-dronke,[6] as he sat on his bench upright;
Ther cam a privee theef, men clepeth Deeth,
That in this contree al the peple sleeth,
And with his spere he smoot his herte a-two,
And wente his wey with-outen wordes mo.
He hath a thousand slayn this pestilence:
And, maister, er ye come in his presence,
Me thinketh that it were necessarie
For to be war of swich an adversarie:
Beth redy for to mete him evermore.
Thus taughte me my dame, I sey na-more."
"By seinte Marie," seyde this taverner,
"The child seith sooth, for he hath slayn this yeer,
Henne over a myle, with-in a greet village,
Both man and womman, child and hyne,[7] and page.
I trowe his habitacioun be there;
To been avysed greet wisdom it were,
Er that he dide a man a dishonour."
"Ye, goddes armes," quod this ryotour,
"Is it swich peril with him for to mete?
I shal him seke by wey and eek by strete,
I make avow to goddes digne bones!
Herkneth, felawes, we three been al ones;
Lat ech of us holde up his hond til other,
And ech of us bicomen otheres brother,
And we wol sleen this false traytour Deeth;
He shal be slayn, which that so many sleeth,
By goddes dignitee, er it be night."
Togidres han thise three her trouthes plight,

1 dice. 2 St. Matthew, v, 34. 3 Jeremiah, iv. 2.
4 In the Authorized Version it is the third commandment. The Vulgate has a different arrangement.
5 i.e. in an earlier commandment.
6 And furthermore I say flatly.
7 An abbey in Gloucestershire, at which was shown as a relic a phial containing some of the sacred blood.
8 five and three. The "chance" is a term in the game of "hazard," a more complicated form of the modern "craps."

1 cursed dice. 2 nine A.M. 3 servant.
4 quickly. 5 last night. 6 dead drunk. 7 servant.

live and dyen ech of hem for other,
hough he were his owene y-boren brother.
l up they sterte al dronken, in this rage,
l forth they goon towardes that village,
which the taverner had spoke biforn,
l many a grisly ooth than han they sworn,
l Cristes blessed body they to-rente [1] —
eeth shal be deed, if that they may him hente."
Whan they han goon nat fully half a myle,
ht as they wolde han troden over a style,
old man and a povre with hem mette.
s olde man ful mekely hem grette,[2]
l seyde thus, "now, lordes, god yow see!" [3]
he proudest of thise ryotoures three
swerde agayn, "what? carl,[4] with sory grace,
ly artow al forwrapped [5] save thy face?
ly livestow so longe in so greet age?"
his olde man gan loke in his visage,
d seyde thus, "for I ne can nat finde
nan, though that I walked in-to Inde,
ither in citee nor in no village,
at wolde chaunge his youthe for myn age;
d therfore moot I han myn age stille,
longe time as it is goddes wille.
Ne deeth, allas! ne wol nat han my lyf;
us walke I, lyk a restelees caityf,[6]
d on the ground, which is my modres gate,
nokke with my staf, bothe erly and late,
d seye, 'leve moder, leet me in!
, how I vanish, flesh, and blood, and skin!
as! whan shul my bones been at reste?
oder, with yow wolde I chaunge my cheste,
at in my chambre longe tyme hath be,
! for an heyre clout to wrappe me!' [7]
t yet to me she wol nat do that grace,
r which ful pale and welked [8] is my face.
But, sirs, to yow it is no curteisye
speken to an old man vileinye,
t he trespasse in worde, or elles in dede.
holy writ ye may your-self wel rede,
gayns [9] an old man, hoor upon his heed,
sholde aryse;' [10] wherfor I yeve yow reed,
e dooth un-to an old man noon harm now,
-more than ye wolde men dide to yow
age, if that ye so longe abyde;
d god be with yow, wher ye go [11] or ryde.
noot go thider as I have to go."
"Nay, olde cherl, by god, thou shalt nat so,"

1 tore to pieces. 2 greeted. 3 protect.
4 churl. 5 wrapped up. 6 captive.
7 I would exchange my chest full of money for a hair-th shroud.
8 withered. 9 in presence of.
10 Leviticus, XIX, 32. 11 walk.

Seyde this other hasardour anon;
"Thou partest nat so lightly, by seint John!
Thou spak right now of thilke traitour Deeth,
That in this contree alle our frendes sleeth.
Have heer my trouthe, as thou are his aspye,[1]
Tel wher he is, or thou shalt it abye,[2]
By god, and by the holy sacrament!
For soothly thou art oon of his assent,
To sleen us yonge folk, thou false theef!"
"Now, sirs," quod he, "if that yow be so leef
To finde Deeth, turne up this croked wey,
For in that grove I lafte him, by my fey,
Under a tree, and ther he wol abyde;
Nat for your boost he wol him no-thing hyde.
See ye that ook? right ther ye shul him finde.
God save yow, that boghte agayn mankinde,
And yow amende!" — thus seyde this olde man.
And everich of thise ryotoures ran,
Til he cam to that tree, and ther they founde
Of florins fyne of golde y-coyned rounde
Wel ny an eighte busshels, as hem thoughte.
No lenger thanne after Deeth they soughte,
But ech of hem so glad was of that sighte,
For that the florins been so faire and brighte,
That doun they sette hem by this precious hord.
The worste of hem he spake the firste word.
"Brethren," quod he, "tak kepe what I seye;
My wit is greet, though that I bourde [3] and pleye.
This tresor hath fortune un-to us yiven,
In mirthe and jolitee our lyf to liven,
And lightly as it comth, so wol we spende.
Ey! goddes precious dignitee! who wende
To-day, that we sholde han so fair a grace?
But mighte this gold be caried fro this place
Hoom to myn hous, or elles un-to youres —
For wel ye woot that al this gold is oures —
Than were we in heigh felicitee.
But trewely, by daye it may nat be;
Men wolde seyn that we were theves stronge,
And for our owene tresor doon us honge.[4]
This tresor moste y-caried be by nighte
As wysly and as slyly as it mighte.
Wherfore I rede that cut among us alle
Be drawe, and lat see wher the cut wol falle;
And he that hath the cut with herte blythe
Shal renne to the toune, and that ful swythe,[5]
And bringe us breed and wyn ful prively.
And two of us shul kepen subtilly

1 spy. 2 pay for. 3 jest.
4 have us hanged. 5 quickly.

This tresor wel; and, if he wol nat tarie,
Whan it is night, we wol this tresor carie
By oon assent, wher-as us thinketh best."
That oon of hem the cut broughte in his fest,
And bad hem drawe, and loke wher it wol falle;
And it fil on the yongeste of hem alle;
And forth toward the toun he wente anon.
And al-so sone as that he was gon,
That oon of hem spak thus un-to that other,
"Thou knowest wel thou art my sworne brother,
Thy profit wol I telle thee anon.
Thou woost wel that our felawe is agon;
And heer is gold, and that ful greet plentee,
That shal departed been among us three.
But natheles, if I can shape it so
That it departed were among us two,
Hadde I nat doon a freendes torn to thee?"
That other answerde, "I noot how that may be;
He woot how that the gold is with us tweye,
What shal we doon, what shal we to him seye?"
"Shal it be conseil?"[1] seyde the firste shrewe,[2]
"And I shal tellen thee, in wordes fewe,
What we shal doon, and bringe it wel aboute."
"I graunte," quod that other, "out of doute,
That, by my trouthe, I wol thee nat biwreye."
"Now," quod the firste, "thou woost wel we be tweye,
And two of us shul strenger be than oon.
Look whan that he is set, and right anoon
Arys, as though thou woldest with him pleye;
And I shal ryve him thurgh the sydes tweye
Whyl that thou strogelest with him as in game,
And with thy dagger look thou do the same;
And than shal al this gold departed be,
My dere freend, bitwixen me and thee;
Than may we bothe our lustes al fulfille,
And pleye at dees right at our owene wille."
And thus acorded been thise shrewes tweye
To sleen the thridde, as ye han herd me seye.
This yongest, which that wente un-to the toun,
Ful ofte in herte he rolleth up and doun
The beautee of thise florins newe and brighte.
"O lord!" quod he, "if so were that I mighte
Have al this tresor to my-self allone,
Ther is no man that liveth under the trone
Of god, that sholde live so mery as I!"
And atte laste the feend, our enemy,

1 a secret. 2 rogue.

Putte in his thought that he shold poyse[n] beye,
With which he mighte sleen his felaw[e] tweye;
For-why the feend fond him in swich lyving
That he had leve him to sorwe bringe,
For this was outrely his fulle entente
To sleen hem bothe, and never to repente.
And forth he gooth, no lenger wolde he tarie,
Into the toun, un-to a pothecarie,
And preyed him, that he him wolde selle
Som poyson, that he mighte his rattes quelle.
And eek ther was a polcat in his hawe,[2]
That, as he seyde, his capouns hadde y-slawe
And fayn he wolde wreke him, if he mighte,
On vermin, that destroyed him by nighte.
The pothecarie answerde, "and thou shal have
A thing that, al-so god my soule save,
In al this world there nis no creature,
That ete or dronke hath of this confiture
Noght but the mountance[3] of a corn of whete,
That he ne shal his lyf anon forlete;
Ye, sterve[4] he shal, and that in lasse whyle
Than thou wolt goon a paas nat but a myle
This poyson is so strong and violent."
This cursed man hath in his hond y-hent
This poyson in a box, and sith he ran
In-to the nexte strete, un-to a man,
And borwed of him large botels three;
And in the two his poyson poured he;
The thridde he kepte clene for his drinke.
For al the night he shoop him for to swinke.
In caryinge of the gold out of that place.
And whan this ryotour, with sory grace,
Had filled with wyn his grete botels three,
To his felawes agayn repaireth he.
What nedeth it to sermone of it more?
For right as they had cast his deeth bifore,
Right so they han him slayn, and that anon
And whan that this was doon, thus spak that oon,
"Now lat us sitte and drinke, and make us merie,
And afterward we wol his body berie."
And with that word it happed him, par cas,
To take the botel ther the poyson was,
And drank, and yaf his felawe drinke also,
For which anon they storven[6] bothe two.
But, certes, I suppose that Avicen[7]
Wroot never in no canon, ne in no fen,

1 kill. 2 yard. 3 amount. 4 die.
5 he intended to labor. 6 died.
7 Avicenna, famous Arabian physician of about 1100 A.D., author of a medical treatise called the "Canon," divided into chapters called "fens."

No wonder[1] signes of empoisoning
Than hadde thise wrecches two, er hir ending.
Thus ended been thise homicydes two,
And eek the false empoysoner also.

O cursed sinne, ful of cursednesse!
O traytours homicyde, o wikkednesse!
O glotonye, luxurie, and hasardrye!
Thou blasphemour of Crist with vileinye
And othes grete, of usage and of pryde!
Allas! mankinde, how may it bityde,
That to thy creatour which that thee wroghte,
And with his precious herte-blood thee boghte,
Thou art so fals and so unkinde, allas!
Now, goode men, god foryeve yow your trespas,
And ware yow fro[2] the sinne of avaryce.
Myn holy pardoun may yow alle waryce,[3]
So that ye offre nobles or sterlinges,[4]
Or elles silver broches, spones, ringes.
Boweth your heed under this holy bulle!
Cometh up, ye wyves, offreth of your wolle!
Your name I entre heer in my rolle anon;
In-to the blisse of hevene shul ye gon;
I yow assoile,[5] by myn heigh power,
Yow that wol offre, as clene and eek as cleer
As ye were born; and, lo, sirs, thus I preche.
And Jesu Crist, that is our soules leche,
So graunte yow his pardon to receyve;
For that is best; I wol yow nat deceyve.
But sirs,[6] o word forgat I in my tale,
I have relikes and pardon in my male,[7]
As faire as any man in Engelond,
Which were me yeven by the popes hond.
If any of yow wol, of devocioun,
Offren, and han myn absolucioun,
Cometh forth anon, and kneleth heer adoun,
And mekely receyveth my pardoun:
Or elles, taketh pardon as ye wende,
Al newe and fresh, at every tounes ende,
So that ye offren alwey newe and newe
Nobles and pens, which that be gode and trewe.
It is an honour to everich that is heer,
That ye mowe have a suffisant pardoneer
T'assoille yow, in contree as ye ryde,
For aventures which that may bityde.
Peraventure ther may falle oon or two
Doun of his hors, and breke his nekke atwo.
Look which a seuretee is it to yow alle
That I am in your felaweship y-falle,
That may assoille yow, bothe more and lasse,
Whan that the soule shal fro the body passe.
I rede that our hoste heer shal biginne,
For he is most envoluped in sinne.
Com forth, sir hoste, and offre first anon,
And thou shalt kisse the reliks everichon,
Ye, for a grote! unbokel anon thy purs."
"Nay, nay," quod he, "than have I Cristes curs!
Lat be," quod he, "it shall nat be, so thee'ch![1]
Thou woldest make me kisse thyn old breech,[2]
And swere it were a relik of a seint."

. . . . . .

This pardoner answerde nat a word;
So wrooth he was, no word ne wolde he seye.
"Now," quod our host, "I wol no lenger pleye
With thee, ne with noon other angry man."
But right anon the worthy Knight bigan,
Whan that he saugh that all the peple lough,
"Na-more of this, for it is right y-nough;
Sir Pardoner, be glad and mery of chere;
And ye, sir host, that been to me so dere,
I prey yow that ye kisse the Pardoner.
And Pardoner, I prey thee, drawe thee neer,
And, as we diden, lat us laughe and pleye."
Anon they kiste, and riden forth hir weye.

*Here is ended the Pardoners Tale*

1 wonderful. 2 beware of.
3 cure. 4 silver coins. 5 absolve.
6 The Pardoner now addresses his fellow-pilgrims.
7 bag.

1 so may I prosper. 2 breeches.

## THE PRIORESS'S TALE

The pathetic story of the little school-boy murdered by the Jews is a tale of the type, popular in the Middle Ages, known as the *miracle*. These tales were often, as in this case, told to exemplify the loving care of the Blessed Virgin for those who show her love and honor. While preserving its religious purport, Chaucer has done full justice to the human values of the story. A similar story is found in the ballad of *Hugh of Lincoln* included in this volume.

*The Prologe of the Prioresses Tale*
*Domine, dominus noster.*[3]

O Lord our lord, thy name how merveillous
Is in this large worlde y-sprad — quod she: —
For noght only thy laude precious
Parfourned is by men of dignitee,
But by the mouth of children thy bountee
Parfourned is, for on the brest soukinge
Som tyme shewen they thyn heryinge.[4]

3 The first words of Psalm 8. The first stanza paraphrases verses 1–2 of this Psalm.
4 praise.

Wherefor in laude, as I best can or may,
Of thee, and of the whyte lily flour
Which that thee bar, and is a mayde alway,[10]
To telle a storie I wol do my labour;
Not that I may encresen hir honour;
For she hir-self is honour, and the rote
Of bountee, next hir sone, and soules bote.[1] —

O moder mayde! o mayde moder free!
O bush unbrent,[2] brenninge in Moyses sighte,
That ravisedest doun[3] fro the deitee,
Thurgh thyn humblesse, the goost that in th'alighte,[4]
Of whos vertu, whan he thyn herte lighte,[5]
Conceived was the fadres sapience,
Help me to telle it in thy reverence!

Lady! thy bountee, thy magnificence,
Thy vertu, and thy grete humilitee
Ther may no tonge expresse in no science;
For som-tyme, lady, er men praye to thee,
Thou goost biforn of thy benignitee,
And getest us the light, thurgh thy preyere,
To gyden us un-to thy sone so dere.[6]

My conning is so wayk, o blisful quene,
For to declare thy grete worthinesse,
That I ne may the weighte nat sustene,
But as a child of twelf monthe old, or lesse,
That can unnethes[7] any word expresse,
Right so fare I, and therefor I yow preye,
Gydeth my song that I shal of yow seye.

*Explicit*

*Here biginneth the Prioresses Tale*

Ther was in Asie, in a greet citee,
Amonges Cristen folk, a Jewerye,[8]
Sustened by a lord of that contree
For foule usure and lucre of vilanye,
Hateful to Crist and to his companye;
And thurgh the strete men mighte ryde or wende,
For it was free, and open at either ende.

A litel scole of Cristen folk ther stood
Doun at the ferther ende, in which ther were
Children an heep, y-comen of Cristen blood,
That lerned in that scole yeer by yere
Swich maner doctrine as men used there,
This is to seyn, to singen and to rede,
As smale children doon in hir childhede.

Among thise children was a widwes sone,
A litel clergeon,[1] seven yeer of age,
That day by day to scole was his wone,[2]
And eek also, wher-as he saugh th'image
Of Cristes moder, hadde he in usage,
As him was taught, to knele adoun and seye
His *Ave Marie*, as he goth by the weye.

Thus hath this widwe hir litel sone y-taught
Our blisful lady, Cristes moder dere,
To worshipe ay, and he forgat it naught,
For sely[3] child wol alday sone lere;[4]
But ay, whan I remembre on this matere,
Seint Nicholas stant ever in my presence,
For he so yong to Crist did reverence.[5]

This litel child, his litel book lerninge,
As he sat in the scole at his prymer,
He *Alma redemptoris* herde singe,
As children lerned hir antiphoner;[6]
And, as he dorste, he drough him ner and ner,[7]
And herkned ay the wordes and the note,
Til he the firste vers coude al by rote.

Noght wiste he what this Latin was to seye,
For he so yong and tendre was of age;
But on a day his felaw gan he preye
T'expounden him this song in his langage,
Or telle him why this song was in usage;
This preyde he him to construe and declare
Ful ofte tyme upon his knowes[8] bare.

His felaw, which that elder was than he,
Answerde him thus: "this song, I have herd seye,
Was maked of our blisful lady free,[9]
Hir to salue,[10] and eek hir for to preye
To been our help and socour whan we deye.
I can no more expounde in this matere;
I lerne song, I can but smal grammere."

"And is this song maked in reverence
Of Cristes moder?" seyde this innocent;
"Now certes, I wol do my diligence
To conne it al, er Cristemasse is went;[11]
Though that I for my prymer shal be shent,[12]

1 help. 2 unburned. 3 didst draw down.
4 the Holy Ghost that alighted in thee.
5 illuminated.
6 This stanza paraphrases Dante, *Paradiso*, XXXIII, 13–21.
7 hardly. 8 Jewish quarter.

1 schoolboy. 2 custom. 3 innocent. 4 learn.
5 St. Nicholas, while still an infant, refused to suck on days of abstinence. He is patron-saint of children.
6 book of anthems. 7 nearer and nearer.
8 knees. 9 generous. 10 greet.
11 The anthem, *Alma redemptoris mater*, was sung for a month before and after Christmas. The Latin means, "fostering mother of the Redeemer."
12 scolded.

ıd shal be beten thryës in an houre,
wol it conne, our lady for to honoure."

s felaw taughte him homward prively,
o day to day, til he coude it by rote,
ıd than he song it well and boldely
o word to word, acording with the note;
wyës a day it passed thurgh his throte,
o scoleward and homward whan he wente;
ı Cristes moder set was his entente.

I have seyd, thurgh-out the Jewerye
is litel child, as he cam to and fro,
ıl merily than wolde he singe, and crye
*Alma redemptoris* ever-mo.
ıe swetnes hath his herte perced so
Cristes moder, that, to hir to preye,
e can nat stinte of singing by the weye.

ır firste fo, the serpent Sathanas,
ıat hath in Jewes herte his waspes nest,
o swal,[1] and seide, "O Hebraik peple, allas!
this to yow a thing that is honest,[2]
ıat swich a boy shal walken as him lest[3]
your despyt, and singe of swich sentence,
hich is agayn your lawes reverence?"

o thennes forth the Jewes han conspyred
is innocent out of this world to chace;
ı homicyde ther-to han they hyred,
ıat in an aley hadde a privee place;
ıd as the child gan for-by for to pace,
his cursed Jew him hente and heeld him faste,
ıd kitte his throte, and in a pit him caste.

I seye that in a wardrobe[4] they him threwe
her-as these Jewes purgen hir entraille.
cursed folk of Herodes al newe,
ıat may your yvel entente yow availle?
ordre wol out, certein, it wol nat faille,
ıd namely[5] ther th'onour of god shal sprede,
ıe blood out cryeth on your cursed dede.

O martir, souded[6] to virginitee,
ow maystow singen, folwing ever in oon
ıe whyte lamb celestial," quod she,
Of which the grete evangelist, seint John,
Pathmos wroot, which seith that they that goon
iforn this lamb, and singe a song al newe,
ıat never, fleshly, wommen they ne knewe."[7]

1 swelled. 2 decent. 3 as he pleases.
4 privy. 5 specially. 6 firmly attached.
7 Revelation, XIV, 3-4.

This povre widwe awaiteth al that night
After hir litel child, but he cam noght;
For which, as sone as it was dayes light,
With face pale of drede and bisy thoght,
She hath at scole and elles-wher him soght,
Til finally she gan so fer espye
That he last seyn was in the Jewerye.

With modres pitee in hir brest enclosed,
She gooth, as she were half out of hir minde,
To every place wher she hath supposed
By lyklihede hir litel child to finde;
And ever on Cristes moder meke and kinde
She cryde, and atte laste thus she wroghte,
Among the cursed Jewes she him soghte.

She frayneth[1] and she preyeth pitously
To every Jew that dwelte in thilke place,
To telle hir, if hir child wente oght for-by.
They seyde, "nay"; but Jesu, of his grace,
Yaf in hir thought, inwith[2] a litel space,
That in that place after hir sone she cryde,
Wher he was casten in a pit bisyde.

O grete god, that parfournest thy laude
By mouth of innocents, lo heer thy might!
This gemme of chastitee, this emeraude,
And eek of martirdom the ruby bright,
Ther he with throte y-corven[3] lay upright,[4]
He "*Alma redemptoris*" gan to singe
So lóude, that al the place gan to ringe.

The Cristen folk, that thurgh the strete wente,
In coomen, for to wondre up-on this thing,
And hastily they for the provost sente;
He cam anon with-outen tarying,
And herieth[5] Crist that is of heven king,
And eek his moder, honour of mankinde,
And after that, the Jewes leet he binde.

This child with pitous lamentacioun
Up-taken was, singing his song alway;
And with honour of greet processioun
They carien him un-to the nexte abbay.
His moder swowning by the bere[6] lay;
Unnethe[7] might the peple that was there
This newe Rachel bringe fro his bere.

With torment and with shamful deth echon
This provost dooth thise Jewes for to sterve[8]
That of this mordre wiste, and that anon;
He nolde no swich cursednesse observe.[9]
Yvel shal have, that yvel wol deserve.
Therfor with wilde hors[10] he dide hem drawe,
And after that he heng hem by the lawe.

1 inquires. 2 within. 3 cut.
4 face upwards. 5 praiseth. 6 bier.
7 hardly. 8 die. 9 countenance. 10 horses.

Up-on his bere ay lyth this innocent
Biforn the chief auter,[1] whyl masse laste,
And after that, the abbot with his covent
Han sped hem for to burien him ful faste;
And whan they holy water on him caste,
Yet spak this child, whan spreynd[2] was holy water,
And song — "*O Alma redemptoris mater!*"

This abbot, which that was an holy man
As monkes been, or elles oghten be,
This yonge child to conjure he bigan,
And seyde, "o dere child, I halse[3] thee,
In vertu of the holy Trinitee,
Tel me what is thy cause for to singe,
Sith that thy throte is cut, to my seminge?"

"My throte is cut un-to my nekke-boon,"
Seyde this child, "and, as by wey of kinde,[4]
I sholde have deyed, ye, longe tyme agoon,
But Jesu Crist, as ye in bokes finde,
Wil that his glorie laste and be in minde;
And, for the worship of his moder dere,
Yet may I singe '*O Alma*' loude and clere.

This welle of mercy, Cristes moder swete,
I lovede alwey, as after my conninge;[5]
And whan that I my lyf sholde forlete,[6]
To me she cam, and bad me for to singe
This antem verraily in my deyinge,
As ye han herd, and, whan that I had songe,
Me thoughte, she leyde a greyn up-on my tonge.

Wherfor I singe, and singe I moot certeyn
In honour of that blisful mayden free,
Til fro my tonge of-taken is the greyn;
And afterward thus seyde she to me,
'My litel child, now wol I fecche thee
Whan that the greyn is fro thy tonge y-take;
Be nat agast, I wol thee nat forsake.'"

This holy monk, this abbot, him mene I,
His tonge out-caughte, and took a-wey the greyn,
And he yaf up the goost ful softely.
And whan this abbot had this wonder seyn,
His salte teres trikled doun as reyn,
And gruf[7] he fil al plat up-on the grounde,
And stille he lay as he had been y-bounde.

The covent eek lay on the pavement
Weping, and herien[8] Cristes moder dere,
And after that they ryse, and forth ben went,
And toke awey this martir fro his bere,
And in a tombe of marbul-stones clere
Enclosen they his litel body swete;
Ther he is now, god leve us for to mete.[1]

O yonge Hugh of Lincoln, slayn also
With cursed Jewes, as it is notable,
For it nis but a litel whyle ago;
Preye eek for us, we sinful folk unstable,
That, of his mercy, god so merciable
On us his grete mercy multiplye,
For reverence of his moder Marye. Amen

*Here is ended the Prioresses Tale*

1 altar. 2 sprinkled. 3 beseech.
4 nature.
5 as well as I knew how 6 give up.
7 on his face. 8 praise.

## THE FRIAR'S TALE

Friar and Summoner are traditional enemi
The Summoner, an officer of the ecclesiastic
courts, is a hanger-on of the "secular" clergy
the parish priest and his bishop. The Friar
belonging to an order outside the bishop's juri
diction, were continually meddling throug
their own spiritual ministrations in the pastor
work of the parish priest, an interference whic
the priest naturally resented. On the Cante
bury pilgrimage Chaucer's Summoner ar
Friar get to quarrelling, and each tells a story
the expense of the other. *The Friar's Ta*
applies to a Summoner a popular anecdote pr
viously told at the expense of a bailiff or
lawyer; but the bare anecdote is developed int
a tale of vivid realization and delicious com
irony.

## THE FRIAR'S PROLOGUE

*The Prologe of the Freres Tale*

This worthy limitour,[2] this noble Frere,
He made alwey a maner louring chere
Upon the Somnour, but for honestee
No vileyns word as yet to him spak he.
But atte laste he seyde un-to the Wyf,
"Dame," quod he, "god yeve yow rigl
good lyf!
Ye han heer touched, al-so mote I thee,[3]
In scole-matere greet difficultee;
Ye han seyd muchel thing right wel, I sey
But dame, here as we ryden by the weye,
Us nedeth nat to speken but of game,
And lete auctoritees, on goddes name,
To preching and to scole eek of clergye.
But if it lyke to this companye,
I wol yow of a somnour telle a game.
Pardee, ye may wel knowe by the name,
That of a somnour may no good be sayd;
I praye that noon of you be yvel apayd.[4]

1 i.e. in heaven.
2 A friar licensed to beg for alms within a certain limit area.
3 prosper. 4 displeased.

somnour is a renner up and doun
ith mandements for fornicacioun,
id is y-bet at every tounes ende."
Our host tho spak, "a! sire, ye sholde be hende[1]
id curteys, as a man of your estaat;
companye we wol have no debaat.[2]
lleth your tale, and lat the Somnour be."
"Nay," quod the Somnour, "lat him seye to me
hat so him list; whan it comth to my lot,
god, I shal him quyten every grot.
hal him tellen which a greet honour
is to be a flateringe limitour;
id his offyce I shal him telle, y-wis."
Our host answerde, "pees, na-more of this."
id after this he seyde un-to the Frere,
el forth your tale, leve maister deere."

*Here endeth the Prologe of the Frere*

## THE FRIAR'S TALE

*Here biginneth the Freres Tale*

hilom ther was dwellinge in my contree
erchedeken, a man of heigh degree,
hat boldely dide execucioun
punisshinge of fornicacioun,
wicchecraft, and eek of bauderye,
diffamacioun, and avoutrye,[3]
chirche-reves,[4] and of testaments,
contractes, and of lakke of sacraments,
id eek of many another maner cryme
hich nedeth nat rehercen at this tyme;
usure, and of symonye also.
t certes, lechours dide he grettest wo;
ey sholde singen, if that they were hent;[5]
id smale tytheres weren foule y-shent.
any persone wolde up-on hem pleyne,
er mighte asterte him[6] no pecunial peyne.
r smale tythes and for smal offringe
made the peple pitously to singe.
r er the bisshop caughte hem with his hook,
ey weren in the erchedeknes book.
anne hadde he, thurgh his jurisdiccioun,
wer to doon on hem correccioun.
hadde a Somnour redy to his hond,
slyer boy was noon in Engelond;
r subtilly he hadde his espiaille,
at taughte him, wher that him mighte availle.
coude spare of lechours oon or two,
techen him to foure and twenty mo.

For thogh this Somnour wood[1] were as an hare,
To telle his harlotrye I wol nat spare;
For we been out of his correccioun;[2]
They han of us no jurisdiccioun,
Ne never shullen, terme of alle hir lyves,
"Peter! so been the wommen of the styves,"[3]
Quod the Somnour, "y-put out of my cure!"
"Pees, with mischance and with mis-aventure,"
Thus seyde our host, "and lat him telle his tale.
Now telleth forth, thogh that the Somnour gale,[4]
Ne spareth nat, myn owene maister dere."
This false theef, this Somnour, quod the Frere,
Hadde alwey baudes redy to his hond,
As any hauk to lure in Engelond,
That tolde him al the secree that they knewe;
For hir acqueyntance was nat come of-newe.
They weren hise approwours[5] prively;
He took him-self a greet profit therby;
His maister knew nat alwey what he wan.
With-outen mandement, a lewed[6] man
He coude somne, on peyne of Cristes curs,
And they were gladde for to fille his purs,
And make him grete festes atte nale.[7]
And right as Judas hadde purses smale,
And was a theef, right swich a theef was he;
His maister hadde but half his duëtee.[8]
He was, if I shal yeven him his laude,
A theef, and eek a Somnour, and a baude.
He hadde eek wenches at his retenue,
That, whether that sir Robert or sir Huwe,
Or Jakke, or Rauf, or who-so that it were,
That lay by hem, they tolde it in his ere;
Thus was the wenche and he of oon assent.
And he wolde fecche a feyned mandement,
And somne hem to the chapitre[9] bothe two,
And pile[10] the man, and lete the wenche go.
Thanne wolde he seye, "frend, I shal for thy sake
Do stryken hir out of our lettres blake;
Thee thar[11] na-more as in this cas travaille;
I am thy freend, ther I thee may availle."
Certeyn he knew of bryberyes mo
Than possible is to telle in yeres two.
For in this world nis dogge for the bowe,
That can an hurt deer from an hool y-knowe,
Bet than this Somnour knew a sly lechour,
Or an avouter, or a paramour.

1 polite. 2 quarrel. 3 adultery.
4 church wardens. 5 caught.
6 he could avoid.

1 mad.
2 The Friar, as a member of a mendicant order, was not under the jurisdiction of the diocese in which he lived.
3 brothels. 4 exclaim. 5 informers.
6 ignorant. 7 at the ale house. 8 sum due to him.
9 chapter house. 10 plunder. 11 thou needest.

And, for that was the fruit of al his rente,
Therfore on it he sette al his entente.
And so bifel, that ones on a day
This Somnour, ever waiting on his pray,
Rood for to somne a widwe, an old ribybe,[1]
Feyninge a cause, for he wolde brybe.
And happed that he saugh bifore him ryde
A gay yeman,[2] under a forest-syde.
A bowe he bar, and arwes brighte and kene;
He hadde up-on a courtepy[3] of grene;
An hat up-on his heed with frenges blake.
"Sir," quod this Somnour, "hayl! and wel a-take!"
"Wel-come," quod he, "and every good felawe!
Wher rydestow under this grene shawe?"[4]
Seyde this yeman, "wiltow fer to day?"
This Somnour him answerde, and seyde, "nay;
Heer faste by," quod he, "is myn entente
To ryden, for to reysen up a rente
That longeth to my lordes duëtee."
"Artow thanne a bailly?" "Ye!" quod he.
He dorste nat, for verray filthe and shame,
Seye that he was a somnour, for the name.
"*Depardieux*," quod this yeman, "dere brother,
Thou art a bailly, and I am another.
I am unknowen as in this contree;
Of thyn aqueyntance I wolde praye thee,
And eek of brotherhede, if that yow leste.
I have gold and silver in my cheste;
If that thee happe to comen in our shyre,
Al shal be thyn, right as thou wolt desyre."
"Grantmercy,"[5] quod this Somnour, "by my feith!"
Everich in otheres hand his trouthe leith,
For to be sworne bretheren til they deye.
In daliance they ryden forth hir weye.
This Somnour, which that was as ful of jangles,[6]
As ful of venim been thise wariangles,[7]
And ever enquering up-on every thing,
"Brother," quod he, "where is now your dwelling,
Another day if that I sholde yow seche?"
This yeman him answerde in softe speche,
"Brother," quod he, "fer in the north[8] contree,
Wher, as I hope, som-tyme I shal thee see.
Er we departe, I shal thee so wel wisse,
That of myn hous ne shaltow never misse."
"Now, brother," quod this Somnour, "I yow preye,
Teche me, whyl that we ryden by the weye,
Sin that ye been a baillif as am I,
Som subtiltee, and tel me feithfully
In myn offyce how I may most winne;
And spareth nat for conscience ne sinne,
But as my brother tel me, how do ye?"
"Now, by my trouthe, brother dere, seyde he,
"As I shal tellen thee a feithful tale,
My wages been ful streite[1] and ful smale.
My lord is hard to me and daungerous,[2]
And myn offyce is ful laborous;
And therfore by extorcions I live.
For sothe, I take al that men wol me yive;
Algate, by sleyghte or by violence,
Fro yeer to yeer I winne al my dispence.
I can no bettre telle feithfully."
"Now, certes," quod this Somnour, "so fare I;
I spare nat to taken, god it woot,
But-if it be to hevy or to hoot.
What I may gete in conseil privély,
No maner conscience of that have I;
Nere myn extorcioun, I mighte nat liven,
Ne of swiche japes[3] wol I nat be shriven.
Stomak ne conscience ne knowe I noon;
I shrewe thise shrifte-fadres[4] everichoon.
Wel be we met, by god and by seint Jame!
But, leve brother, tel me than thy name,"
Quod this Somnour; and in this mene whyle
This yeman gan a litel for to smyle.
"Brother," quod he, "wiltow that I the telle?
I am a feend, my dwelling is in helle.
And here I ryde about my purchasing,
To wite wher men wolde yeve me any thing.
My purchas is th'effect of al my rente.[5]
Loke how thou rydest for the same entente
To winne good, thou rekkest never how;
Right so fare I, for ryde wolde I now
Un-to the worldes ende for a preye."
"A," quod this Somnour, "*ben'cite*, what sey ye?
I wende ye were a yeman trewely.
Ye han a mannes shap as wel as I;
Han ye figure than determinat
In helle, ther ye been in your estat?"
"Nay, certeinly," quod he, "ther have we noon;
But whan us lyketh, we can take us oon,
Or elles make yow seme we ben shape
Som-tyme lyk a man, or lyk an ape;
Or lyk an angel can I ryde or go.
It is no wonder thing thogh it be so;

1 hag. 2 yeoman. 3 short jacket. 4 forest.
5 many thanks. 6 idle talk. 7 butcher-birds.
8 The north, as the region of darkness, was believed to be the home of devils.

1 restricted. 2 overbearing. 3 jokes.
4 I curse these father-confessors.
5 what I get is the sum-total of my income.

lousy jogelour can deceyve thee,
nd pardee, yet can[1] I more craft than he."
"Why," quod the Somnour, "ryde ye thanne or goon
n sondry shap, and nat alwey in oon?"
"For we," quod he, "wol us swich formes make
s most able is our preyes for to take."
"What maketh yow to han al this labour?"
"Ful many a cause, leve sir Somnour,"
eyde this feend, "but alle thing hath tyme.
he day is short, and it is passed pryme,[2]
nd yet ne wan I no-thing in this day.
wol entende to winnen, if I may,
nd nat entende our wittes to declare.
or, brother myn, thy wit is al to bare
o understonde, al-thogh I tolde hem thee.
ut, for thou axest why labouren we;
or, som-tyme, we ben goddes instruments,
nd menes to don his comandements,
Vhan that him list, up-on his creatures,
n divers art and in divers figures.
Vith-outen him we have no might, certayn,
f that him list to stonden ther-agayn.
nd som-tyme, at our prayere, han we leve
nly the body and nat the soule greve;
Vitnesse on Job, whom that we diden wo.
nd som-tyme han we might of bothe two,
his is to seyn, of soule and body eke.
nd somtyme be we suffred for to seke
p-on a man, and doon his soule unreste,
nd nat his body, and al is for the beste.
Vhan he withstandeth our temptacioun,
t is a cause of his savacioun;
l-be-it that it was nat our entente
le sholde be sauf, but that we wolde him hente.[3]
nd som-tyme be we servant un-to man,
s to the erchebisshop Seint Dunstan
nd to the apostles servant eek was I."
"Yet tel me," quod the Somnour, "feithfully,
Make ye yow newe bodies thus alway
f elements?" the feend answerde, "nay;
om-tyme we feyne, and som-tyme we aryse
Vith dede bodies in ful sondry wyse,
nd speke as renably[4] and faire and wel
s to the Phitonissa[5] dide Samuel.
nd yet wol som men seye it was nat he;
I do no fors of[6] your divinitee.
But o thing warne I thee, I wol nat jape,
Thou wolt algates wite how we ben shape;
Thou shalt her-afterward, my brother dere,
Com ther thee nedeth nat of me to lere.

For thou shalt by thyn owene experience
Conne in a chayer rede[1] of this sentence
Bet than Virgyle, whyl he was on lyve,
Or Dant also; now lat us ryde blyve.
For I wol holde companye with thee
Til it be so, that thou forsake me."
"Nay," quod this Somnour, "that shal nat bityde;
I am a yeman, knowen is ful wyde;
My trouthe wol I holde as in this cas.
For though thou were the devel Sathanas,
My trouthe wol I holde to my brother,
As I am sworn, and ech of us til other
For to be trewe brother in this cas;
And bothe we goon abouten our purchas.
Tak thou thy part, what that men wol thee yive,
And I shall myn; thus may we bothe live.
And if that any of us have more than other,
Lat him be trewe, and parte it with his brother."
"I graunte," quod the devel, "by my fey."
And with that word they ryden forth hir wey.
And right at the entring of the tounes ende,
To which this Somnour shoop him[2] for to wende,
They saugh a cart, that charged was with hey,
Which that a carter droof forth in his wey.
Deep was the wey, for which the carte stood
The carter smoot, and cryde, as he were wood.
"Hayt, Brok! hayt, Scot! what spare ye for the stones?
The feend," quod he, "yow fecche body and bones,
As ferforthly as ever were ye foled!
So muche wo as I have with yow tholed![3]
The devel have al, bothe hors and cart and hey!"
This Somnour seyde, "heer shal we have a pley;"
And neer the feend he drough, as noght ne were,
Ful prively, and rouned[4] in his ere:
"Herkne, my brother, herkne, by thy feith;
Herestow nat how that the carter seith?
Hent[5] it anon, for he hath yeve it thee,
Bothe hey and cart, and eek hise caples[6] three."
"Nay," quod the devel, "god wot, never a deel;
It is nat his entente, trust me weel.
Axe him thy-self, if thou nat trowest me,
Or elles stint[7] a while, and thou shalt see."

1 know. 2 nine A.M. 3 catch. 4 reasonably. 5 The Witch of Endor. 6 I take no stock in.

1 lecture. 2 made his plans. 3 suffered. 4 whispered. 5 take. 6 cart-horses. 7 stop.

This carter thakketh[1] his hors upon the croupe,
And they bigonne drawen and to-stoupe,[2]
"Heyt, now!" quod he, "ther Jesu Crist yow blesse,
And al his handwerk, bothe more and lesse!
That was wel twight,[3] myn owene lyard[4] boy!
I pray god save thee and sëynt Loy!
Now is my cart out of the slow, pardee!"
"Lo! brother," quod the feend, "what tolde I thee?
Heer may ye see, myn owene dere brother,
The carl[5] spak oo thing, but he thoghte another.
Lat us go forth abouten our viage;
Heer winne I no-thing up-on cariage." [6]
Whan that they comen som-what out of toune,
This Somnour to his brother gan to roune,
"Brother," quod he, "heer woneth an old rebekke,[7]
That hadde almost as lief to lese hir nekke
As for to yeve a peny of hir good.
I wol han twelf pens, though that she be wood,[8]
Or I wol sompne hir un-to our offyce;
And yet, god woot, of hir knowe I no vyce.
But for thou canst nat, as in this contree,
Winne thy cost, tak heer ensample of me."
This Somnour clappeth at the widwes gate.
"Com out," quod he, "thou olde viritrate![9]
I trowe thou hast som frere or preest with thee!"
"Who clappeth?" seyde this widwe, "*ben'cite!*
God save you, sire, what is your swete wille?"
"I have," quod he, "of somonce here a bille;
Up peyne of cursing,[10] loke that thou be
To-morn bifore the archedeknes knee
T'answere to the court of certeyn thinges."
"Now, lord," quod she, "Crist Jesu, king of kinges,
So wisly[11] helpe me, as I ne may.
I have been syk, and that ful many a day.
I may nat go so fer," quod she, "ne ryde,
But I be deed, so priketh it in my syde.
May I nat axe a libel,[12] sir Somnour,
And answere there, by my procutour,[13]
To swich thing as men wol opposen me?"
"Yis," quod this Somnour, "pay anon, lat se,
Twelf pens to me, and I wol thee acquyte.
I shall no profit han ther-by but lyte;
My maister hath the profit, and nat I.
Com of, and lat me ryden hastily;
Yif me twelf pens, I may no lenger tarie."
"Twelf pens," quod she, "now lad Seinte Marie
So wisly help me out of care and sinne,
This wyde world thogh that I sholde winne
Ne have I nat twelf pens with-inne myn hold.
Ye knowen wel that I am povre and old;
Kythe[1] your almesse on me povre wrecche."
"Nay than," quod he, "the foule feend me fecche
If I th'excuse, though thou shul be spilt!"
"Alas," quod she, "god woot, I have no gilt."
"Pay me," quod he, "or by the swete seinte Anne,
As I wol bere awey thy newe panne
For dette, which that thou owest me of old,
Whan that thou madest thyn housbond cokewold,
I payde at hoom for thy correccioun."
"Thou lixt,[2] quod she, "by my savacioun!
Ne was I never er now, widwe ne wyf,
Somoned un-to your court in al my lyf;
Ne never I nas but of my body trewe!
Un-to the devel blak and rough of hewe
Yeve I thy body and my panne also!"
And whan the devel herde hir cursen so
Up-on hir knees, he seyde in this manere,
"Now Mabely, myn owene moder dere,
Is this your wil in ernest, that ye seye?"
"The devel," quod she, "so fecche him ere he deye,
And panne and al, but he wol him repente!"
"Nay, olde stot,[3] that is nat myn entente,"
Quod this Somnour, "for to repente me,
For any thing that I have had of thee;
I wolde I hadde thy smok and every clooth!"
"Now, brother," quod the devel, "be nat wrooth;
Thy body and this panne ben myne by right.
Thou shalt with me to helle yet to-night,
Where thou shalt knowen of our privetee
More than a maister of divinitee:"
And with that word this foule feend hente;[4]
Body and soule, he with the devel wente
Wher-as that somnours han hir heritage.
And god, that maked after his image

1 beateth. 2 lean forwards. 3 pulled.
4 gray. 5 churl.
6 on account of the peasant's cart and horses — a technical term in feudal law.
7 dame. 8 mad. 9 hag. 10 excommunication.
11 certainly. 12 ask for a copy of the indictment.
13 legal representative.

1 show. 2 liest. 3 beast. 4 seized.

ankinde, save and gyde us alle and some;
d leve[1] this Somnour good man to bicome!
Lordinges, I coude han told yow, quod this Frere,
dde I had leyser for this Somnour here,
ter the text of Crist and Poul and John,
d of our othere doctours many oon,
viche peynes, that your hertes mighte agryse,[2]
-be-it so, no tonge may devyse,
ogh that I mighte a thousand winter telle,
e peyne of thilke cursed hous of helle.
t, for to kepe us fro that cursed place,
aketh, and preyeth Jesu for his grace
kepe us fro the temptour Sathanas.
rketh this word, beth war as in this cas;
e leoun sit in his await[3] alway
slee the innocent, if that he may.
isposeth ay your hertes to withstonde
e feend, that yow wolde make thral and bonde.
e may nat tempten yow over your might;
r Crist wol be your champion and knight.
d prayeth that thise Somnours hem repente
hir misdedes, er that the feend hem hente.

*Here endeth the Freres Tale.*

## THE FRANKLIN'S TALE

The scene is Brittany; the time is, for Chaucer as well as for us, long ago in the days of gan antiquity. The story is of courtly love, agic, and quixotic loyalty to one's spoken rd. The tale is a beautiful example of the ort romance, built about a single episode, of e type known in Old French literature as the . One may read the *lais* of Marie de France the prose translation of Eugene Mason veryman's Library).

### THE FRANKLIN'S PROLOGUE

*The Prologe of the Frankeleyns Tale*

hise olde gentil Britons in hir dayes
f diverse aventures maden layes,[4]
ymeyed in hir firste Briton tonge;
hich layes with hir instruments they songe,
r elles redden hem for hir plesaunce;
nd oon of hem have I in remembraunce,
hich I shal seyn with good wil as I can.
But, sires, by-cause I am a burel[5] man,
t my biginning first I yow biseche
ave me excused of my rude speche;
lerned never rethoryk certeyn;
hing that I speke, it moot be bare and pleyn.

I sleep never on the mount of Pernaso,[1]
No lerned Marcus Tullius Cithero.
Colours[2] ne knowe I none, with-outen drede,
But swiche colours as growen in the mede,
Or elles swiche as men dye or peynte.
Colours of rethoryk ben me to queynte;[3]
My spirit feleth noght of swich matere.
But if yow list, my tale shul ye here.

### THE FRANKLIN'S TALE

*Here biginneth the Frankeleyns Tale*

In Armorik, that called is Britayne,[4]
Ther was a knight that loved and dide his payne
To serve a lady in his beste wyse;
And many a labour, many a greet empryse[5]
He for his lady wroghte, er she were wonne.
For she was oon, the faireste under sonne,
And eek therto come of so heigh kinrede,
That wel unnethes dorste this knight, for drede,
Telle hir his wo, his peyne, and his distresse.
But atte laste, she, for his worthinesse,
And namely[6] for his meke obeysaunce,
Hath swich a pitee caught of his penaunce,
That prively she fil of his accord[7]
To take him for hir housbonde and hir lord,
Of swich lordshipe as men han over hir wyves;
And for to lede the more in blisse hir lyves,
Of his free wil he swoor hir as a knight,
That never in al his lyf he, day ne night,
Ne sholde up-on him take no maistrye
Agayn hir wil, ne kythe[8] hir jalousye,
But hir obeye, and folwe hir wil in al
As any lovere to his lady shal;
Save that the name of soveraynetee,
That wolde he have for shame of his degree.
She thanked him, and with ful greet humblesse
She seyde, "sire, sith of your gentillesse
Ye profre me to have so large a reyne,[9]
Ne wolde never god bitwixe us tweyne,
As in my gilt, were outher werre or stryf.
Sir, I wol be your humble trewe wyf,
Have heer my trouthe, til that myn herte breste."
Thus been they bothe in quiete and in reste.
For o thing, sires, saufly dar I seye,
That frendes everich other moot obeye,
If they wol longe holden companye.
Love wol nat ben constreyned by maistrye;

1 permit. 2 shudder. 3 watch.
4 short romances. 5 unlettered.

1 Parnassus. 2 rhetorical figures.
3 elaborate. 4 Brittany. 5 undertaking.
6 particularly. 7 she agreed with him.
8 show. 9 so generous a control.

Whan maistrie comth, the god of love anon
Beteth hise winges, and farewel! he is gon!
Love is a thing as any spirit free;
Wommen of kinde[1] desiren libertee,
And nat to ben constreyned as a thral;
And so don men, if I soth seyen shal.
Loke who that is most pacient in love,
He is at his avantage al above.
Pacience is an heigh vertu certeyn;
For it venquisseth, as thise clerkes seyn,
Thinges that rigour sholde never atteyne.
For every word men may nat chyde or pleyne.[2]
Lerneth to suffre, or elles, so moot I goon,
Ye shul it lerne, wher-so ye wole or noon.
For in this world, certein, ther no wight is,
That he ne dooth or seith som-tyme amis.
Ire, siknesse, or constellacioun,[3]
Wyn, wo, or chaunginge of complexioun[4]
Causeth ful ofte to doon amis or speken.
On every wrong a man may nat be wreken;[5]
After the tyme, moste be temperaunce
To every wight that can on[6] governaunce.
And therfore hath this wyse worthy knight,
To live in ese, suffrance hir bihight,
And she to him ful wisly gan to swere
That never sholde ther be defaute in here.

Heer may men seen an humble wys accord;
Thus hath she take hir servant and hir lord,
Servant in love, and lord in mariage;
Than was he bothe in lordship and servage;
Servage? nay, but in lordshipe above,
Sith he hath bothe his lady and his love;
His lady, certes, and his wyf also,
The which that lawe of love acordeth to.
And whan he was in this prosperitee,
Hoom with his wyf he gooth to his contree,
Nat fer fro Penmark,[7] ther his dwelling was,
Wher-as he liveth in blisse and in solas.

Who coude telle, but he had wedded be,
The joye, the ese, and the prosperitee
That is bitwixe an housbonde and his wyf?
A yeer and more lasted this blisful lyf,
Til that the knight of which I speke of thus,
That of Kayrrud was cleped Arveragus,[8]
Shoop him[9] to goon, and dwelle a yeer or tweyne
In Engelond, that cleped was eek Briteyne,
To seke in armes worship and honour;
For al his lust[10] he sette in swich labour;
And dwelleth ther two yeer, the book seith thus.

Now wol I stinte[11] of this Arveragus,

1 nature. 2 complain. 3 influence of the stars.
4 change of bodily constitution.
5 avenged. 6 knows about.
7 A headland on the west coast of Brittany.
8 was called Arveragus of Kayrrud.
9 made his plans. 10 desire. 11 cease.

And speken I wole of Dorigene his wyf,
That loveth hir housbonde as hir hertes ly
For his absence wepeth she and syketh,[1]
As doon thise noble wyves whan hem lyket
She moorneth, waketh, wayleth, fasteth pleyneth;
Desyr of his presence hir so distreyneth,
That al this wyde world she sette at noght
Hir frendes, whiche that knewe hir hev thoght,
Conforten hir in al that ever they may;
They prechen hir, they telle hir night and day
That causelees she sleeth hir-self, allas!
And every confort possible in this cas
They doon to hir with al hir bisinesse,
Al for to make hir leve hir hevinesse.

By proces, as ye knowen everichoon,
Men may so longe graven in a stoon,
Til som figure ther-inne emprented be.
So longe han they conforted hir, til she
Receyved hath, by hope and by resoun,
Th'emprenting of hir consolacioun,
Thurgh which hir grete sorwe gan aswage;
She may nat alwey duren[2] in swich rage.

And eek Arveragus, in al this care,
Hath sent hir lettres hoom of his welfare,
And that he wol come hastily agayn;
Or elles hadde this sorwe hir herte slayn.

Hir freendes sawe hir sorwe gan to slake,
And preyede hir on knees, for goddes sake
To come and romen hir[3] in companye,
Awey to dryve hir derke fantasye.
And finally, she graunted that requeste;
For wel she saugh that it was for the beste.

Now stood hir castel faste by the see,
And often with hir freendes walketh she
Hir to disporte up-on the bank an heigh,
Wher-as she many a ship and barge seigh[4]
Seilinge hir cours, wher-as hem liste go;
But than was that a parcel of hir wo.
For to hir-self ful ofte "allas!" seith she,
"Is ther no ship, of so manye as I see,
Wol bringen hom my lord? than were myn herte
Al warisshed[5] of his bittre peynes smerte."

Another tyme ther wolde she sitte and thinke,
And caste hir eyen dounward fro the brinke.
But whan she saugh the grisly rokkes blake
For verray fere so wolde hir herte quake,
That on hir feet she mighte hir noght sustene
Than wolde she sitte adoun upon the grene
And pitously in-to the see biholde,
And seyn right thus, with sorweful sykes colde:

1 sigheth. 2 continue. 3 take a walk.
4 saw. 5 cured. 6 sighs.

"Eterne god, that thurgh thy purveyaunce[1]
lest the world by certein governaunce,
ydel,[2] as men seyn, ye no-thing make;
t, lord, thise grisly feendly rokkes blake,
at semen rather a foul confusioun
werk than any fair creacioun
swich a parfit wys god and a stable,
y han ye wroght this werk unresonable?
by this werk, south, north, ne west, ne eest,
er nis y-fostred man, ne brid, ne beest;
looth no good, to my wit, but anoyeth.[3]
ye nat, lord, how mankinde it destroyeth?
hundred thousand bodies of mankinde
n rokkes slayn, al be they nat in minde,
hich mankinde is so fair part of thy werk
at thou it madest lyk to thyn owene merk.[4]
an semed it ye hadde a greet chiertee[5]
ward mankinde; but how than may it be
at ye swiche menes[6] make it to destroyen,
hiche menes do no good, but ever anoyen?
root wel clerkes wol seyn, as hem leste,
arguments, that al is for the beste,
ough I ne can the causes nat y-knowe.
t thilke god, that made wind to blowe,
kepe my lord! this my conclusioun;
clerkes lete[7] I al disputisoun.
t wolde god that alle thise rokkes blake
re sonken in-to helle for his sake!
lise rokkes sleen myn herte for the fere."
us wolde she seyn, with many a pitous tere.
Hir freendes sawe that it was no disport
romen by the see, but disconfort;
d shopen[8] for to pleyen somwher elles.
ey leden hir by riveres and by welles,
d eek in othere places delitables;
ey dauncen, and they pleyen at ches and tables.[9]
So on a day, right in the morwe-tyde,
-to a gardin that was ther bisyde,
which that they had maad hir ordinaunce
vitaille and of other purveyaunce,[10]
ey goon and pleye hem al the longe day.
d this was on the sixte morwe of May,
hich May had peynted with his softe shoures
is gardin ful of leves and of floures;
d craft of mannes hand so curiously
rayed hadde this gardin, trewely,
at never was ther gardin of swich prys,[11]
t-if it were the verray paradys.

Th' odour of floures and the fresshe sighte
Wolde han maad any herte for to lighte
That ever was born, but-if to gret siknesse,
Or to gret sorwe helde it in distresse;
So ful it was of beautee with plesaunce.
At-after diner gonne they to daunce,
And singe also, save Dorigen allone,
Which made alwey hir compleint and hir mone;
For she ne saugh him on the daunce go,
That was hir housbonde and hir love also.
But nathelees she moste a tyme abyde,
And with good hope lete hir sorwe slyde.
Up-on this daunce, amonges othere men,
Daunced a squyer biforen Dorigen,
That fressher was and jolyer of array,
As to my doom,[1] than is the monthe of May.
He singeth, daunceth, passinge any man
That is, or was, sith that the world bigan.
Ther-with he was, if men sholde him discryve,
Oon of the beste faringe man on-lyve;
Yong, strong, right vertuous, and riche and wys,
And wel biloved, and holden in gret prys.
And shortly, if the sothe I tellen shal,
Unwiting of this Dorigen at al,
This lusty squyer, servant to Venus,
Which that y-cleped was Aurelius,
Had loved hir best of any creature
Two yeer and more, as was his aventure,
But never dorste he telle hir his grevaunce;
With-outen coppe[2] he drank al his penaunce.
He was despeyred, no-thing dorste he seye,
Save in his songes somwhat wolde he wreye[3]
His wo, as in a general compleyning;
He seyde he lovede, and was biloved nothing.
Of swich matere made he manye layes,
Songes, compleintes, roundels, virelayes,
How that he dorste nat his sorwe telle,
But languissheth, as a furie dooth in helle;
And dye he moste, he seyde, as dide Ekko
For Narcisus, that dorste nat telle hir wo.
In other manere than ye here me seye,
Ne dorste he nat to hir his wo biwreye;[4]
Save that, paraventure, som-tyme at daunces,
Ther yonge folk kepen hir observaunces,
It may wel be he loked on hir face
In swich a wyse, as man that asketh grace;
But no-thing wiste she of his entente.
Nathelees, it happed, er they thennes wente,
By-cause that he was hir neighebour,
And was a man of worship and honour,

providence. 2 vain. 3 injures. 4 image.
love. 6 instruments. 7 leave. 8 arranged.
backgammon. 10 provision. 11 esteem.

1 judgment.
2 without cup, i.e. not in small quantities.
3 reveal. 4 reveal.

And hadde [1] y-knowen him of tyme yore,
They fille in speche; and forth more and more
Un-to his purpos drough [2] Aurelius,
And whan he saugh his tyme, he seyde thus:
"Madame," quod he, "by god that this world made,
So that I wiste it mighte your herte glade,
I wolde, that day that your Arveragus
Wente over the see, that I, Aurelius,
Had went ther never I sholde have come agayn;
For wel I woot my service is in vayn.
My guerdon is but bresting [3] of myn herte;
Madame, reweth upon my peynes smerte;
For with a word ye may me sleen or save,
Heer at your feet god wolde that I were grave! [4]
I ne have as now no leyser more to seye;
Have mercy, swete, or ye wol do me deye!"
She gan to loke up-on Aurelius:
"Is this your wil," quod she, "and sey ye thus?
Never erst," quod she, "ne wiste I what ye mente.
But now, Aurelie, I knowe your entente,
By thilke god that yaf me soule and lyf,
Ne shal I never been untrewe wyf
In word ne werk, as fer as I have wit:
I wol ben his to whom that I am knit;
Tak this for fynal answer as of me."
But after that in pley thus seyde she:
"Aurelie," quod she, "by heighe god above,
Yet wolde I graunte yow to been your love,
Sin I yow see so pitously complayne;
Loke what day that, endelong [5] Britayne,
Ye remoeve alle the rokkes, stoon by stoon,
That they ne lette ship ne boot to goon —
I seye, whan ye han maad the coost so clene
Of rokkes, that ther nis no stoon y-sene,
Than wol I love yow best of any man;
Have heer my trouthe in al that ever I can."
"Is ther non other grace in yow?" quod he.
"No, by that lord," quod she, "that maked me!
For wel I woot that it shal never bityde.
Lat swiche folies out of your herte slyde.
What deyntee [6] sholde a man han in his lyf
For to go love another mannes wyf,

1 The subject is Dorigen. 2 drew.
3 breaking. 4 buried. 5 all along. 6 pleasure.

That hath hir body whan so that h lyketh?"
Aurelius ful ofte sore syketh; [1]
Wo was Aurelie, whan that he this herde,
And with a sorweful herte he thus a swerde:
"Madame," quod he, "this were an possible!
Than moot I dye of sodein deth horrible."
And with that word he turned him anoon.
Tho come hir othere freendes many oon,
And in the aleyes romeden up and doun,
And no-thing wiste of this conclusioun,
But sodeinly bigonne revel newe
Til that the brighte sonne loste his hewe;
For th'orisonte [2] hath reft the sonne his ligh
This is as muche to seye as it was night.
And hoom they goon in joye and in solas,
Save only wrecche Aurelius, allas!
He to his hous is goon with sorweful herte
He seeth he may nat fro his deeth asterte.
Him semed that he felte his herte colde;
Up to the hevene his handes he gan holde
And on his knowes [4] bare he sette him dou
And in his raving seyde his orisoun.
For verray wo out of his wit he breyde.[5]
He niste what he spak, but thus he seyde;
With pitous herte his pleynt hath he bigon
Un-to the goddes, and first un-to the sonn
He seyde, "Appollo, god and governour
Of every plaunte, herbe, tree and flour,
That yevest, after they declinacioun,[6]
To ech of hem his tyme and his sesoun,
As thyn herberwe [7] chaungeth lowe or hye
Lord Phebus, cast thy merciable yë
On wrecche Aurelie, which that am but lor
Lo, lord! my lady hath my deeth y-sworn
With-oute gilt, but [8] thy benignitee
Upon my dedly herte have som pitee!
For wel I woot, lord Phebus, if yow lest,
Ye may me helpen, save my lady, best.
Now voucheth sauf that I may yow d vyse
How that I may been holpe and in wh wyse.
Your blisful suster, Lucina [9] the shene,[10]
That of the see is chief goddesse and quene
Though Neptunus have deitee in the see,
Yet emperesse aboven him is she:
Ye knowen wel, lord, that right as hir des
Is to be quiked [12] and lightned of your fyr,
For which she folweth yow ful busily,
Right so the see desyreth naturelly

1 sigheth. 2 the horizon. 3 escape.
4 knees. 5 he went out of his wits.
6 according to thy height in the sky (at different se sons of the year).
7 dwelling place. 8 unless. 9 Diana, the Moo
10 bright. 11 Because she controls the tide
12 endowed with life.

folwen hir, as she that is goddesse
he in the see and riveres more and lesse.
erfore, lord Phebus, this is my requeste —
this miracle, or do myn herte breste —
at now, next at this opposicioun,[1]
ich in the signe shal be of the Leoun,
preyeth hir so greet a flood to bringe,
at fyve fadme at the leeste it overspringe
e hyeste rokke in Armorik Briteyne;
d lat this flood endure yeres tweyne;
an certes to my lady may I seye:
oldeth your heste,[2] the rokkes been
aweye.'
Lord Phebus, dooth this miracle for me;
ye hir she go no faster cours than ye;
ye, preyeth your suster that she go
faster cours than ye thise yeres two.[3]
an shal she been evene atte fulle alway,
d spring-flood laste bothe night and day.
d, but she vouche-sauf in swiche manere
graunte me my sovereyn lady dere,
y hir to sinken every rok adoun
to hir owene derke regioun[4]
der the ground, ther Pluto dwelleth inne,
never-mo shal I my lady winne.
y temple in Delphos wol I barefoot seke;
rd Phebus, see the teres on my cheke,
d of my peyne have som compassioun."
d with that word in swowne he fil adoun,
d longe tyme he lay forth in a traunce.
His brother, which that knew of his penaunce,
caughte him and to bedde he hath him broght.
speyred in this torment and this thoght
te I this woful creature lye;
ese he, for me, whether he wol live or dye.
Arveragus, with hele[5] and greet honour,
he that was of chivalrye the flour,
comen hoom, and othere worthy men.
blisful artow now, thou Dorigen,
at hast thy lusty housbonde in thyne armes,
e fresshe knight, the worthy man of armes,
at loveth thee, as his owene hertes lyf.
-thing list him to been imaginatyf[6]
any wight had spoke, whyl he was oute,
hire of love; he hadde of it no doute.[7]
noght entendeth to no swich matere,
t daunceth, justeth, maketh hir good chere;
d thus in joye and blisse I lete hem dwelle,
d of the syke Aurelius wol I telle.

1 i.e. at the full moon. 2 promise.
3 i.e. that the moon remain full continuously for two years.
4 Under the name of Hecate, Diana is goddess of hades.
5 health. 6 It never occurred to him to guess.
7 fear.

In langour and in torment furious
Two yeer and more lay wrecche Aurelius,
Er any foot he mighte on erthe goon;
Ne confort in this tyme hadde he noon,
Save of his brother, which that was a clerk;[1]
He knew of al this wo and al this werk.
For to non other creature certeyn
Of this matere he dorste no word seyn.
Under his brest he bar it more secree
Than ever dide Pamphilus[2] for Galathee.
His brest was hool, with-oute for to sene,
But in his herte ay was the arwe kene.
And wel ye knowe that of a sursanure[3]
In surgerye is perilous the cure,
But men mighte touche the arwe, or come therby.
His brother weep and wayled prively,
Til atte laste him fil in remembraunce,
That whyl he was at Orliens in Fraunce,
As yonge clerkes, that been likerous,[4]
To reden artes that been curious,[5]
Seken in every halke and every herne[6]
Particuler sciences for to lerne,
He him remembred that, upon a day,
At Orliens in studie a book he say[7]
Of magik naturel, which his felawe,
That was that tyme a bacheler of lawe,
Al were he[8] ther to lerne another craft,
Had prively upon his desk y-laft;
Which book spak muchel of the operaciouns,
Touchinge the eighte and twenty mansiouns
That longen to[9] the mone, and swich folye,
As in our dayes is nat worth a flye;
For holy chirches feith in our bileve
Ne suffreth noon illusion us to greve.
And whan this book was in his remembraunce,
Anon for joye his herte gan to daunce,
And to him-self he seyde prively:
"My brother shal be warisshed[10] hastily;
For I am siker[11] that ther be sciences,
By whiche men make diverse apparences
Swiche as thise subtile tregetoures[12] pleye.
For ofte at festes have I wel herd seye,
That tregetours, with-inne an halle large,
Have maad come in a water and a barge,
And in the halle rowen up and doun.
Somtyme hath semed come a grim leoun;
And somtyme floures springe as in a mede;
Somtyme a vyne, and grapes whyte and rede;

1 scholar.
2 Reputed author of a medieval Latin love-poem in praise of a lady named Galatea.
3 a wound healed outwardly but not inwardly.
4 desirous. 5 magical.
6 in every hiding-place and corner. 7 saw.
8 although he was. 9 belong to. 10 cured.
11 sure. 12 jugglers.

Somtyme a castel, al of lym and stoon;
And whan hem lyked, voyded [1] it anoon.
Thus semed it to every mannes sighte.
Now than conclude I thus, that if I mighte
At Orliens som old felawe y-finde,
That hadde this mones mansions in minde,
Or other magik naturel above,
He sholde wel make my brother han his love.
For with an apparence a clerk may make
To mannes sighte, that alle the rokkes blake
Of Britaigne weren y-voyded everichon,
And shippes by the brinke comen and gon,
And in swich forme endure a day or two;
Than were my brother warisshed of his wo.
Than moste she nedes holden hir beheste,
Or elles he shal shame hir atte leste."
What sholde I make a lenger tale of this?
Un-to his brotheres bed he comen is,
And swich confort he yaf him for to gon
To Orliens, that he up stirte anon,
And on his wey forthward thanne is he fare,
In hope for to ben lissed [2] of his care.
Whan they were come almost to that citee,
But-if it were a two furlong or three,
A yong clerk rominge by him-self they mette,
Which that in Latin thriftily hem grette,[3]
And after that he seyde a wonder thing:
"I knowe," quod he, "the cause of your coming";
And er they ferther any fote wente,
He tolde hem al that was in hir entente.
This Briton clerk him asked of felawes
The whiche that he had knowe in olde dawes; [4]
And he answerde him that they dede were,
For which he weep ful ofte many a tere.
Doun of his hors Aurelius lighte anon,
And forth with this magicien is he gon
Hoom to his hous, and made hem wel at ese.
Hem lakked no vitaille that mighte hem plese;
So wel arrayed hous as ther was oon [5]
Aurelius in his lyf saugh never noon.
He shewed him, er he wente to sopeer,
Forestes, parkes ful of wilde deer;
Ther saugh he hertes [6] with hir hornes hye,
The gretteste that ever were seyn with yë.
He saugh of hem an hondred slayn with houndes,
And somme with arwes blede of bittre woundes.
He saugh, whan voided were thise wilde deer,
Thise fauconers upon a fair river,
That with hir haukes han the heron slayn.
Tho saugh he knightes justing in a playn;
And after this, he dide him swich plesaunce,
That he him shewed his lady on a daunce
On which him-self he daunced, as him thoughte.
And whan this maister, that this magik wroughte,
Saugh it was tyme, he clapte his handes two,
And farewel! al our revel [1] was ago.
And yet remoeved they never out of the hous,
Whyl they saugh al this sighte merveillous,
But in his studie, ther-as his bookes be,
They seten stille, and no wight but they three.
To him this maister called his squyer,
And seyde him thus: "is redy our soper?
Almost an houre it is, I undertake,
Sith I yow bad our soper for to make,
Whan that thise worthy men wenten with me
In-to my studie, ther-as my bookes be."
"Sire," quod this squyer, "whan it lyketh yow,
It is al redy, though ye wol right now."
"Go we than soupe," quod he, "as for the beste;
This amorous folk som-tyme mote han reste."
At-after soper fille they in tretee,[2]
What somme sholde this maistres guerdon be,
To remoeven alle the rokkes of Britayne,
And eek from Gerounde [3] to the mouth of Sayne.
He made it straunge,[4] and swoor, so god him save,
Lasse than a thousand pound he wolde nat have,
Ne gladly for that somme he wolde nat goon.
Aurelius, with blisful herte anoon,
Answerde thus, "fy on a thousand pound!
This wyde world, which that men seye is round,
I wolde it yeve, if I were lord of it.
This bargayn is ful drive,[5] for we ben knit.[6]
Ye shal be payed trewely, by my trouthe!
But loketh now, for no necligence or slouthe,
Ye tarie us heer no lenger than to-morwe."
"Nay," quod this clerk, "have heer my feith to borwe." [7]
To bedde is goon Aurelius whan him leste,
And wel ny al that night he hadde his reste;

1 sent away. 2 relieved. 3 greeted. 4 days.
5 So well furnished a house as that one was.
6 stags

1 entertainment. 2 discussion.
3 the Gironde river. 4 He held off.
5 completed. 6 agreed. 7 as pledge.

What for his labour and his hope of blisse,
His woful herte of penaunce hadde a lisse.[1]
Upon the morwe, whan that it was day,
To Britaigne toke they the righte way,
Aurelius, and this magicien bisyde,
And been descended ther they wolde abyde;
And this was, as the bokes me remembre,
The colde frosty seson of Decembre.
Phebus wex old,[2] and hewed lyk latoun,[3]
That in his hote declinacioun
Shoon as the burned[4] gold with stremes brighte;
But now in Capricorn[5] adoun he lighte,
Wher-as he shoon ful pale, I dar wel seyn.
The bittre frostes, with the sleet and reyn,
Destroyed hath the grene in every yerd.
Janus[6] sit by the fyr, with double berd,
And drinketh of his bugle-horn the wyn.
Biforn him stant braun of the tusked swyn,
And "Nowel"[7] cryeth every lusty man.
Aurelius, in al that ever he can,
Doth to his maister chere and reverence,
And preyeth him to doon his diligence
To bringen him out of his peynes smerte,
Or with a swerd that he wolde slitte his herte.
This subtil clerk swich routhe[8] had of this man,
That night and day he spedde him that he can,
To wayte a tyme of his conclusioun;
This is to seye, to make illusioun,
By swich an apparence or jogelrye,
I ne can no termes of astrologye,
That she and every wight sholde wene and seye,
That of Britaigne the rokkes were aweye,
Or elles they were sonken under grounde.
So atte laste he hath his tyme y-founde
To maken his japes[9] and his wrecchednesse
Of swich a supersticious cursednesse.
His tables Toletanes[10] forth he broght,
Ful wel corrected, ne ther lakked noght,
Neither his collect ne his expans yeres,[11]
Ne his rotes ne his othere geres,
As been his centres and his arguments,
And his proporcionels convenients
For his equacions in every thing.
And, by his eighte spere in his wirking,
He knew ful wel how fer Alnath was shove
Fro the heed of thilke fixe Aries above
That in the ninthe speere considered is;
Ful subtilly he calculed al this.
Whan he had founde his firste mansioun,
He knew the remenant by proporcioun;
And knew the arysing of his mone weel,
And in whos face, and terme, and every-deel;
And knew ful weel the mones mansioun
Acordaunt to his operacioun,
And knew also his othere observaunces
For swiche illusiouns and swiche meschaunces
As hethen folk used in thilke dayes;
For which no lenger maked he delayes,
But thurgh his magik, for a wyke[1] or tweye,
It semed that alle the rokkes were aweye.
Aurelius, which that yet despeired is
Wher[2] he shal han his love or fare amis,
Awaiteth night and day on this miracle;
And whan he knew that ther was noon obstacle,
That voided were thise rokkes everichon,
Doun to his maistres feet he fil[3] anon,
And seyde, "I woful wrecche, Aurelius,
Thanke yow, lord, and lady myn Venus,
That me han holpen fro my cares colde:"
And to the temple his wey forth hath he holde,
Wher-as he knew he sholde his lady see.
And whan he saugh his tyme, anon-right he,
With dredful[4] herte and with ful humble chere,
Salewed[5] hath his sovereyn lady dere:
"My righte lady," quod this woful man,
"Whom I most drede and love as I best can,
And lothest were of al this world displese,
Nere it that I for yow have swich disese,
That I moste dyen heer at your foot anon,
Noght wolde I telle how me is wo bigon;
But certes outher moste I dye or pleyne;
Ye slee me giltelees for verray peyne.
But of my deeth, thogh that ye have no routhe,
Avyseth yow, er that ye breke your trouthe.
Repenteth yow, for thilke god above,
Er ye me sleen by-cause that I yow love.
For, madame, wel ye woot what ye han hight;[6]
Nat that I chalange any thing of right
Of yow my sovereyn lady, but your grace;
But in a gardin yond, at swich a place,
Ye woot right wel what ye bihighten me;
And in myn hand your trouthe plighten ye
To love me best, god woot, ye seyde so,
Al be that I unworthy be therto.

1 relief. 2 The Sun grew old, i.e. it was winter.
3 latten, a composition metal of dull hue.
4 burnished.
5 The Sun enters the Zodiacal Sign of Capricorn in December.
6 The god for whom the month of January is named.
7 Merry Christmas. 8 pity.
9 tricks. 10 astronomical tables.
11 In lines 547–62, we have a series of technical terms from the science of astrology.

1 week. 2 whether. 3 fell.
4 timid. 5 saluted. 6 promised.

Madame, I speke it for the honour of yow,
More than to save myn hertes lyf right now;
I have do so as ye comanded me;
And if ye vouche-sauf, ye may go see.
Doth as yow list, have your biheste in minde,
For quik or deed, right ther ye shul me finde;
In yow lyth al, to do me live or deye; —
But wel I woot the rokkes been aweye!"

He taketh his leve, and she astonied stood,
In al hir face nas a drope of blood;
She wende never han come in swich a trappe:
"Allas!" quod she, "that ever this sholde happe!
For wende I never, by possibilitee,
That swich a monstre or merveille mighte be!
It is agayns the proces of nature:"
And hoom she gooth a sorweful creature.
For verray fere unnethe [1] may she go,[2]
She wepeth, wailleth, al a day or two,
And swowneth, that it routhe was to see;
But why it was, to no wight tolde she;
For out of toune was goon Arveragus.
But to hir-self she spak, and seyde thus,
With face pale and with ful sorweful chere,
In hir compleynt, as ye shul after here:

"Allas," quod she, "on thee, Fortune, I pleyne,
That unwar [3] wrapped hast me in thy cheyne;
For which, t'escape, woot I no socour
Save only deeth or elles dishonour;
Oon of thise two bihoveth me to chese.
But nathelees, yet have I lever lese [4]
My lyf than of my body have a shame,
Or knowe my-selven fals, or lese my name,
And with my deth I may be quit, y-wis.
Hath ther nat many a noble wyf, er this,
And many a mayde y-slayn hir-self, allas!
Rather than with hir body doon trespas?

Yis, certes, lo, thise stories [5] beren witnesse;
Whan thretty tyraunts, ful of cursednesse,
Had slayn Phidoun in Athenes, atte feste,
They comanded his doghtres for t'areste,
And bringen hem biforn hem in despyt
Al naked, to fulfille hir foul delyt,
And in hir fadres blood they made hem daunce
Upon the pavement, god yeve hem mischaunce!
For which thise woful maydens, ful of drede,
Rather than they wolde lese hir maydenhede,
They prively ben stirt [1] in-to a welle,
And dreynte [2] hem-selven, as the bokes telle.

They of Messene lete enquere and seke
Of Lacedomie fifty maydens eke,
On whiche they wolden doon hir lecherye;
But was ther noon of al that companye
That she nas slayn, and with a good entente
Chees rather for to dye than assente
To been oppressed of hir maydenhede.
Why sholde I thanne to dye been in drede?

Lo, eek, the tiraunt Aristoclides
That loved a mayden, heet [3] Stimphalides,
Whan that hir fader slayn was on a night,
Un-to Dianes temple goth she right,
And hente the image in hir handes two,
Fro which image wolde she never go.
No wight ne mighte hir handes of it arace,[4]
Til she was slayn right in the selve place.
Now sith that maydens hadden swich despyt
To been defouled with mannes foul delyt,
Wel oghte a wyf rather hir-selven slee
Than be defouled, as it thinketh me.

What shal I seyn of Hasdrubales wyf,
That at Cartage birafte hir-self hir lyf?
For whan she saugh that Romayns wan the toun,
She took hir children alle, and skipte adoun
In-to the fyr, and chees rather to dye
Than any Romayn dide hir vileinye.

Hath nat Lucresse y-slayn hir-self, allas!
At Rome, whanne she oppressed was
Of Tarquin, for hir thoughte it was a shame
To liven whan she hadde lost hir name?

The sevene maydens of Milesie also
Han slayn hem-self, for verray drede and wo,
Rather than folk of Gaule hem sholde oppresse.
Mo than a thousand stories, as I gesse,
Coude I now telle as touchinge this matere.

Whan Habradate was slayn, his wyf so dere
Hirselven slow, and leet hir blood to glyde
In Habradates woundes depe and wyde,
And seyde, 'my body, at the leeste way,
Ther shal no wight defoulen, if I may.'

What sholde I mo [5] ensamples heer-of sayn,
Sith that so manye han hem-selven slayn
Wel rather than they wolde defouled be?
I wol conclude, that it is bet for me
To sleen my-self, than been defouled thus.
I wol be trewe un-to Arveragus,

1 hardly. 2 walk.
3 without my knowledge. 4 I had rather lose.
5 The stories which follow are all taken from St. Jerome *Contra Jovinianum*.

1 They secretly jumped. 2 drowned.
3 called. 4 tear away. 5 more.

Or rather sleen my-self in som manere,
As dide Demociones doghter dere,
By-cause that she wolde nat defouled be.
O Cedasus! it is ful greet pitee,
To reden how thy doghtren deyde, allas!
That slowe hem-selven for swich maner cas.[1]
As greet a pitee was it, or wel more,
The Theban mayden, that for Nichanore
Hir-selven slow, right for swich maner wo.
Another Theban mayden dide right so;
For oon of Macedoine hadde hir oppressed,
She with hir deeth hir maydenhede redressed.
What shal I seye of Nicerates wyf,
That for swich cas birafte hir-self hir lyf?
How trewe eek was to Alcebiades
His love, that rather for to dyen chees
Than for to suffre his body unburied be!
Lo which a wyf was Alcestè," quod she.
"What seith Omer of gode Penalopee?
Al Grece knoweth of hir chastitee.
Pardee, of Laodomya is writen thus,
That whan at Troye was slayn Protheselaus,
No lenger wolde she live after his day.
The same of noble Porcia telle I may;
With-oute Brutus coude she nat live,
To whom she hadde al hool hir herte yive.
The parfit wyfhod of Arthemesye
Honoured is thurgh al the Barbarye.[2]
O Teuta, queen! thy wyfly chastitee
To alle wyves may a mirour be.
The same thing I seye of Bilia,
Of Rodogone, and eek Valeria."
Thus pleyned Dorigene a day or tweye,
Purposinge ever that she wolde deye.
But nathelees, upon the thridde night,
Hom cam Arveragus, this worthy knight,
And asked hir, why that she weep so sore?
And she gan wepen ever lenger the more.
"Allas!" quod she, "that ever was I born!
Thus have I seyd," quod she, "thus have I sworn" —
And told him al as ye han herd bifore;
It nedeth nat reherce it yow na-more.
This housbond with glad chere, in freendly wyse,
Answerde and seyde as I shal yow devyse:
"Is ther ought elles, Dorigen, but this?"
"Nay, nay," quod she, "god help me so, as wis;[3]
This is to muche, and it were goddes wille."
"Ye, wyf," quod he, "lat slepen that is stille;[4]
It may be wel, paraventure, yet to-day.
Ye shul your trouthe holden, by my fay!

1 in a case of such sort. 2 land of the barbarians.
3 as (it is) certain. 4 i.e. let sleeping dogs lie.

For god so wisly have mercy on me,
I hadde wel lever y-stiked for to be,[1]
For verray love which that I to yow have,
But-if[2] ye sholde your trouthe kepe and save.
Trouthe is the hyeste thing that man may kepe:" —
But with that word he brast[3] anon to wepe,
And seyde, "I yow forbede, up[4] peyne of deeth,
That never, whyl thee lasteth lyf ne breeth,
To no wight tel thou of this aventure.
As I may best, I wol my wo endure,
Ne make no contenance[5] of hevinesse,
That folk of yow may demen harm or gesse."
And forth he cleped a squyer and a mayde:
"Goth forth anon with Dorigen," he sayde,
"And bringeth hir to swich a place anon."
They take hir leve, and on hir wey they gon;
But they ne wiste why she thider wente.
He nolde no wight tellen his entente.
Paraventure an heep of yow, y-wis,
Wol holden him a lewed[6] man in this,
That he wol putte his wyf in jupartye;[7]
Herkneth the tale, er ye up-on hir crye.
She may have bettre fortune than yow semeth;
And whan that ye han herd the tale, demeth.
This squyer, which that highte Aurelius,
On Dorigen that was so amorous,
Of aventure happed hir to mete
Amidde the toun, right in the quikkest[8] strete,
As she was boun[9] to goon the wey forthright
Toward the gardin ther-as she had hight.[10]
And he was to the gardinward also;
For wel he spyed, whan she wolde go
Out of hir hous to any maner place.
But thus they mette, of aventure or grace;
And he saleweth hir with glad entente,
And asked of hir whiderward she wente?
And she answerde, half as she were mad,
"Un-to the gardin, as myn housbond bad,
My trouthe for to holde, allas! allas!"
Aurelius gan wondren on this cas,
And in his herte had greet compassioun
Of hir and of hir lamentacioun,
And of Arveragus, the worthy knight,
That bad hir holden al that she had hight,

1 I had much rather be stabbed. 2 unless.
3 burst. 4 on. 5 show no appearance.
6 foolish. 7 jeopardy. 8 liveliest.
9 prepared. 10 promised.

So looth him was his wyf sholde breke hir trouthe;
And in his herte he caughte of this greet routhe,
Consideringe the beste on every syde,
That fro his lust yet were him lever abyde
Than doon so heigh a cherlish wrecchednesse
Agayns franchyse [1] and alle gentillesse;
For which in fewe wordes seyde he thus:
"Madame, seyth to your lord Arveragus,
That sith I see his grete gentillesse
To yow, and eek I see wel your distresse,
That him were lever han shame (and that were routhe)
Than ye to me sholde breke thus your trouthe,
I have wel lever ever to suffre wo
Than I departe [2] the love bitwix yow two.
I yow relesse, madame, in-to your hond
Quit every surement [3] and every bond,
That ye han maad to me as heer-biforn,
Sith thilke tyme which that ye were born.
My trouthe I plighte, I shal yow never repreve
Of no biheste, and here I take my leve,
As of the treweste and the beste wyf
That ever yet I knew in al my lyf.
But every wyf be-war of hir biheste,
On Dorigene remembreth atte leste.
Thus can a squyer doon a gentil dede,
As well as can a knight, with-outen drede."
She thonketh him up-on hir knees al bare,
And hoom un-to hir housbond is she fare,
And tolde him al as ye han herd me sayd;[4]
And be ye siker, he was so weel apayd,[5]
That it were inpossible me to wryte;
What sholde I lenger of this cas endyte?
Arveragus and Dorigene his wyf
In sovereyn blisse leden forth hir lyf.
Never eft ne was ther angre hem bitwene;
He cherisseth hir as though she were a quene;
And she was to him trewe for evermore.
Of thise two folk ye gete of me na-more.
Aurelius, that his cost hath al forlorn,[6]
Curseth the tyme that ever he was born:
"Allas," quod he, "allas! that I bihighte
Of pured gold a thousand pound of wighte
Un-to this philosophre![7] how shal I do?
I see na-more but that I am fordo.[8]
Myn heritage moot I nedes selle,
And been a begger; heer may I nat dwelle,
And shamen al my kinrede in this place,
But I of him may gete bettre grace.

1 generosity. 2 put asunder.
3 every pledge discharged. 4 say. 5 pleased.
6 lost. 7 i.e. the magician. 8 ruined.

But nathelees, I wol of him assaye,
At certeyn dayes, yeer by yeer, to paye,
And thanke him of his grete curteisye;
My trouthe wol I kepe, I wol nat lye."
With herte soor he gooth un-to his cofre,
And broghte gold un-to this philosophre,
The value of fyve hundred pound, I gesse,
And him bisecheth, of his gentillesse,
To graunte him dayes of the remenaunt,
And seyde, "maister, I dar wel make avaunt,[1]
I failled never of my trouthe as yit;
For sikerly my dette shal be quit
Towardes yow, how-ever that I fare
To goon a-begged in my kirtle bare.[2]
But wolde ye vouche-sauf, up-on seurtee,
Two yeer or three for to respyten me,
Than were I wel; for elles moot I selle
Myn heritage; ther is na-more to telle."
This philosophre sobrely answerde,
And seyde thus, whan he thise wordes herde:
"Have I nat holden covenant un-to thee?"
"Yes, certes, wel and trewely," quod he.
"Hastow nat had thy lady as thee lyketh?"
"No, no," quod he, and sorwefully he syketh.[3]
"What was the cause? tel me if thou can."
Aurelius his tale anon bigan,
And tolde him al, as ye han herd bifore;
It nedeth nat to yow reherce it more.
He seide, "Arveragus, of gentillesse,
Had lever dye in sorwe and in distresse
Than that his wyf were of hir trouthe fals."
The sorwe of Dorigen he tolde him als,[4]
How looth hir was to been a wikked wyf,
And that she lever had lost that day hir lyf,
And that hir trouthe she swoor, thurgh innocence:
"She never erst herde speke of apparence;[5]
That made me han of hir so greet pitee.
And right as frely as he sente hir me,
As frely sente I hir to him ageyn.
This al and som, ther is na-more to seyn."
This philosophre answerde, "leve brother,
Everich of yow dide gentilly til other.
Thou art a squyer, and he is a knight;
But god forbede, for his blisful might,
But-if a clerk coude doon a gentil dede
As wel as any of yow, it is no drede![6]
Sire, I relesse thee thy thousand pound,
As thou right now were cropen [7] out of the ground,
Ne never er now ne haddest knowen me.
For sire, I wol nat take a peny of thee
For al my craft, ne noght for my travaille.
Thou hast y-payed wel for my vitaille;

1 boast.
2 To go a-begging clothed only in a short coat.
3 sigheth. 4 also. 5 illusion caused by magic.
6 doubt. 7 had crept.

t is y-nogh, and farewel, have good day:"
And took his hors, and forth he gooth his way.
Lordinges,[1] this question wolde I aske now,
Which was the moste free,[1] as thinketh yow?
Now telleth me, er that ye ferther wende.
I can na-more, my tale is at an ende.

*Here is ended the Frankeleyns Tale*

# THE MINOR POEMS

## THE PARLIAMENT OF FOWLS

The poem presents under the veil of graceful allegory the courtship by three rival suitors of some great lady of Chaucer's day. Many critics have believed that the lady, the "formel egle," is the Princess Anne of Bohemia, who in January 1382 became the queen of Richard II of England, that the "tercel egle" is Richard, and that the two eagles "of lower kinde" are two continental princes who had been suitors for the hand of Princess Anne. But this identification is far from certain. The form of the poem combines two medieval types, the dream-vision and the "debate," the latter a poem in which an unsolved problem is left to the reader's decision — which of the three suitors deserves the lady? Into the poem Chaucer has put the fruit of much reading. The description of the garden is from the *Teseide* of Boccaccio; the picture of the goddess Nature is from a writer in medieval Latin, Alanus de Insulis. The parliament itself, where the various classes of birds humorously represent different ranks of society, is, so far as we know, Chaucer's own invention.

### *The Proem*

The lyf so short, the craft so long to lerne,
Th'assay so hard, so sharp the conquering,
The dredful joye, that alwey slit so yerne,[2]
Al this mene I by love, that my feling
Astonyeth with his wonderful worching
So sore y-wis, that whan I on him thinke,
Nat wot I wel wher[3] that I wake or winke.

For al be that I knowe not love in dede,
Ne wot how that he quyteth folk hir hyre,
Yet happeth me ful ofte in bokes rede
Of his miracles, and his cruel yre;
Ther rede I wel he wol be lord and syre,
I dar not seyn, his strokes been so sore,
But god save swich a lord! I can no more.

Of usage, what for luste[4] what for lore,[5]
On bokes rede I ofte, as I yow tolde.
But wherfor that I speke al this? not yore
Agon, hit happed me for to beholde
Upon a boke, was write with lettres olde;
And ther-upon, a certeyn thing to lerne,
The longe day ful faste I radde and yerne.[2]

For out of olde feldes, as men seith,
Cometh al this newe corn fro yeer to yere;
And out of olde bokes, in good feith,
Cometh al this newe science that men lere.
But now to purpos as of this matere —
To rede forth hit gan me so delyte,
That al the day me thoughte but a lyte.

This book of which I make mencioun,
Entitled was al thus, as I shal telle,
"Tullius of the dreme of Scipioun";[3]
Chapitres seven hit hadde, of hevene and helle,
And erthe, and soules that therinne dwelle,
Of whiche, as shortly as I can hit trete,
Of his sentence I wol you seyn the grete.

First telleth hit, whan Scipioun was come
In Afrik, how he mette Massinisse,
That him for joye in armes hath y-nome.
Than telleth hit hir speche and al the blisse
That was betwix hem, til the day gan misse;
And how his auncestre, African so dere,
Gan in his slepe that night to him appere.

Than telleth hit that, fro a sterry place,
How African hath him Cartage shewed,
And warned him before of al his grace,
And seyde him, what man, lered other lewed,[4]
That loveth comun profit, wel y-thewed,[5]
He shal unto a blisful place wende,
Ther as joye is that last withouten ende.
Than asked he, if folk that heer be dede
Have lyf and dwelling in another place;
And African seyde, "ye, withoute drede,"
And that our present worldes lyves space
Nis but a maner deth, what wey we trace,
And rightful folk shal go, after they dye,
To heven; and shewed him the galaxye.

1 The Franklin is addressing his fellow pilgrims.
2 slides away so soon. 3 whether.
4 pleasure. 5 instruction.

1 generous. 2 eagerly.
3 The "Dream of Scipio" is a portion of Cicero's *De Republica*.
4 learned or ignorant. 5 well conducted

Than shewed he him the litel erthe, that heer is,
At regard of the hevenes quantite;
And after shewed he him the nyne speres,[1]
And after that the melodye herde he
That cometh of thilke speres thryes three,
That welle is of musyke and melodye
In this world heer, and cause of armonye.

Than bad he him, sin erthe was so lyte,
And ful of torment and of harde grace,
That he ne shulde him in the world delyte.
Than tolde he him, in certeyn yeres space,
That every sterre shulde come into his place
Ther hit was first; and al shulde out of minde
That in this worlde is don of al mankinde.

Than prayde him Scipioun to telle him al
The wey to come un-to that hevene blisse;
And he seyde, "know thy-self first immortal,
And loke ay besily thou werke and wisse[2]
To comun profit, and thou shalt nat misse
To comen swiftly to that place dere,
That ful of blisse is and of soules clere.

But brekers of the lawe, soth to seyne,
And lecherous folk, after that they be dede,
Shul alwey whirle aboute th'erthe in peyne,
Til many a world be passed, out of drede,
And than, for-yeven alle hir wikked dede,
Than shul they come unto that blisful place,
To which to comen god thee sende his grace!" —

The day gan failen, and the derke night,
That reveth bestes from hir besinesse,
Berafte me my book for lakke of light,
And to my bedde I gan me for to dresse,
Fulfild of thought and besy hevinesse;
For bothe I hadde thing which that I nolde,
And eek I ne hadde that thing that I wolde.

But fynally my spirit, at the laste,
For-wery of my labour al the day,
Took rest, that made me to slepe faste,
And in my slepe I mette,[3] as I lay,
How African, right in that selfe aray
That Scipioun him saw before that tyde,
Was comen, and stood right at my beddes syde.

The wery hunter, slepinge in his bed,
To wode ayein his minde goth anoon;
The juge dremeth how his plees ben sped;
The carter dremeth how his cartes goon;
The riche, of gold; the knight fight with his foon,
The seke met he drinketh of the tonne;
The lover met he hath his lady wonne.

Can I nat seyn if that the cause were
For I had red of African beforn,
That made me to mete that he stood there;
But thus seyde he, "thou hast thee so wel born
In loking of myn olde book to-torn,
Of which Macrobie roghte nat a lyte,[1]
That somdel of thy labour wolde I quyte!" —

Citherea![2] thou blisful lady swete,
That with thy fyr-brand dauntest whom thee lest,
And madest me this sweven[3] for to mete,
Be thou my help in this, for thou mayst best;
As wisly as I saw thee north-north-west,
When I began my sweven for to wryte,
So yif me might to ryme hit and endyte!

*The Story*

This forseid African me hente[4] anoon,
And forth with him unto a gate broghte
Right of a parke, walled with grene stoon;
And over the gate, with lettres large y-wroghte,
Ther weren vers y-writen, as me thoghte,
On eyther halfe, of ful gret difference,
Of which I shal yow sey the pleyn sentence.

"Thorgh me men goon in-to that blisful place
Of hertes hele[5] and dedly woundes cure;
Thorgh me men goon unto the welle of Grace,
Ther grene and lusty May shal ever endure;
This is the wey to al good aventure;
Be glad, thou reder, and thy sorwe of-caste,
Al open am I; passe in, and hy the faste!"

"Thorgh me men goon," than spak that other syde,
"Unto the mortal strokes of the spere,
Of which Disdayn and Daunger is the gyde,
Ther tree shal never fruit ne leves bere.
This streem you ledeth to the sorwful were,[6]
Ther as the fish in prison is al drye;
Th'eschewing is only the remedye."

Thise vers of gold and blak y-writen were,
The whiche I gan a stounde[7] to beholde,

1 In the old astronomy, the motion of the heavenly bodies was explained as due to the revolutions of nine concentric transparent spheres about the central earth.
2 point the way. 3 dreamed.

1 Macrobius wrote a famous commentary on the Dream of Scipio.
2 Venus. 3 dream. 4 took.
5 health. 6 weir. 7 while.

For with that oon encresed ay my fere,
And with that other gan myn herte bolde;
That oon me hette, that other did me colde,
No wit had I, for errour, for to chese,
To entre or flee, or me to save or lese.

Right as, betwixen adamauntes [1] two
Of even might, a pece of iren y-set,
That hath no might to meve to ne fro —
For what that on may hale, that other let —
Ferde I, that niste whether me was bet,
To entre or leve, til African my gyde
Me hente, and shoof in at the gates wyde,

And seyde, "hit stondeth writen in thy face,
Thyn errour, though thou telle it not to me;
But dred thee nat to come in-to this place,
For this wryting is no-thing ment by thee,
Ne by noon, but he Loves servant be;
For thou of love hast lost thy tast, I gesse,
As seek man hath of swete and bitternesse.

But natheles, al-though that thou be dulle,
Yit that thou canst not do, yit mayst thou see;
For many a man that may not stonde a pulle,
Yit lyketh him at the wrastling for to be,
And demeth yit wher [2] he do bet or he;
And if thou haddest cunning for t'endyte,
I shal thee shewen mater of to wryte."

With that my hond in his he took anoon,
Of which I comfort caughte, and wente in faste;
But lord! so I was glad and wel begoon!
For over-al, wher that I myn eyen caste,
Were treës clad with leves that ay shal laste,
Eche in his kinde, of colour fresh and grene
As emeraude, that joye was to sene.

The bilder ook, and eek the hardy asshe;
The piler elm, the cofre unto careyne; [3]
The boxtree piper; holm to whippes lasshe;
The sayling firr; the cipres, deth to pleyne;
The sheter [4] ew, the asp for shaftes pleyne;
The olyve of pees, and eek the drunken vyne,
The victor palm, the laurer to devyne.

A garden saw I, ful of blosmy bowes,
Upon a river, in a grene mede,
There as that swetnesse evermore y-now is,
With floures whyte, blewe, yelowe, and rede;
And colde welle-stremes, no-thing dede,
That swommen ful of smale fisshes lighte,
With finnes rede and scales silver-brighte.

On every bough the briddes herde I singe,
With voys of aungel in hir armonye,
Som besyed hem hir briddes [1] forth to bringe;
The litel conyes [2] to hir pley gunne hye,
And further al aboute I gan espye
The dredful roo, the buk, the hert and hinde,
Squerels, and bestes smale of gentil kinde.

Of instruments of strenges in acord
Herde I so pleye a ravisshing swetnesse
That god, that maker is of al and lord,
Ne herde never better, as I gesse;
Therwith a wind, unnethe hit might be lesse,
Made in the leves grene a noise softe
Acordant to the foules songe on-lofte.

The air of that place so attempre was
That never was grevaunce of hoot ne cold;
Ther wex eek every holsom spyce and gras,
Ne no man may ther wexe seek ne old;
Yet was ther joye more a thousand fold
Then man can telle; ne never wolde it nighte,
But ay cleer day to any mannes sighte.

Under a tree, besyde a welle, I say [3]
Cupyde our lord his arwes forge and fyle;
And at his fete his bowe al redy lay,
And Wil [4] his doghter, tempred al the whyle
The hedes in the welle, and with hir wyle
She couched hem after as they shulde serve,
Som for to slee, and som to wounde and kerve.

Tho was I war of Plesaunce anon-right,
And of Aray, and Lust, [5] and Curtesye;
And of the Craft that can and hath the might
To doon by force a wight to do folye —
Disfigurat was she, I nil not lye;
And by him-self, under an oke, I gesse,
Sawe I Delyt, that stood with Gentilnesse.

I saw Beautee, withouten any atyr,
And Youthe, ful of game and Jolyte,
Fool-hardinesse, Flatery, and Desyr,
Messagerye, and Mede, and other three —
Hir names shul noght here be told for me —
And upon pilers grete of jasper longe
I saw a temple of bras y-founded stronge.

Aboute the temple daunceden alway
Wommen y-nowe, of whiche somme ther were

1 magnets. 2 whether.
3 Elm wood was used for coffins. 4 shooter.

1 fledglings. 2 rabbits. 3 saw.
4 desire. 5 pleasure.

Faire of hem-self, and somme of hem were gay;
In kirtels, al dishevele,[1] wente they there —
That was hir office alwey, yeer by yere —
And on the temple, of doves whyte and faire
Saw I sittinge many a hundred paire.

Before the temple-dore ful soberly
Dame Pees sat, with a curteyn in hir hond:
And hir besyde, wonder discretly,
Dame Pacience sitting ther I fond
With face pale, upon an hille of sond;
And alder-next,[2] within and eek withoute,
Behest and Art, and of hir folke a route.

Within the temple, of syghes hote as fyr
I herde a swogh [3] that gan aboute renne;
Which syghes were engendred with desyr,
That maden every auter for to brenne
Of newe flaume; and wel aspyed I thenne
That al the cause of sorwes that they drye [4]
Com of the bitter goddesse Jalousye.

The god Priapus saw I, as I wente,
Within the temple, in soverayn place stonde,
In swich aray as whan the asse him shente
With crye by night, and with his ceptre in honde;
Ful besily men gunne assaye and fonde
Upon his hede to sette, of sondry hewe,
Garlondes ful of fresshe floures newe.

And in a privee corner, in disporte,
Fond I Venus and hir porter Richesse,
That was ful noble and hauteyn of hir porte;
Derk was that place, but afterward lightnesse
I saw a lyte, unnethe hit might be lesse,
And on a bed of golde she lay to reste,
Til that the hote sonne gan to weste.
Hir gilte heres with a golden threde
Y-bounden were, untressed as she lay,
And naked fro the breste unto the hede
Men might hir see; and, sothly for to say,
The remenant wel kevered to my pay [5]
Right with a subtil kerchef of Valence,
Ther was no thikker cloth of no defence.

The place yaf a thousand savours swote,
And Bachus, god of wyn, sat hir besyde,
And Ceres next, that doth of hunger bote; [6]
And, as I seide, amiddes lay Cipryde,
To whom on knees two yonge folkes cryde
To ben hir help; but thus I leet hir lye,
And ferther in the temple I gan espye

That, in dispyte of Diane the chaste,
Ful many a bowe y-broke heng on the wal
Of maydens, suche as gunne hir tymes waste
In hir servyse; and peynted over al
Of many a story, of which I touche shal
A fewe, as of Calixte and Athalaunte,
And many a mayde, of which the name I wante;

Semyramus, Candace, and Ercules,
Biblis, Dido, Tisbe and Piramus,
Tristram, Isoude, Paris, and Achilles,
Eleyne, Cleopatre, and Troilus,
Silla, and eek the moder of Romulus —
Alle these were peynted on that other syde,
And al hir love, and in what plyte they dyde.

Whan I was come ayen into the place
That I of spak, that was so swote and grene,
Forth welk I tho, my-selven to solace.
Tho was I war wher that ther sat a quene
That, as of light the somer-sonne shene
Passeth the sterre, right so over mesure
She fairer was than any creature.

And in a launde,[1] upon an hille of floures,
Was set this noble goddesse Nature;
Of braunches were hir halles and hir boures,
Y-wrought after hir craft and hir mesure;
Ne ther nas foul that cometh of engendrure,
That they ne were prest [2] in hir presence,
To take hir doom and yeve hir audience.

For this was on seynt Valentynes day,
Whan every foul cometh ther to chese his make,[3]
Of every kinde, that men thenke may;
And that so huge a noyse gan they make,
That erthe and see, and tree, and every lake
So ful was, that unnethe was ther space
For me to stonde, so ful was al the place.

And right as Aleyn, in the Pleynt of Kinde,[4]
Devyseth Nature of aray and face,
In swich aray men mighten hir ther finde.
This noble emperesse, ful of grace,
Bad every foul to take his owne place,
As they were wont alwey fro yeer to yere,
Seynt Valentynes day, to stonden there.

That is to sey, the foules of ravyne [5]
Were hyest set; and than the foules smale,
That eten as hem nature wolde enclyne,
As worm, or thing of whiche I telle no tale;

1 with hair loose. 2 next of all. 3 low noise. 4 endure. 5 satisfaction. 6 remedy.

1 open space of grass. 2 ready. 3 mate.
4 Alanus de Insulis was author of a work, *De Planctu Naturæ*, from which Chaucer has taken hints for his description of the goddess Nature.
5 birds of prey.

But water-foul sat lowest in the dale;
And foul that liveth by seed sat on the grene,
And that so fele,[1] that wonder was to sene.

Ther mighte men the royal egle finde,
That with his sharpe look perceth the sonne;
And other egles of a lower kinde,
Of which that clerkes wel devysen conne.
Ther was the tyraunt with his fethres donne
And greye, I mene the goshauk, that doth pyne[2]
To briddes for his outrageous ravyne.

The gentil faucon, that with his feet distreyneth
The kinges hond; the hardy sperhauk eke,
The quayles foo; the merlion[3] that peyneth
Him-self ful ofte, the larke for to seke;
Ther was the douve, with hir eyen meke;
The jalous swan, ayens his deth that singeth;
The oule eek, that of dethe the bode[4] bringeth;

The crane the geaunt, with his trompes soune;
The theef, the chogh; and eek the jangling pye;
The scorning jay; the eles foo, the heroune;
The false lapwing, ful of trecherye;
The stare,[5] that the counseyl can bewrye;
The tame ruddok; and the coward kyte;
The cok, that orloge is of thorpes[6] lyte;

The sparow, Venus sone; the nightingale,
That clepeth forth the fresshe leves newe;
The swalow, mordrer of the flyës smale
That maken hony of floures fresshe of hewe;
The wedded turtel, with hir herte trewe;
The pecok, with his aungels fethres brighte;
The fesaunt, scorner of the cok by nighte;

The waker goos; the cukkow ever unkinde;
The popinjay, ful of delicasye;
The drake, stroyer of his owne kinde;
The stork, the wreker of avouterye;[7]
The hote cormeraunt of glotonye;
The raven wys, the crow with vois of care;
The throstel olde; the frosty feldefare.

What shulde I seyn? of foules every kinde
That in this worlde han fethres and stature,
Ben mighten in that place assembled finde
Before the noble goddesse Nature.
And everich of hem did his besy cure
Benignely to chese or for to take,
By hir acord, his formel[1] or his make.

But to the poynt — Nature held on hir honde
A formel egle, of shap the gentileste
That ever she among hir werkes fonde,
The most benigne and the goodlieste;
In hir was every vertu at his reste,
So ferforth, that Nature hir-self had blisse
To loke on hir, and ofte hir bek to kisse.

Nature, the vicaire of th'almyghty lorde,
That hoot, cold, hevy, light, and moist and dreye
Hath knit by even noumbre of acorde,
In esy vois began to speke and seye,
"Foules, tak hede of my sentence, I preye,
And, for your ese, in furthering of your nede,
As faste as I may speke, I wol me spede.

Ye know wel how, seynt Valentynes day,
By my statut and through my governaunce,
Ye come for to chese — and flee your way —
Your makes, as I prik yow with plesaunce.
But natheles, my rightful ordenaunce
May I not lete, for al this world to winne,
That he that most is worthy shal beginne.

The tercel egle,[2] as that ye knowen wel,
The foul royal above yow in degree,
The wyse and worthy, secree, trewe as stel,
The which I formed have, as ye may see,
In every part as hit best lyketh me,
Hit nedeth noght his shap yow to devyse,
He shal first chese and speken in his gyse.

And after him, by order shul ye chese,
After your kinde, everich as yow lyketh,
And, as your hap is, shul ye winne or lese;
But which of yow that love most entryketh,[3]
God sende him hir that sorest for him syketh."
And therwith-al the tercel gan she calle,
And seyde, "my sone, the choys is to thee falle.

But natheles, in this condicioun
Mot be the choys of everich that is here,
That she agree to his electioun,
Who-so he be that shulde been hir fere;[4]
This is our usage alwey, fro yeer to yere;
And who so may at this time have his grace,
In blisful tyme he com in-to this place."

With hed enclyned and with ful humble chere
This royal tercel spak and taried nought;

1 many. 2 injury. 3 merlin, small hawk.
4 warning. 5 starling.
6 that time-piece is of little villages.
7 avenger of adultery.

1 companion. 2 male eagle.
3 ensnareth. 4 companion.

"Unto my sovereyn lady, and noght my fere,
I chese, and chese with wille and herte and thought,
The formel on your hond so wel y-wrought,
Whos I am al and ever wol hir serve,
Do what hir list, to do me live or sterve.[1]

Beseching hir of mercy and of grace,
As she that is my lady sovereyne;
Or let me dye present in this place.
For certes, long may I not live in peyne;
For in myn herte is corven[2] every veyne;
Having reward[3] al only to my trouthe,
My dere herte, have on my wo som routhe.

And if that I to hir be founde untrewe,
Disobeysaunt, or wilful negligent,
Avauntour,[4] or in proces love a newe,
I pray to you this be my jugement,
That with these foules I be al to-rent,
That ilke day that ever she me finde
To hir untrewe, or in my gilte unkinde.

And sin that noon loveth hir so wel as I,
Al be she never of love me behette,[5]
Than oghte she be myn thourgh hir mercy,
For other bond can I noon on hir knette.
For never, for no wo, ne shal I lette
To serven hir, how fer so that she wende;
Sey what yow list, my tale is at an ende."

Right as the fresshe, rede rose newe
Ayen the somer-sonne coloured is,
Right so for shame al wexen gan the hewe
Of this formel, whan she herde al this;
She neyther answerde wel, ne seyde amis.
So sore abasshed was she, til that Nature
Seyde, "doghter, drede yow noght, I yow assure."

Another tercel egle spak anoon
Of lower kinde, and seyde, "that shal not be;
I love hir bet than ye do, by seynt John,
Or atte leste I love hir as wel as ye;
And lenger have served hir, in my degree,
And if she shulde have loved for long loving,
To me allone had been the guerdoning.

I dar eek seye, if she me finde fals,
Unkinde, jangler,[6] or rebel any wyse,
Or jalous, do me hongen by the hals![7]
And but I bere me in hir servyse
As wel as that my wit can me suffyse,
Fro poynt to poynt, hir honour for to save,
Tak she my lyf, and al the good I have."

The thridde tercel egle answerde tho,
"Now, sirs, ye seen the litel leyser here;
For every foul cryeth out to been a-go
Forth with his make, or with his lady dere;
And eek Nature hir-self ne wol nought here,
For tarying here, noght half that I wolde seye;
And but I speke, I mot for sorwe deye.

Of long servyse avaunte[1] I me no-thing,
But as possible is me to dye to-day
For wo, as he that hath ben languisshing
Thise twenty winter, and wel happen may
A man may serven bet and more to pay[2]
In half a yere, al-though hit were no more,
Than som man doth that hath served ful yore.

I ne say not this by me, for I ne can
Do no servyse that may my lady plese;
But I dar seyn, I am hir trewest man
As to my dome, and feynest wolde hir ese;
At shorte wordes, til that deth me sese,
I wol ben hires, whether I wake or winke,
And trewe in al that herte may bethinke."

Of al my lyf, sin that day I was born,
So gentil plee in love or other thing
Ne herde never no man me beforn,
Who-so that hadde leyser and cunning
For to reherse hir chere and hir speking;
And from the morwe gan this speche laste
Til dounward drow the sonne wonder faste.

The noyse of foules for to ben delivered
So loude rong, "have doon and let us wende!"
That wel wende I the wode had al to-shivered.
"Come of!" they cryde, "allas! ye wil us shende![3]
Whan shal your cursed pleding have an ende?
How shulde a juge eyther party leve,
For yee or nay, with-outen any preve?"

The goos, the cokkow, and the doke also
So cryden "kek, kek!" "kukkow!" "quek quek!" hye,
That thorgh myn eres the noyse wente tho.
The goos seyde, "al this nis not worth a flye!
But I can shape hereof a remedye,
And I wol sey my verdit faire and swythe[4]
For water-foul, who-so be wrooth or blythe."

1 die. 2 cut. 3 regard. 4 boaster. 5 promised. 6 idle talker. 7 neck.

1 boast. 2 satisfaction. 3 injure. 4 quickly

"And I for worm-foul," seyde the fool cukkow,
"For I wol, of myn owne auctorité,
For comune spede, take the charge now,
For to delivere us is gret charité."
"Ye may abyde a whyle yet, parde!"
Seide the turtel, "if hit be your wille
A wight may speke, him were as good be stille.

I am a seed-foul, oon the unworthieste,
That wot I wel, and litel of kunninge;
But bet is that a wightes tonge reste
Than entremeten [1] him of such doinge
Of which he neyther rede can nor singe.
And who-so doth, ful foule himself acloyeth,[2]
For office uncommitted ofte anoyeth."

Nature, which that alway had an ere
To murmour of the lewednes [3] behinde,
With facound [4] voys seide, "hold your tonges there!
And I shal sone, I hope, a counseyl finde
You to delivere, and fro this noyse unbinde;
I juge, of every folk men shal oon calle
To seyn the verdit for you foules alle."

Assented were to this conclusioun
The briddes alle; and foules of ravyne
Han chosen first, by pleyn electioun,
The tercelet of the faucon, to diffyne
Al hir sentence, and as him list, termyne;
And to Nature him gonnen to presente,
And she accepteth him with glad entente.

The tercelet seide than in this manere:
"Ful hard were hit to preve hit by resoun
Who loveth best this gentil formel here;
For everich hath swich replicacioun,
That noon by skilles [5] may be broght a-doun;
I can not seen that arguments avayle;
Than semeth hit ther moste be batayle."

"Al redy!" quod these egles tercels tho.
"Nay, sirs!" quod he, "if that I dorste it seye,
Ye doon me wrong, my tale is not y-do!
For sirs, ne taketh noght a-gref, I preye,
It may noght gon, as ye wolde, in this weye;
Oure is the voys that han the charge in honde,
And to the juges dome ye moten stonde;

And therfor pees! I seye, as to my wit,
Me wolde thinke how that the worthieste
Of knighthode, and lengest hath used hit,
Moste of estat, of blode the gentileste,
Were sittingest [1] for hir, if that hir leste;
And of these three she wot hir-self, I trowe,
Which that he be, for hit is light to knowe."

The water-foules han her hedes leyd
Togeder, and of short avysement,
Whan everich had his large golee [2] seyd,
They seyden sothly, al by oon assent,
How that "the goos, with hir facounde gent,[3]
That so desyreth to pronounce our nede,
Shal telle our tale," and preyde "god hir spede."

And for these water-foules tho began
The goos to speke, and in hir cakelinge
She seyde, "pees! now tak kepe every man,
And herkeneth which a reson I shal bringe;
My wit is sharp, I love no taryinge;
I seye, I rede him, though he were my brother,
But she wol love him, lat him love another!"

"Lo here! a parfit reson of a goos!"
Quod the sperhauk; [4] "never mot she thee! [5]
Lo, swich hit is to have a tonge loos!
Now parde, fool, yet were hit bet for thee
Have holde thy pees, than shewed thy nycete! [6]
Hit lyth not in his wit nor in his wille,
But sooth is seyd, 'a fool can noght be stille.'"

The laughter aroos of gentil foules alle,
And right anoon the seed-foul chosen hadde
The turtel trewe, and gunne hir to hem calle,
And preyden hir to seye the sothe sadde [7]
Of this matere, and asked what she radde; [8]
And she answerde, that pleynly hir entente
She wolde shewe, and sothly what she mente.

"Nay, god forbede a lover shulde chaunge!"
The turtel seyde, and wex for shame al reed;
"Thogh that his lady ever-more be straunge,
Yet let him serve hir ever, til he be deed;
For sothe, I preyse noght the gooses reed; [9]
For thogh she deyed, I wolde non other make, [10]
I wol ben hires, til that the deth me take."

"Wel bourded!" [11] quod the doke, "by my hat!
That men shulde alwey loven, causeles,
Who can a reson finde or wit in that?
Daunceth he mury that is mirtheles?

1 meddle. 2 overburdens. 3 ignorance.
4 eloquent. 5 reasons.

1 most suitable. 2 mouthful.
3 well-bred eloquence. 4 sparrow-hawk.
5 prosper. 6 foolishness. 7 the sober truth.
8 advised. 9 advice. 10 mate. 11 jested.

Who shulde recche of that is reccheles?
Ye, quek!" yit quod the doke, ful wel and faire,
"There been mo sterres, god wot, than a paire!"

"Now fy, cherl!" quod the gentil tercelet,
"Out of the dunghil com that word ful right,
Thou canst noght see which thing is wel be-set:
Thou farest by love as oules doon by light,
The day hem blent, ful wel they see by night;
Thy kind is of so lowe a wrechednesse,
That what love is, thou canst nat see ne gesse."

Tho gan the cukkow putte him forth in prees [1]
For foul that eteth worm, and seide blyve,[2]
"So I," quod he, "may have my make in pees,
I recche not how longe that ye stryve;
Lat ech of hem be soleyn [3] al hir lyve,
This is my reed, sin they may not acorde;
This shorte lesson nedeth noght recorde."

"Ye! have the glotoun fild ynogh his paunche,
Than are we wel!" seyde the merlioun;
"Thou mordrer of the heysugge [4] on the braunche
That broghte thee forth, thou rewthelees glotoun!
Live thou soleyn, wormes corrupcioun!
For no fors is of lakke of thy nature; [5]
Go, lewed be thou, whyl the world may dure!"

"Now pees," quod Nature, "I comaunde here;
For I have herd al your opinioun,
And in effect yet be we never the nere; [6]
But fynally, this is my conclusioun,
That she hir-self shal han the eleccioun
Of whom hir list, who-so be wrooth or blythe,
Him that she cheest, he shal hir have as swythe.[7]

For sith hit may not here discussed be
Who loveth hir best, as seide the tercelet,
Than wol I doon hir this favour, that she
Shal have right him on whom hir herte is set,
And he hir that his herte hath on hir knet.[1]
This juge I, Nature, for I may not lyë;
To noon estat I have non other yë.

But as for counseyl for to chese a make,
If hit were reson, certes, than wolde I
Counseyle yow the royal tercel take,
As seide the tercelet ful skilfully,
As for the gentilest and most worthy,
Which I have wroght so wel to my plesaunce;
That to yow oghte been a suffisaunce."

With dredful [2] vois the formel hir answerde,
"My rightful lady, goddesse of Nature,
Soth is that I am ever under your yerde,
Lyk as is everiche other creature,
And moot be youres whyl my lyf may dure;
And therfor graunteth me my firste bone,[3]
And myn entente I wol yow sey right sone."

"I graunte it you," quod she; and right anoon
This formel egle spak in this degree,
"Almighty quene, unto this yeer be doon
I aske respit for to avysen me.
And after that to have my choys al free;
This al and som, that I wolde speke and seye;
Ye gete no more, al-though ye do me deye.

I wol noght serven Venus ne Cupyde
For sothe as yet, by no manere wey."
"Now sin it may non other wyse betyde,"
Quod tho Nature, "here is no more to sey;
Than wolde I that these foules were a-wey
Ech with his make, for tarying lenger here"—
And seyde hem thus, as ye shul after here.

"To you speke I, ye tercelets," quod Nature,
"Beth of good herte and serveth, alle three;
A yeer is not so longe to endure,
And ech of yow peyne him, in his degree,
For to do wel; for, god wot, quit is she
Fro yow this yeer; what after so befalle,
This entremes [4] is dressed for you alle."

And whan this werk al broght was to an ende,
To every foule Nature yaf his make
By even acorde, and on hir wey they wende.
A! lord! the blisse and joye that they make!
For ech of hem gan other in winges take,
And with hir nekkes ech gan other winde,
Thanking alwey the noble goddesse of kinde.

1 in the crowd. 2 straightway.
3 single. 4 hedge sparrow.
5 It makes no difference if thy race become extinct.
6 nearer. 7 quickly.

1 knitted. 2 timid. 3 boon.
4 intervening course at a dinner.

But first were chosen foules for to singe,
As yeer by yere was alwey hir usaunce
To singe a roundel at hir departinge,
To do Nature honour and plesaunce.
The note, I trowe, maked was in Fraunce;
The wordes were swich as ye may heer finde,
The nexte vers, as I now have in minde.
*Qui bien aime a tard oublie.*[1]
"Now welcom somer, with thy sonne softe,
That hast this wintres weders over-shake,
And driven awey the longe nightes blake!

Seynt Valentyn, that art ful hy onlofte; —
Thus singen smale foules for thy sake —
*Now welcom somer, with thy sonne softe,*
*That hast this wintres weders over-shake.*

Wel han they cause for to gladen ofte,
Sith ech of hem recovered hath his make;
Ful blisful may they singen whan they wake;
*Now welcom somer, with thy sonne softe,*
*That hast this wintres weders over-shake*
*And driven awey the longe nightes blake.*"

And with the showting, whan hir song was do,
That foules maden at hir flight a-way,
I wook, and other bokes took me to
To rede upon, and yet I rede alway;
I hope y-wis, to rede so som day
That I shal mete som thing for to fare
The bet; and thus to rede I nil not spare.
*Explicit tractatus de congregacione Volucrum die sancti Valentini*

## TRUTH

*Balade de bon conseyl*

Flee fro the prees,[2] and dwelle with sothfastnesse,
Suffyce unto thy good,[3] though hit be smal;
For hord hath hate, and climbing tikelnesse,[4]
Prees hath envye, and wele blent overal;[5]
Savour[6] no more than thee bihove shal;
Werk wel thy-self, that other folk canst rede;
And trouthe shal delivere, hit is no drede.

Tempest[7] thee noght al croked to redresse,[8]
In trust of hir that turneth as a bal:[9]
Gret reste stant in litel besinesse;
And eek be war to sporne ageyn an al;[10]
Stryve noght, as doth the crokke with the wal.
Daunte[1] thy-self, that dauntest otheres dede;
And trouthe shal delivere, hit is no drede.

That thee is sent, receyve in buxumnesse,[2]
The wrastling for this worlde axeth a fal.
Her nis non hoom, her nis but wildernesse:
Forth, pilgrim, forth! Forth, beste, out of thy stal!
Know thy contree, look up, thank God of al;
Hold the hye wey, and lat thy gost thee lede:
And trouthe shal delivere, hit is no drede.

*Envoy*

Therfore, thou Vache,[3] leve thyn old wrecchednesse
Unto the worlde; leve now to be thral;
Crye him mercy, that of his hy goodnesse
Made thee of noght, and in especial
Draw unto him, and pray in general
For thee, and eek for other, hevenlich mede:
And trouthe shal delivere, hit is no drede.
*Explicit Le bon counseill de G. Chaucer*

1 This indicates the tune, or "note," which "maked was in Fraunce."
2 crowd. 3 be satisfied with your property. 4 ticklish uncertainty. 5 wealth always blinds. 6 relish. 7 vex. 8 set straight again. 9 i.e. Fortune. 10 kick against an awl.

## GENTILESSE

*Moral Balade of Chaucer*

The firste stok, fader of gentilesse —
What man that claymeth gentil for to be,
Must folowe his trace, and alle his wittes dresse
Vertu to sewe,[4] and vyces for to flee.
For unto vertu longeth dignitee,
And noght the revers, saufly dar I deme,
Al were he[5] mytre, croune, or diademe.

This firste stok was ful of rightwisnesse,
Trewe of his word, sobre, pitous, and free,[6]
Clene of his goste, and loved besinesse,
Ageinst the vyce of slouthe, in honestee;
And, but his heir love vertu, as dide he,
He is noght gentil, thogh he riche seme,
Al were he mytre, croune, or diademe.

Vyce may wel be heir to old richesse;
But ther may no man, as men may wel see,
Bequethe his heir his vertuous noblesse
That is appropred unto no degree,[7]
But to the firste fader in magestee,
That maketh him his heir, that can him queme,[8]
Al were he mytre, croune, or diademe.

1 subdue. 2 humility. 3 Sir Philip la Vache, a friend of Chaucer's. 4 follow. 5 although he wear. 6 generous. 7 That belongs to no one social class. 8 please.

## THE COMPLEINT OF CHAUCER TO HIS EMPTY PURSE

To you, my purse, and to non other wight
Compleyne I, for ye be my lady dere!
I am so sory, now that ye be light;
For certes, but ye make me hevy chere,
Me were as leef be leyd up-on my bere;[1]
For whiche un-to your mercy thus I crye:
Beth hevy ageyn, or elles mot I dye!

Now voucheth sauf this day, or hit be night,
That I of you the blisful soun may here,
Or see your colour lyk the sonne bright,
That of yelownesse hadde never pere.
Ye be my lyf, ye be myn hertes stere,[2]
Quene of comfort and of good companye:
Beth hevy ageyn, or elles mot I dye!

1 bier. 2 steersman.

Now purs, that be to me my lyves light,
And saveour, as doun in this worlde here,
Out of this toune help me through your might,
Sin that ye wole nat been my tresorere;
For I am shave as nye[1] as any frere.
But yit I pray un-to your curtesye:
Beth hevy ageyn, or elles mot I dye!

*Lenvoy de Chaucer*

O conquerour[2] of Brutes[3] Albioun!
Which that by lyne and free eleccioun
Ben verray king, this song to you I sende;
And ye, that mowen al our harm amende,
Have minde up-on my supplicacioun!

1 close.
2 Henry IV, who became king on Sept. 30, 1399. Four days later Chaucer's pension was doubled.
3 Brutus, a refugee from Troy, was the mythical founder of the realm of Albion (Britain).

## JOHN GOWER (*died* 1408)

Of Gower's life almost nothing is known. He died in 1408, apparently at an advanced age, and was buried in the church of St. Mary Overy (now Southwark Cathedral) near the southern end of London Bridge, where his tomb is still to be seen. He was a gentleman of liberal education and substantial wealth, a generous benefactor of the priory of St. Mary Overy, within whose precincts he spent the later years of his life. We know that he was a personal friend of Chaucer. He was married, apparently for the second time, in 1398.

He wrote voluminously in three different languages — the *Mirour de l'Omme* (about 1377) also known by the Latin title *Speculum Meditantis*, a didactic poem in French, which discusses in nearly 30,000 lines human virtues and vices and the problems of contemporary society; *Vox Clamantis* (about 1381), a Latin poem of over 10,000 lines which deals with similar topics; and *Confessio Amantis* (1390), a poem in English which contains some 34,000 lines. In all his work Gower maintains a high level of literary excellence without ever rising to the heights of great poetry. In *Confessio Amantis*, a lover confesses to a priest of Venus his shortcomings and disappointments in love, the confession following the medieval formula of the Seven Deadly Sins. After each part of the confession, the priest tells for the lover's guidance a series of tales which are intended to illustrate the point in question. The tale of Florent here printed illustrates the virtue of obedience, as opposed to the deadly sin of pride. The same story is told by the Wife of Bath in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. The *Confessio Amantis* is really a great collection of stories, gathered by Gower from his wide reading, for which the device of the confession is little more than a literary excuse. The stories are told clearly and entertainingly in graceful octosyllabic verse. As a writer of narrative verse, Gower deserves to rank with William Morris, author of the *Earthly Paradise*.

Gower's complete works in four volumes are edited by G. C. Macaulay (Oxford University Press); there is also a small volume of selections from *Confessio Amantis* by the same editor and publisher.

## THE TALE OF FLORENT

(*Confessio Amantis*, bk. 1, lines 1407–1861)

Ther was whilom be daies olde
A worthi knyht, and as men tolde
He was nevoeu to themperour
And of his court a courteour:
Wifles he was, Florent he hihte;
He was a man that mochel myhte;[1]
Of armes he was desirous,
Chivalerous and amorous;

1 who could do great things.

And for the fame of worldes speche,
Strange aventures forto seche,
He rod the Marches al aboute.
And fell a time, as he was oute,
Fortune, which may every thred
Tobreke and knette of mannes sped,[1]
Schop,[2] as this knyht rod in a pas,[3]
That he be strengthe take was,
And to a castell thei him ladde,
Wher that he fewe frendes hadde:

1 break and knit together again of man's prosperity.
2 devised. 3 at a walk.

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For so it fell that ilke stounde[1]
That he hath with a dedly wounde
Feihtende his oghne hondes[2] slain
Branchus, which to the Capitain
Was sone and heir, wherof ben wrothe
The fader and the moder bothe.
That knyht Branchus was of his hond
The worthieste of al his lond,
And fain thei wolden do vengance
Upon Florent; bot remembrance
That thei toke of his worthinesse
Of knyhthod and of gentilesse,
And how he stod of cousinage
To themperour, made hem assuage,
And dorsten noght slen him for fere:
In gret desputeisoun thei were
Among hemself, what was the beste.
Ther was a lady, the slyheste
Of alle that men knewe tho,
So old sche myhte unethes go,[3]
And was grantdame unto the dede:[4]
And sche with that began to rede,
And seide how sche wol bringe him inne,
That sche schal him to dethe winne
Al only of his oghne grant,
Thurgh strengthe of verray covenant
Withoute blame of eny wiht.
Anon sche sende for this kniht,
And of hire sone sche alleide[5]
The deth, and thus to him sche seide:
"Florent, how so thou be to wyte[6]
Of Branchus deth, men schal respite
As now to take vengement,
Be so thou stonde in juggement
Upon certein condicioun,
That thou unto a questioun
Which I schal axe schalt ansuere;
And over this thou schalt ek swere,
That if thou of the sothe faile,
Ther schal non other thing availe,
That thou ne schalt thi deth receive.
And for men schal the noght deceive,
That thou therof myht ben avised,
Thou schalt have day and tyme assised[7]
And leve saufly forto wende,
Be so that at thi daies ende
Thou come ayein with thin avys."
This knyht, which worthi was and wys,
This lady preith that he may wite,
And have it under seales write,
What questioun it scholde be
For which he schal in that degree
Stonde of his lif in jeupartie.
With that sche feigneth compaignie,[8]
And seith: "Florent, on love it hongeth
Al that to myn axinge longeth:
What alle wommen most desire
This wole I axe, and in thempire
Wher as thou hast most knowlechinge
Tak conseil upon this axinge."
Florent this thing hath undertake,
The day was set, the time take,
Under his seal he wrot his oth,
In such a wise and forth he goth
Home to his emes[1] court ayein;
To whom his aventure plein
He tolde, of that him is befalle.
And upon that thei weren alle
The wiseste of the lond asent,[2]
Bot natheles of on assent
Thei myhte noght acorde plat,
On seide this, an othre that.
After the disposicioun
Of naturel complexioun[3]
To som womman it is plesance,
That to an other is grevance;
Bot such a thing in special,
Which to hem alle in general
Is most plesant, and most desired
Above alle othre and most conspired,[4]
Such o thing conne thei noght finde
Be constellacion ne kinde:
And thus Florent withoute cure
Mot stonde upon his aventure,
And is al schape unto the lere,[5]
As in defalte of his answere.
This knyht hath levere forto dye
Than breke his trowthe and forto lye
In place ther as he was swore,
And schapth him gon ayein therfore.
Whan time cam he tok his leve,
That lengere wolde he noght beleve,
And preith his em he be noght wroth,
For that is a point of his oth,
He seith, that noman schal him wreke,[6]
Thogh afterward men hiere speke
That he par aventure deie.
And thus he wente forth his weie
Alone as knyht aventurous,
And in his thoght was curious
To wite what was best to do:
And as he rod al one so,
And cam nyh ther he wolde be,
In a forest under a tre
He syh wher sat a creature,
A lothly wommannysch figure,
That forto speke of fleisch and bon
So foul yit syh he nevere non.
This knyht behield hir redely,

1 hour. 2 with his own hands.
3 hardly walk. 4 the dead knight.
5 alleged. 6 blame.
7 appointed.
8 friendliness.

1 uncle's. 2 sent for.
3 constitution. 4 agreed upon.
5 prepared for the loss. 6 avenge.

And as he wolde have passed by,
Sche cleped him and bad abide;
And he his horse heved [1] aside
Tho torneth, and to hire he rod,
And there he hoveth [2] and abod,
To wite what she wolde mene.
And sche began him to bemene,[3]
And seide: "Florent be thi name,
Thou hast on honde such a game,
That bot thou be the betre avised,
Thi deth is schapen and devised,
That al the world ne mai the save,
Bot if that thou my conseil have."
Florent, whan he this tale herde,
Unto this olde wyht answerde
And of hir conseil he hir preide.
And sche ayein to him thus seide:
"Florent, if I for the so schape,
That thou thurgh me thi deth ascape
And take worschipe of thi dede,
What schal I have to my mede?"
"What thing," quod he, "that thou wolt axe."
"I bidde nevere a betre taxe," [4]
Quod sche; "bot ferst, er thou be sped,
Thou schalt me leve such a wedd,[5]
That I wol have thi trowthe in honde
That thou schalt be myn housebonde."
"Nay," seith Florent, "that may noght be."
"Ryd thanne forth thi wey," quod sche,
"And if thou go withoute red,
Thou schalt be sekerliche [6] ded."
Florent behihte [7] hire good ynowh
Of lond, of rente, of park. of plowh,
Bot al that compteth sche at noght.
Tho fell this knyht in mochel thoght;
Now goth he forth, now comth ayein,
He wot noght what is best to sein,
And thoghte, as he rode to and fro,
That chese he mot on of the tuo —
Or forto take hire to his wif
Or elles forto lese his lif.
And thanne he caste his avantage,
That sche was of so gret an age,
That sche mai live bot a while,
And thoghte put hire in an ile,[8]
Wher that noman hire scholde knowe,
Til sche with deth were overthrowe.
And thus this yonge lusti knyht
Unto this olde lothly wiht
Tho seide: "If that non other chance
Mai make my deliverance,
Bot only thilke same speche
Which, as thou seist, thou schalt me teche,
Have hier myn hond, I schal thee wedde."
And thus his trowthe he leith to wedde.[1]
With that sche frounceth [2] up the browe:
"This covenant I wol allowe,"
Sche seith: "if eny other thing
Bot that thou hast of my techyng
Fro deth thi body mai respite,
I woll thee of thi trowthe acquite,
And elles be non other weie.
Now herkne me what I schal seie.
Whan thou art come into the place,
Wher now thei maken gret manace
And upon thi comynge abyde,
Thei wole anon the same tide
Oppose [3] thee of thin answere.
I wot thou wolt nothing forbere
Of that thou wenest be thi beste,
And if thou myht so finde reste,
Wel is, for thanne is ther nomore.
And elles this schal be my lore,
That thou schalt seie, upon this molde [4]
That alle wommen lievest wolde
Be soverein of mannes love:
For what womman is so above,
Sche hath, as who seith, al hire wille;
And elles may sche noght fulfille
What thing hir were lievest have.
With this answere thou schalt save
Thiself, and other wise noght.
And whan thou hast thin ende wroght,
Come hier ayein, thou schalt me finde,
And let nothing out of thi minde."
He goth him forth with hevy chiere,
As he that not [5] in what manere
He mai this worldes joie atteigne:
For if he deie, he hath a peine,
And if he live, he mot him binde
To such on which of alle kinde
Of wommen is thunsemlieste:
Thus wot he noght what is the beste:
Bot be him lief or be him loth,
Unto the castell forth he goth
His full answere for to yive,
Or forto deie or forto live.
Forth with his conseil cam the lord,
The thinges stoden of record,
He sende up for the lady sone,
And forth sche cam, that olde mone.[6]
In presence of the remenant
The strengthe of al the covenant
Tho was reherced openly,
And to Florent sche bad forthi
That he schal tellen his avis,
As he that woot what is the pris.
Florent seith al that evere he couthe,
Bot such word cam ther non to mowthe,

1 his horse's head. 2 stays
3 communicate to him. 4 I ask no better promise.
5 pledge. 6 certainly. 7 promised. 8 island.

1 gives as a pledge. 2 wrinkles. 3 interrogate.
4 earth. 5 knows not. 6 companion.

That he for yifte or for beheste
Mihte eny wise his deth areste.[1]
And thus he tarieth longe and late,
Til that this lady bad algate[2]
That he schal for the dom final
Yive his answere in special
Of that sche hadde him ferst opposed:
And thanne he hath trewly supposed
That he him may of nothing yelpe,[3]
Bot if so be tho wordes helpe
Whiche as the womman hath him tawht;
Wherof he hath an hope cawht
That he schal ben excused so,
And tolde out plein his wille tho.
And whan that this matrone herde
The manere how this knyht ansuerde,
Sche seide: "Ha treson, wo thee be,
That hast thus told the privite[4]
Which alle wommen most desire!
I wolde that thou were afire."
Bot natheles in such a plit
Florent of his answere is quit.
And tho began his sorwe newe,
For he mot gon, or ben untrewe,
To hire which his trowthe hadde.
Bot he, which alle schame dradde,
Goth forth in stede of his penance,
And takth the fortune of his chance,
As he that was with trowthe affaited.[5]
This olde wyht him hath awaited
In place wher as he hire lefte:
Florent his wofull heved[6] uplefte
And syh this vecke[7] wher sche sat,
Which was the lothlieste what[8]
That evere man caste on his yhe:
Hire nase bass,[9] hire browes hyhe,
Hire yhen smale and depe set,
Hire chekes ben with teres wet,
And rivelen[10] as an emty skyn
Hangende doun unto the chin;
Hire lippes schrunken ben for age,
Ther was no grace in the visage,
Hir front was nargh,[11] hir lockes hore,
Sche loketh forth as doth a More,[12]
Hire necke is schort, hir schuldres courbe,[13]
That myhte a mannes lust destourbe,
Hire body gret and nothing smal,
And schortly to descrive hire al,
Sche hath no lith[14] withoute a lak;
Bot lich unto the wollesak
Sche proferth hire unto this knyht,
And bad him, as he hath behyht,
So as sche hath ben his warant,
That he hire holde covenant,
And be the bridel sche him seseth.
Bot Godd wot how that sche him pleseth
Of suche wordes as sche spekth:
Him thenkth welnyh his herte brekth
For sorwe that he may noght fle,
Bot if he wolde untrewe be.
Loke, how a sek man for his hele
Takth baldemoine with canele,[1]
And with the mirre takth the sucre,
Ryht upon such a maner lucre[2]
Stant Florent, as in this diete:
He drinkth the bitre with the swete,
He medleth sorwe with likynge,
And liveth, as who seith,[3] deyinge;
His youthe schal be cast aweie
Upon such on which as the weie[4]
Is old and lothly overal.
Bot nede he mot that nede schal:[5]
He wolde algate his trowthe holde,
As every knyht therto is holde,[6]
What happ so evere him is befalle:
Thogh sche be the fouleste of alle,
Yet to thonour of wommanhiede
Him thoghte he scholde taken hiede;
So that for pure gentilesse,
As he hire couthe best adresce,
In ragges, as sche was totore,[7]
He set hire on his hors tofore
And forth he takth his weie softe;
No wonder thogh he siketh[8] ofte.
Bot as an oule[9] fleth be nyhte
Out of alle othre briddes syhte,
Riht so this knyht on daies brode
In clos him hield, and schop his rode
On nyhtes time, til the tyde
That he cam there he wolde abide;
And prively withoute noise
He bringth this foule grete coise[10]
To his castell in such a wise
That noman myhte hire schappe avise,
Til sche into the chambre cam:
Wher he his prive conseil nam[11]
Of suche men as he most troste,
And tolde hem that he nedes moste
This beste wedde to his wif,
For elles hadde he lost his lif.
The prive wommen were asent,[12]
That scholden ben of his assent:
Hire ragges thei anon of drawe,
And, as it was that time lawe,
She hadde bath, sche hadde reste,
And was arraied to the beste.
Bot with no craft of combes brode
Thei myhte hire hore lockes schode,[13]

1 stop. 2 in any case. 3 boast.
4 secret. 5 prepared. 6 head.
7 hag. 8 thing. 9 flat.
10 shrivel. 11 Her forehead was narrow.
12 Moor. 13 bent. 14 limb.

1 gentian with cinnamon. 2 compensation.
3 so to speak. 4 highway.
5 But he must, whom fate compels. 6 bound.
7 all torn. 8 sighs. 9 owl. 10 hag.
11 took. 12 sent for. 13 divide, untangle.

And sche ne wolde noght be schore [1]
For no conseil, and thei therfore,
With such atyr as tho was used,
Ordeinen that it was excused,
And hid so crafteliche aboute,
That noman myhte sen hem oute.
Bot when sche was fulliche arraied
And hire atyr was al assaied,
Tho was sche foulere on to se:
Bot yit it may non other be,
Thei were wedded in the nyht;
So wo begon was nevere knyht
As he was thanne of mariage.
And sche began to pleie and rage,
As who seith, I am wel ynowh;
Bot he therof nothing ne lowh,[2]
For sche tok thanne chiere on honde [3]
And clepeth him hire housebonde,
And seith, "My lord, go we to bedde,
For I to that entente wedde,
That thou schalt be my worldes blisse:"
And profreth him with that to kisse,
As sche a lusti lady were.
His body myhte wel be there,
Bot as of thoght and of memoire
His herte was in purgatoire.
Bot yit for strengthe of matrimoine
He myhte make non essoine,[4]
That he ne mot algates plie [5]
To gon to bedde of compaignie:
And whan thei were abedde naked,
Withoute slep he was awaked;
He torneth on that other side,
For that he wolde hise yhen hyde
Fro lokynge on that foule wyht.
The chambre was al full of lyht,
The courtins were of cendal [6] thinne;
This newe bryd which lay withinne,
Thogh it be noght with his acord,
In armes sche beclipte hire lord,
And preide, as he was torned fro,
He wolde him torne ayeinward tho;
"For now," sche seith, "we ben both on."
And he lay still as eny ston,
Bot evere in on [7] sche spak and preide,
And bad him thenke on that he seide,
Whan that he tok hire be the hond.
He herde and understod the bond,
How he was set to his penance,
And as it were a man in trance
He torneth him al sodeinly,
And syh a lady lay him by
Of eyhtetiene [8] wynter age,
Which was the faireste of visage
That evere in al this world he syh:
And as he wolde have take hire nyh,
Sche put hire hand, and be his leve
Besoghte him that he wolde leve,
And seith that for to wynne or lese
He mot on of tuo thinges chese,
Wher [1] he wol have hire such on nyht,
Or elles upon daies lyht,
For he schal noght have bothe tuo.
And he began to sorwe tho,
In many a wise and caste his thoght,
Bot for al that yit cowthe he noght
Devise himself which was the beste.
And sche, that wolde his hertes reste,
Preith that he sholde chese algate,[2]
Til ate laste longe and late
He seide: "O ye, my lyves hele,[3]
Sey what you list in my querele,
I not what ansuere I shal yive:
Bot evere whil that I may live,
I wol that ye be my maistresse,
For I can noght miselve gesse
Which is the beste unto my chois.
Thus grante I yow myn hole vois,
Ches for ous bothen, I you preie;
And what as evere that ye seie,
Riht as ye wole so wol I."
"Mi lord," sche seide, "grant merci,[4]
For of this word that ye now sein,
That ye have mad me soverein,
Mi destine is overpassed,
That never hierafter schal be lassed [5]
Mi beaute, which that I now have,
Til I be take into my grave;
Bot nyht and day as I am now
I schal alwey be such to yow.
The kinges dowhter of Cizile [6]
I am, and fell bot siththe awhile,[7]
As I was with my fader late,
That my stepmoder for an hate,
Which toward me sche hath begonne,
Forschop [8] me, til I hadde wonne
The love and sovereinete
Of what knyht that in his degre
Alle othre passeth of good name:
And, as men sein, ye ben the same,
The dede proeveth it is so;
Thus am I youres evermo."
Tho was plesance and joye ynowh,
Echon with other pleide and lowh;
Thei live longe and wel thei ferde,
And clerkes that this chance herde
Thei writen it in evidence,
To teche how that obedience
Mai wel fortune a man to love
And sette him in his lust above,
As it befell unto this knyht.

1 shorn. 2 laughed. 3 began to be merry. 4 excuse. 5 submit. 6 silk. 7 continually. 8 eighteen.

1 whether. 2 at any rate. 3 health of my life. 4 thank you. 5 lessened 6 Sicily. 7 but a short time since. 8 transformed.

# SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT

In the British Museum is preserved a manuscript known as Cotton Nero A. X + 4, which contains four poems copied out by one scribe, and written in the English spoken in the latter part of the fourteenth century in the West Midland district. These poems are generally believed to be the work of one poet, as to whose identity we have not even a plausible guess. But he is a very good poet. Had this single manuscript perished, we should never have known the greatest of Chaucer's contemporaries in English poetry; for two of the poems in the manuscript — *Pearl*, a hauntingly beautiful dream-vision, in which a father sees again in the lovely fields outside the walls of the New Jerusalem the dear daughter whom he had lost, and the romance of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* — are among the noblest poems of the English Middle Ages. Unluckily the West Midland dialect of these poems makes them so difficult to read that most modern readers must be content to know them only in translation.

The third stanza of *Sir Gawain* runs thus in the original. (The character þ represents *th;* the character ȝ in the middle of a word represents *gh*, at the end of a word *z*.)

Þis kyng lay at Camylot vpon kryst-masse,
With mony luflych lorde, ledeȝ of þe best,
Rekenly of þe rounde table alle þo rich breþer,
With rych reuel oryȝt, & rechles merþes;
Þer tournayed tulkes by-tymeȝ ful mony,
Justed ful Jolilé þyse gentyle kniȝtes,
Syþen kayred to þe court, caroles to make.
For þer þe fest watȝ ilyche ful fiften dayes
With alle þe mete & þe mirþe þat men coupe a-vyse;
Such glaumande gle glorious to here,
Dere dyn vp-on day, daunsyng on nyȝtes,
Al watȝ hap upon heȝe in halleȝ & chambreȝ,
With lordeȝ & ladies, as leuest him þoȝt;
With alle þe wele of þe worlde þay woned þer samen,
Þe most kyd knyȝtes vnder krystes seluen,
& þe louelokkest ladies þat euer lif haden,
& he þe comlokest kyng þat þe court haldes;
For al watȝ þis fayre folk in her first age,
on sille;
Þe hapnest vnder heuen,
Kyng hyȝest mon of wylle,
Hit were now gret nye to neuen
So hardy a here on hille.

Where the nameless poet found the story which he has retold so beautifully, we do not know; but we can recognize in the poem a skilful combination of two originally separate stories which are found in many varying versions — the story of the challenge which is the principal matter of the first and fourth "fyttes," and the story of the temptation which fills "Fytte the Third." (For versions of these stories, see G. L. Kittredge: *A Study of Gawain and the Green Knight*, Harvard University Press, 1916.)

The poem is an admirable example of medieval romance. The scene is laid at the court of King Arthur, which was already in the long-ago for fourteenth-century readers, a world of magic and marvelous adventure. Sir Gawain is a noble pattern of chivalric virtues — loyalty, courtesy, honor. His one small lapse but serves to make him more credibly human. Unlike many of the old romances, the poem has unity of theme and a nearly faultless narrative form.

The best edition of the poem is that of Tolkien and Gordon (Oxford University Press, 1925). It has been several times translated into modern English. The translation here printed is by Neilson and Webster in *Chief British Poets of the 14th and 15th Centuries* (Houghton Mifflin), where the student may also find a translation of the *Pearl*.

## SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT

### FYTTE THE FIRST

1. After the siege and the assault had ceased at Troy, the city been destroyed and burned to brands and ashes, the warrior who wrought there the trains of treason was tried for his treachery, the truest on earth.[1] This was Aeneas the noble; he and his high kindred afterwards conquered provinces, and became patrons of well nigh all the wealth in the

1 Antenor and Aeneas were the traitors who in the medieval story of Troy handed over the city to the Greeks.

West Isles. As soon as rich Romulus turns him to Rome, with great pride he at once builds that city, and names it with his own name, which it now has; Ticius turns to Tuscany and founds dwellings; Longobard raises homes in Lombardy; and, far over the French flood, Felix Brutus establishes Britain joyfully on many broad banks, where war and waste and wonders by turns have since dwelt, and many a swift interchange of bliss and woe.

2. And when this Britain was founded by this great hero, bold men loving strife bred therein, and many a time they wrought destruction. More strange things have happened in this land since these days than in any other that I know; but of all the British kings that built here, Arthur was ever the most courteous, as I have heard tell. Therefore, I mean to tell of an adventure in the world, which some count strange and extraordinary even among the wonders of Arthur. If ye will listen to this lay but a little while, I will tell it forthright as I heard it told in town, as it is set down in story that cannot be changed, long written in the land in true words.

3. This King lay royally at Camelot at Christmas tide with many fine lords, the best of men, all the rich brethren of the Round Table, with right rich revel and careless mirth. There full many heroes tourneyed betimes, jousted full gaily; then returned these gentle knights to the court to make carols.[1] For there the feast was held full fifteen days alike with all the meat and the mirth that men could devise. Such a merry tumult, glorious to hear; joyful din by day, dancing at night. All was high joy in halls and chambers with lords and ladies as pleased them best. With all the weal in the world they dwelt there together, the most famous knights save only Christ, the loveliest ladies that ever had life, and he, the comeliest of kings, who holds the court. For all this fair company were in their prime in the hall, the happiest troop under heaven with the proudest of kings. Truly it would be hard to name anywhere so brave a band.

4. When New Year was fresh and but newly come, the court was served double on the dais. As soon as the king with his knights was come into the hall, the chanting in the chapel came to an end; loud was the cry there of clerks and others. Noel was celebrated anew, shouted full often; and afterwards the great ones ran about to take handsel;[1] called aloud for New Year's gifts, paid them out briskly, busily discussed the gifts; ladies laughed full loud, though they had lost; and he that won was not wroth, that may ye well trow. All this mirth they made till the meat time. When they had washed, worthily they went to their seats, the best man ever above, as it best behoved. Queen Guinevere full beauteous was set in the midst, placed on the rich dais adorned all about. Fine silk at the sides, a canopy over her of precious cloth of Toulouse, and tapestries of Tars,[2] that were embroidered and set with the best gems that money could buy. Truly no man could say that he ever beheld a comelier lady than she, with her dancing gray eyes.

5. But Arthur would not eat till all were served. He was so merry in his mirth, and somewhat childlike in his manner; his life pleased him well; he loved little either to lie long or to sit long, so busied him his young blood and his wild brain. And another custom moved him also, that he through chivalry had taken up; he would never eat upon such a dear day before he was told an uncouth tale of some adventurous thing, of some great marvel that he could believe, of ancient heroes, of arms, or of other adventures; or unless some person demanded of him a sure knight to join with him in jousting, to incur peril, to risk life against life, trusting each in the other, leaving the victory to fortune. This was the king's custom whenever he held court at each goodly feast among his free company in the hall. And so with undaunted face he strides stoutly to his seat on that New Year, making great mirth with everybody.

6. Thus the great king stands waiting before the high table, talking of trifles full courteously. The good Gawain was placed there beside Guinevere, and Agravain of the Hard Hand sat on the other side, both of them the king's sister's sons and full sure knights. Bishop Baldwin at the top begins the table, and Ywain, Urien's son, ate by himself. These were placed on the dais and honorably served, and after them many a good man at the side tables. Then the first course came in with blare of trumpets, which were hung with many a bright banner. A new noise of kettle-drums with the noble pipes, wild and stirring melodies wakened the echoes; that many a heart heaved full high at their tones. Dainties of precious meats

1 dancing and singing in a ring.

1 New Year's gifts of good omen.
2 Oriental figured stuff.

llowed, foison of fresh viands, and on so
lany dishes that it was difficult to find place
efore the people to set on the cloth the
lver that held the several courses. Each
an as he himself preferred partook without
esitation. Every two [1] had twelve dishes be-
veen them, good beer and bright wine both.

7. Now will I tell you no more of their
rvice, for everybody must well understand
hat there was no lack of opportunity for the
eople to take their food. Another noise full
ew suddenly drew nigh, for scarcely had the
usic ceased a moment, and the first course
een properly served in the court, than there
urst in at the hall door an awesome being,
height one of the tallest men in the world;
om the neck to the waist so square and so
ick was he, and his loins and his limbs so
ng and so great, that half giant I believed
im to have been, or, at any rate, the largest
f men, and withal the handsomest in spite
f his bulk, that ever rode; for though his
ack and breast were so vast, yet his belly
nd waist were properly slim; and all his
rm according, full fairly shaped. At the
ue of his noble face men wondered; he
rried himself in hostile fashion and was
ntirely green.

8. All green was this man and his clothing;
straight coat sat tight to his sides; a fair
antle above, adorned within; the lining
owed, with costly trimming of shining
hite fur; and such his hood also, that was
ught back from his locks and lay on his
oulders, the hem well stretched; hose of
e same green, that clung to his calf; and
ean spurs under, of bright gold upon silk
ands richly barred, and shoes on his shanks
s the hero rides. And all his vesture verily
as clean verdure, both the bars of his belt,
nd the other beauteous stones that were
t in fine array about himself and his saddle,
orked on silk. It would be too difficult to
ell the half of the trifles that were embroid-
red there, with birds and flies, with gay
auds of green, — the gold ever in the middle;
he pendants of the poitrel, the proud crup-
er, the bits, — and all the metal was
namelled; the stirrups that he stood on
ere coloured the same, and his saddle bow
ikewise, and his fine reins that glimmered
nd glinted all of green stones. The horse
hat he rode on was of the same colour too,
green horse, great and thick, a steed full
tiff to guide, in gay embroidered bridle, and
ne right dear to his master.

[1] It was extremely sumptuous having only two at a
ess; i.e. only two sharing the same cup and platter.

9. This hero was splendidly dressed in green; and the hair of his head matched that of his horse; fair flowing locks enfolded his shoulders; a beard as big as a bush hung over his breast; and it, together with his splendid hair that reached from his head, was trimmed evenly all round above his elbows, so that half his arms were caught thereunder in the manner of a king's hood, that covers his neck. The mane of that great horse was much like it, very curly and combed, with knots full many folded in with gold wire about the fair green, — always one knot of the hair, another of gold. The tail and the forelock were twined in the same way, and both bound with a band of bright green, set with full precious stones the whole length of the dock, and then tied up with a thong in a tight knot; where rang many bells full bright of burnished gold. Such a steed in the world, such a hero as rides him, was never beheld in that hall before that time. His glances were like bright lightning, so said all that saw him. It seemed as if no man could endure under his blows.

10. He had neither helm nor hauberk, nor gorget, armour nor breastplate, nor shaft nor shield to guard or to smite; but in his one hand he had a holly twig, that is greenest when groves are bare, and an axe in his other, a huge and prodigious one, a weapon merciless almost beyond description; the head had the vast length of an ell-yard, the blade all of green steel and of beaten gold; the bit brightly burnished, with a broad edge, as well shaped for cutting as sharp razors. The stern warrior gripped it by the steel of its stout staff, which was wound with iron to the end of the wood and all engraven with green in beauteous work. A lace was lapped about it, that was fastened at the head, and tied up often along the helve, with many precious tassels attached on rich embroidered buttons of the bright green. This hero turns him in and enters the hall, riding straight to the high dais, fearless of mischief. He greeted never a one, but looked loftily about, and the first word that he uttered was: "Where is the governor of this company? Gladly I would see that hero and speak with him."

He cast his eye on the knights and rode fiercely up and down, stopped and gan ponder who was there the most renowned.

11. All gazed fixedly on the man, for everybody marvelled what it might mean, that a knight and a horse could have such a colour: as green grown as the grass, and

greener, it seemed; shining brighter than green enamel on gold. All were amazed who stood there, and stalked nearer to him, with all the wonder in the world what he would do; for many marvels had they seen, but such never before. Therefore for phantom and faery the folk there deemed it; and for that reason many a noble warrior was slow to answer, and all were astonished at his voice and sat stone still in a deep silence through the rich hall. Their voices sank as though they had suddenly fallen asleep. I deem, however, that it was not all for fear, but somewhat for courtesy. But now let him to whom all defer undertake the wight.

12. Then Arthur before the high dais beheld that adventure, and saluted the stranger properly, for never was he afraid, and said, "Sir, welcome indeed to this place. I am called Arthur, the head of this hostel. Light courteously down and tarry, I pray thee; and whatso thy will is we shall wit after."

"Nay, so help me he that sits on high," quoth the hero. "To dwell any time in this house was not my errand; but because the fame of this people is lifted up so high, and thy town and thy men are held the best, the stoutest in steel gear on steeds to ride, the wightest and the worthiest of the world's kind, and proved opponents in other proper sports; and here courtesy is known, as I have heard tell, — it is this that has enticed me hither certainly at this time. You may be sure by this branch that I bear here that I pass in peace and seek no quarrel; for if I had set out with a company in fighting fashion, I have a hauberk at home and a helm both, a shield and a sharp spear shining bright, and other weapons to wield, I ween well also; but since I wished no war, my weeds are softer. Now if thou be as bold as all men tell, thou wilt grant me graciously the game that I ask."

Arthur knew how to answer, and said: "Sir courteous knight, if it is battle that thou cravest, thou shalt not fail of a fight here."

13. "Nay, I demand no fight; in faith I tell thee there are but beardless children about on this bench. If I were hasped in arms on a high steed there is no man here to match me, their might is so weak. Therefore I crave in this court a Christmas game, for it is Yule and New Year, and here are many gallants. If there be a man in this house who holds himself so hardy, is so bold in his blood, so rash in his head, that he dares stiffly strike one stroke for another, I shall give him as my gift this rich gisarm, this axe, that is heavy enough, to handle as he likes; and I shall abide the first blow as bare as I sit. If any warrior be wight enough to try what I propose, let him leap lightly to me and take this weapon — I quit-claim it for ever, let him keep it as his own — and I shall stand him a stroke firmly on this floor. At another time, by our Lady, thou wilt grant me the boon of dealing him another blow; I will give him respite of a twelvemonth and a day. Now hie, and let us see quickly if any herein dare say aught."

14. If he had astonished them at first, stiller were then all the retainers in hall, the high and the low. The warrior on his steed settled himself in his saddle, and fiercely his red eyes he reeled about; bent his thick brows, shining green; and waved his beard, awaiting whoso would rise. When none would answer him he coughed aloud, stretched himself haughtily and began to speak; "What! Is this Arthur's house," said the hero then, "that is famous through so many realms? Where is now your pride and your conquests, your fierceness, and your wrath and your great words? Now is the revel and the renown of the Round Table overcome by the word of a single man; for all tremble for dread without a blow shown."

With this he laughed so loud that the lord grieved; the blood shot for shame into his fair face. He waxed as wroth as the wind; and so did all that were there. The king so keen of mood then stood near that proud man.

15. "Sir," said he, "by heaven thy asking is foolish; and as thou hast demanded folly, it behooves thee to find it. I know no man that is aghast of thy great words. Give me now thy gisarm, for God's sake, and I will grant thy boon that thou hast bidden."

Quickly he leaped to him and caught at his hand; and the other alights fiercely on foot. Now Arthur has his axe, and grips the helve; he whirls it sternly about as if he meant to strike with it. The bold stranger stood upright before him, higher than any in the house by a head and more; with stern cheer he stood there, stroked his beard, and with cool countenance drew down his coat, no more afraid or dismayed for Arthur's great strokes than if some one had brought him a drink of wine upon the bench.

Gawain, that sat by the queen, turned to the king: "I beseech now with all courtesy that this affair might be mine."

16. "Would ye, worthy lord," quoth Gawain to the king, "bid me step from this

bench and stand by you there, — that I without rudeness might leave this table, and that my liege lady liked it not ill — I would come to your help before your rich court; for methinks it is obviously unseemly that such an asking is made so much of in your hall, even though ye yourself be willing to take it upon you, while so many bold ones sit about you on the bench; than whom, I ween, none under heaven are higher of spirit, nor more mighty on the field where strife is neared. I am the weakest, I know, and feeblest of wit; and to tell the truth there would be the least loss in my life. I am only to praise forasmuch as ye are my uncle; no other nobility than your blood know I in my body. And since this adventure is so foolish, it belongs not to you; I have asked it of you first; give it to me. Let this great court decide if I have not spoken well."

The heroes took counsel together and they all gave the same advice, — to free the crowned king and give the game to Gawain.

17. Then the king commanded Gawain to rise from the table; and he right quickly stood up and made himself ready, kneeled down before the king and took the weapon; and Arthur lovingly left it to him, lifted up his hand and gave him God's blessing, and gladly bade him be hardy both of heart and of hand. "Take care, cousin," quoth the king, "that thou give him a cut; and if thou handle him properly, I readily believe that thou shalt endure the blow which he shall give after."

Gawain goes to the man with gisarm in hand; and he boldly awaits him, shrinking never a whit. Then speaks to Sir Gawain the knight in the green; "Rehearse we our agreement before we go farther. First I conjure thee, hero, how thou art called, that thou tell me it truly, so that I may believe it."

"In good faith," quoth the knight, "Gawain am I called, who give you this buffet, whatever befalls after; and at this time twelvemonth I am to take from thee another with whatever weapon thou wilt, and from no wight else alive."

The other answers again, "Sir Gawain, so thrive I as I am heartily glad that thou shalt give this blow."

18. "By Gog," quoth the green knight, "Sir Gawain, it delights me that I am to get at thy fist what I have requested here; and thou hast readily and truly rehearsed the whole of the covenant that I asked of the king, save that thou shalt assure me, sir, by thy troth, that thou wilt seek me thyself wheresoever thou thinkest I may be found upon the earth, and fetch for thyself such wages as thou dealest me to-day before this rich company."

"Where should I seek thee?" quoth Gawain. "Where is thy place? I know never where thou livest, by him that wrought me; nor do I know thee, knight, thy court, nor thy name. But tell me truly the way and how thou art called, and I will use all my wit to win my way thither, — and that I swear thee, for a sooth, and by my sure troth."

"New Year will suffice for that; no more is needed now," quoth the man in green to Gawain the courteous. "To tell the truth, after I have received thy tap, and thou hast smitten me well, I shall promptly inform thee of my house and my home and mine own name. Then thou mayest inquire about my journey and hold promise; and if I speak no speech, then thou speedest the better, for thou mayest linger at ease in thy land and seek no further. Take now thy grim tool to thee and let us see how thou knockest."

"Gladly, sir, for sooth," quoth Gawain as he strokes his axe.

19. The green knight on the ground prepared himself properly. With the head a little bowed he disclosed the flesh. His long, lovely locks he laid over his crown, and let the naked nape of his neck show for the blow. Gawain gripped his axe and gathered it on high; the left foot he set before on the ground, and let the axe light smartly down on the naked flesh, so that the sharp edge severed the giant's bones, and shrank through the clear flesh and sheared it in twain, till the edge of the brown steel bit into the ground. The fair head fell from the neck to the earth, and many pushed it with their feet where it rolled forth. The blood burst from the body and glistened on the green. Yet never faltered nor fell the hero for all that; but stoutly he started up with firm steps, and fiercely he rushed forth where the heroes stood, caught his lovely head, and lifted it up straightway. Then he turned to his steed, seized the bridle, stepped into the steel bow and strode aloft, holding the head in his hand by the hair; and as soberly the man sat in his saddle as if no mishap had ailed him, though he was headless on the spot. He turned his trunk about — that ugly body that bled. Many a one of them thought that he had lost his reason.

20. For he held the head straight up in his hand; turned the face toward the highest on the dais; and it lifted up the eyelids and

looked straight out, and spoke thus much with its mouth, as ye may now hear: — "Look Gawain, that thou be ready to go as thou hast promised, and seek loyally, hero, till thou find me; as thou hast promised in this hall in the hearing of these knights. To the green chapel go thou, I charge thee, to receive such a blow as thou hast dealt. Thou deservest to be promptly paid on New Year's morn. As the knight of the green chapel many men know me; therefore, if thou strivest to find me, thou shalt never fail. And so come, or it behooves thee to be called recreant."

With a wild rush he turned the reins, and flew out at the hall door — his head in his hand — so that the fire of the flint flew from the foal's hoofs. To what country he vanished knew none there; no more than they wist whence he was come. The king and Gawain roared with laughter at that green man; but this adventure was reckoned a marvel among men.

21. Though the courteous king wondered in his heart, he let no semblance be seen, but said aloud to the comely queen with courteous speech, "Dear dame, to-day be never dismayed; well becoming are such tricks at Christmas, in lack of entertainment, to laugh and sing about among these pleasant carols of knights and ladies. Nevertheless I may well go to my meat, for I can not deny that I have seen a marvel." He glanced at Sir Gawain and said cheerfully, "Now, sir, hang up thine axe; it has hewn enough." And it was put above the dais to hang on the tapestry where all men might marvel at it, and by it avouch the wonderful happening. Then they turned to the board, these heroes together — the king and the good knight — and the keen men served them double of all dainties, as was most fitting; with all manner of meat, and minstrelsy both. They spent that day in joy until it came to an end. Now take care, Sir Gawain, that thou blench not for the pain to prosecute this adventure that thou hast taken on hand.

## FYTTE THE SECOND

1. This hansel of adventures had Arthur at the beginning, in the young year, since he yearned to hear boasting. Although there was little news when they went to their seats, now they are provided with stern work, their hands quite full. Gawain was glad to begin those games in the hall; but it would not be surprising if the end were heavy; for though men be merry in mind when they have muc drink, yet a year runs full swiftly, and yield never the same; the beginning full seldo matches the end. And so this Yule went b and the year after it, each season in tur following the other. After Christmas cam the crabbed Lent, that tries the flesh wit fish and more simple food. But then t weather of the world quarrels with winter, an though the cold still clings, the clouds lif copiously descends the rain in warm shower and falls upon the fair earth. Flowers sho there; green are the garments both of fiel and of groves; birds hurry to build, and lustil they sing for the solace of the soft summe that follows thereafter. Blossoms swell int bloom in rows rich and rank; and lovely note are heard in the beauteous wood.

2. After the season of summer with th soft winds, when Zephyrus blows on seed and herbs, happy is the plant that waxe then, when the dank dew drops from th leaves, to await the blissful glance of th bright sun. But then harvest hastens an hardens it soon: warns it to wax full rip against the winter. He drives with drough the dust to rise, — from the face of the eart to fly full high. The wild wind of the welki wrestles with the sun. The leaves fall fro the bough and light on the ground. Th grass becomes all gray that erst was green Then all ripes and rots that which formerl flourished; and thus runs the year in yester days many; and winter returns again withou asking any man, till the Michelmas moon ha come in wintry wise. Then thinks Gawai full soon of his anxious voyage.

3. Yet till Allhallows day with Arthur h lingers; and Arthur made a feast on tha festival for the hero's sake, with great an gay revel of the Round Table. Knights ful courteous and comely ladies all for love o that man were in sorrow; but nevertheles they spoke only of mirth; and many a joyles one there made jests for his gentle sak After meat he mournfully addresses his uncle and speaks of his passage, and openly he say — "Now, liege lord of my life, leave I ask o you. Ye know the cost of this case; I do no care to tell you even a trifle of its dangers but I am ready to start for the fray no late than to-morrow morn, to seek the man in th green, as God will guide me."

Then the best of the castle gathered to gether, Ywain and Erec, and others ful many, Sir Dodinel de Sauvage, the Duke o Clarence, Lancelot and Lyonel and Luca the Good, Sir Bors and Sir Bedever, big me

both, and many other proud ones, with Mador de la Port. All this company of court came nearer to the king, to counsel the knight, with care at their hearts. There was much deep grief felt in the hall that so worthy a one as Gawain should go on that errand, to endure a sorry dint and deal none himself with his brand. But the knight ever made good cheer, and said, "Why should I swerve from stern and strange destiny? What can a man do but try?"

4. He lingered there all that day, and on the morn made ready. Early he asked for his arms, and they were all brought. First a carpet of Toulouse was stretched over the floor, and much was the gilt gear that gleamed upon it. The brave man stepped thereon and handled the steel, clad in a doublet of costly Tars, and afterwards a well wrought hood, closed on top and bound within with a glistening white fur. Then they put the sabatons [1] upon the hero's feet, lapped his legs in steel with fair greaves, to which were attached well polished poleynes [2] fastened about his knees with knots of gold. Fine cuisses then, that well enclosed his thick, brawny thighs, they attached with thongs. Next the decorated burnie [3] of bright steel rings upon precious stuff encased the hero, and well burnished braces upon his two arms, with elbow-pieces goodly and gay and gloves of plate, and all the goodly gear that might avail him at that time, with rich coat armour, gold spurs well fastened, and a sure brand girt about his side by a silken sash.

5. When he was hasped in arms his harness was rich; the least latchet or loop gleamed with gold. So, harnessed as he was, he heard his mass, offered and adored at the high altar. Then he came to the king and his court; courteously took his leave of lords and ladies; and they kissed him, and convoyed him, entrusting him to Christ. By that time was Gringolet ready, and girt with a saddle that gleamed full gaily with many gold fringes; everywhere nailed anew, prepared for that emergency. The bridle, barred about, was bound with bright gold; the decoration of the breastplate and of the fine housings, the crupper and caparison, accorded with the saddle-bow, and all was adorned with rich red gold nails, that glittered and gleamed like the gleam of the sun. Then he took the helm and quickly kissed it. It was stoutly stapled and stuffed within; it was high on his head, hasped behind, with a light urison [4] over the ventail,[1] embroidered and bound with the best gems on a broad silken border; and birds on the seams like painted popinjays [2] preening themselves here and there; turtle-doves and true-loves [3] thickly interlaced. As many birds there were as had been in town for seven winters. The circlet that surrounded his crown was even more precious — a device of gleaming diamonds.

6. Then they showed him the shield, that was of sheer gules, with the pentangle painted in pure gold. He took it by the baldric and cast it about his neck; and it became the hero passing fair. And why the pentangle pertains to that noble prince I mean to tell you, though it should delay me. It is a sign that Solomon set formerly as a token of truth, by its own right, for it is a figure that holds five points, and each line overlaps and locks in another; and throughout it is endless; and the English call it everywhere, as I hear, the endless knot. Therefore it suits this knight and his clear arms, forever faithful in five things, and in each of them five ways. Gawain was known for good and as refined gold, devoid of every villainy, adorned with virtues. Therefore, the new pentangle he bore on shield and coat, as the man most true of speech and the knight gentlest of behaviour.

7. First, he was found faultless in his five wits; and again the hero failed never in his five fingers; and all his affiance in this world was in the five wounds that Christ received on the cross, as the creed tells; and wheresoever this man was hard bestead in the mêlée his pious thought was in this above all other things — to take all his strength from the five joys that the courteous Queen of Heaven had of her child. For this cause the knight had her image comely painted in the greater half of his shield, that when he looked down thereupon, his courage never abated. The fifth five that I find that the hero used, were generosity and fellowship above all things, his purity and his courtesy that never swerved, and pity that passes all qualities. These very five were more surely set upon that warrior than upon any other. Now all these [4] were established fivefold in this knight, and each one was fastened in another that had no end, and they were fastened on five points that never failed, nor met anywhere, nor sundered either, but finished always without end at each corner, wherever the game began or concluded.

1 steel shoes. 2 knee pieces. 3 coat of mail. 4 scarf.

1 visor. 2 parrots. 3 true lover's knots 4 these five larger virtues.

Therefore on his fair shield this knot was painted royally with red gold upon red gules. That is the true pentangle as the people properly call it. Now was the gay Gawain armed. He caught up his lance right there, and with a good-day he went for evermore.

8. He spurred his steed with the spurs and sprang on his way so swiftly that the stone struck out fire after him. All who saw the gentle man sighed in heart, and the heroes said all together to each other in their love for that comely knight, "By Christ, it is a shame that thou, hero, must be lost, who art so noble of life. In faith it is not easy to find his match upon the earth. To have acted more warily would have been better counsel; and to have made yon dear one a duke; it would well become him to be a brilliant leader of people here. This would have been better than to have him utterly destroyed, given over to an elvish man for mere boasting pride. Who ever knew any king to take such counsel as to suffer knights to be so tricked for a Christmas game." Much warm water welled from eyes when that seemly sire departed from the dwellings that day. He made no stop, but wightly went his way; many a tiresome path he rode, as I heard the book tell.

9. Now rides this hero, Sir Gawain, through the realm of Logres in God's behalf, though to him it seemed no play. Oft alone companionless he lodged at night in places where he found not before him the fare that he liked. No company had he but his foal by friths and downs, nor nobody but God to talk with by the way; till that he approached nigh unto North Wales. He kept all the isles of Anglesey on the left side, and fared over the fords by the forelands, over at the Holy Head, till he again took land in the wilderness of Wirrel. There dwelt but few that loved either God or man with good heart. And ever as he fared he asked of men that he met if they had heard any talk of a green knight of the green chapel in any spot thereabout, and all nicked him with nay, that never in their life saw they any man of such green hue. The knight took strange roads by many a rough bank. His cheer changed full oft ere he saw that chapel.

10. Many a cliff he overclimbed in strange countries; far sundered from his friends, lonely he rode. At each ford or water where the hero passed it were strange if he found not a foe before him, and that so foul and so fell that it behooved him to fight. So many marvels in the mountains there the man found that it were too tedious to tell of the tenth part. Sometimes he warred with serpents, and with wolves also, sometimes with savages that dwelt in the cliffs; both with bulls and bears, and boars sometimes and giants that assailed him from the high fell. Had he not been doughty and stern and served God, doubtless he had been dead and slain full oft. But the warfare tried him not so much but that the winter was worse when the cold clear water shed from the clouds, and froze ere it might fall to the barren earth. Near slain with the sleet he slept in his iron more nights than enough on naked rocks, where clattering from the crest the cold burn ran, and hung high over his head in hard icicles. Thus in peril and pain and plights full hard through the country wanders this knight all alone till Christmas Eve. At that tide to Mary he made his moan that she might direct his riding and lead him to some dwelling.

11. Merrily on the morn he rides by a mount into a forest full deep, that was strangely wild. High hills were on each side, and woods beneath of hoar oaks full huge, a hundred together. The hazel and the hawthorn were twined all together, covered everywhere with rough ragged moss with many unblithe birds upon bare twigs that piteously piped there for pain of the cold. The knight upon Gringolet rides all alone under the boughs, through many a moss and mire, mourning for his trials, lest he should never survive to see the service of that Sire who on that very night was born of a lady to quell our pain. And therefore sighing he said: "I beseech thee, Lord, and Mary, that is mildest mother so dear, for some harbour where I might properly hear mass and thy matins to-morrow. Meekly I ask it, and thereto earnestly I pray my pater and ave and creed." He rode in his prayer and lamented for his misdeeds. Oft-times he blessed himself, and said, "Christ's cross speed me."

12. The hero had not crossed himself more than thrice ere he was aware in the wood of a dwelling on a hill, above a clearing, on a mount, hidden under the boughs of many a huge tree about the ditches; a castle the comeliest that ever knight owned, set on a prairie, a park all about, with its beautiful palace, pinnacled full thick, and surrounded with many a tree for more than two miles. The hero gazed at the castle on that one side as it shimmered and shone through the fair oaks. Then he humbly doffed his helm and

devoutly he thanked Jesus and St. Julian — who are both gentle — who courteously had directed him and harkened to his cry. "Now con hostel," quoth the man, "I beseech you yet!" Then he spurs Gringolet with his gilt heels, and he full fortunately takes the way to the chief road, that soon brought the hero to the bridge-end in haste. The bridge was securely lifted, the gates locked fast; the walls were well arrayed; no wind blast did it fear.

13. The hero that sat on his horse, abode on the bank of the deep double ditch that stretched to the place. The wall sank in the water wondrous deep, and again a full huge height it towered aloft, of hard hewn stone up to the top courses, corbelled under the battlement in the best manner; and above fine watch-towers ranged along, with many good loop-holes that showed full clean. A better barbican that hero never looked upon. And farther within he beheld the high hall, with towers set full thickly about, and fair and wondrous high filioles with carved tops cunningly devised. Chalk-white chimneys enough he saw that gleamed full white on the battlements. So many painted pinnacles were set everywhere, built so thick among the crenellations of the castle, that it verily appeared cut out of paper. Fair enough it seemed to the noble knight on his horse if he could only attain the shelter within, to harbour in that hostel, while the holiday lasted. He called, and soon there appeared on the wall a right pleasant porter who took his message and greeted the knight errant.

14. "Good sir," quoth Gawain, "would you go my errand to the high lord of this house to crave harbour?"

"Yea, by Peter," quoth the porter; "and truly I trow that ye are welcome, sir, to dwell while you like."

Then the man went again quickly, and a crowd of folk with him, to receive the knight. They let down the great draw and eagerly poured out, and kneeled down on their knees upon the cold earth to welcome the hero as it seemed to them proper. They opened up wide the broad gate for him and he raised them courteously, and rode over the bridge. Several attendants held his saddle while he alighted, and afterwards good men enough stabled his steed. Then knights and squires came down to bring this hero joyfully into the hall. When he lifted up his helm people enough hurried to take it at his hand, in order to serve the courteous one; his sword and his shield they took too. Then he greeted full courteously the knights each one; and many a proud man pressed there to honour that prince. All hasped in his high weeds, they led him to the hall, where a fair fire burned fiercely upon the hearth. Then the lord of the people came from his chamber to meet courteously the man on the floor. He said, "Ye are welcome to wield as you like what is here; all is your own to have at your will and commandment." "Gramercy," quoth Gawain. "Christ reward you for it." Like glad heroes either folded the other in his arms.

15. Gawain looked on the man who greeted him so goodly, and thought it a bold hero that owned the castle, a huge warrior for the nonce, and of great age. Broad and bright was his beard, and all beaver-hued. Firm-gaited was he on his stalwart limbs; with a face as fierce as fire, and a free speech; and to the hero he seemed well suited indeed to govern a nation of good people.

The lord turned to a chamber and promptly commanded to give Gawain a retinue to serve him in lowly wise; and there were ready at his bidding men enough, who brought him to a bright bower where the bedding was curtains of pure silk with clear gold hems, and covertures right curious with comely borders, adorned above with bright fur. Curtains running on ropes, red gold rings, tapestries of Toulouse and Tars hung on the wall, and under foot on the floor of the same pattern. There with mirthful speeches the hero was despoiled of his burnie and of his bright weeds. Quickly men brought him rich robes that he might pick and choose the best for his change. As soon as he took one and was wrapped therein, that sat upon him seemly with sailing skirts, the hero by his visage verily seemed to well nigh every man in looks glowing and lovely in all his limbs; it seemed to them that Christ never made a comelier knight. Wherever in the world he were, it seemed as if he might be a prince without peer in the field where fell men fight.

16. A chair before the chimney, where charcoal burned, was prepared for Sir Gawain richly with cloth and cushions, upon counterpanes that were both fine. And then a beauteous mantle was cast on the man, of a brown fabric richly embroidered, and fairly furred within with the best skins, all of ermine; the hood of the same. And he sat on that settle in seemly rich attire, and warmed him thoroughly; and then his cheer mended. Soon a table was raised up on

trestles full fair, and set with a clean cloth that showed clear white, napkins, salt-cellar, and silver spoons. The hero washed when he would and went to his meat. Men served him seemly enough, — double fold as was proper — with pottages various and suitable, seasoned in the best manner; and many kinds of fish, some baked in bread, some broiled on the coals, some boiled, some in sauces savoured with spices; and always discourse so pleasant that it pleased the warrior. Full freely and often the hero called it a feast right courteously, when all the retainers together praised him as courteous. "Do this penance now, and soon things will be better!" Right mirthful was he for the wine that went to his head.

17. Then they questioned and inquired sparingly in skilful queries put to the prince himself, till he courteously acknowledged that he was of the court which noble Arthur holds alone, who is the rich, royal king of the Round Table; and that it was Gawain himself that sits in the house, by chance come for that Christmas. When the lord had learned that he had that hero, he laughed aloud, so dear it seemed to him; and all the men in the castle made much joy at appearing promptly in the presence of him who contains in his own person all worth and prowess and gracious traits, and is ever praised; above all the men in the world his renown is the greatest. Each warrior said full softly to his companion — "Now shall we see courteous turns of behaviour, and the blameless forms of noble talking; what profit there is in speech may we learn without asking since we have taken that fine father of nurture. God has indeed given us his grace, who grants us to have such a guest as Gawain, on account of whose birth men sit and sing for joy. This hero will now teach us what distinguished manners are; I think that those who hear him will learn how to make love."

18. When the dinner was done and the dear ones risen, the time was nigh arrived at the night. Chaplains took their way to the chapels, and rang full loudly, as they should, to the melodious evensong of the high time. The lord turns thither, and the lady also. Into a comely closet daintily she enters. Gawain joyfully proceeds, and goes thither straightway. The lord takes him by the mantle and leads him to his seat, recognizes him openly and calls him by his name, and says he is the welcomest wight in the world. And Gawain thanked him thoroughly and either embraced the other, and they sat soberly together during the service. Then the lady desired to look on the knight, and came from her closet with many fair maidens. But she was fairer than all the others in flesh and face, in skin and form, in complexion and demeanour — more beautiful than Guinevere, it seemed to the hero. He walked through the chancel to greet that gracious one. Another lady led her by the left hand, that was older than she; an ancient lady it seemed, and one highly honoured by the knights about her; but unlike to look on were the ladies, for if the younger was fair, yellow was the other. Rich red on the one bloomed everywhere; rough wrinkled cheeks rolled on the other. The kerchiefs of the one broidered with many clear pearls, openly displayed her breast and her bright throat, which shone clearer than snow that falls on the hills. The other covered her neck with a gorget, that wrapped her black chin in milk-white pleats. Her forehead was completely enveloped in silken folds, adorned and tricked with small ornaments; and naught was bare of that lady but the black brows, the two eyes, the nose, and the naked lips; and those were ugly to behold and oddly bleared. A gracious lady in the land one might call her forsooth! Her body was short and thick, her hips round and broad. More pleasant to look on was the being she led.

19. When Gawain looked on that beauteous one who gazed graciously, he took leave of the lord, and went toward them. The elder he saluted, bowing full low; the lovelier he took a little in his arms; he kissed her comely, and knightly he greeted her. They welcomed him, and he quickly asked to be their servant if it pleased them. They took him between them and led him conversing to the fireplace in the parlour; and straightway they called for spices, which men speeded to bring them unsparingly, and the pleasant wine therewith each time. The lord leaped merrily up full often, and saw to it that the mirth never faltered. Gaily he snatched off his hood and hung it on a spear, and exhorted them to win it as a prize — he to have it who could make the most mirth that Christmas tide. "And I shall try, by my faith, with the help of my friends to compete with the best, ere I lose my apparel." Thus with laughing mien the lord makes merry in order to glad Sir Gawain with games in the hall that night. When it came time, the king commanded lights; Sir Gawain took his leave and went to his bed.

20. On the morn when as every man knows

God was born to die for us, joy waxes in every dwelling in the world for his sake. So it did there on that day, with many dainties at meats and meals, right quaint dishes, and brave men on the dais dressed in their best. The old ancient wife sits the highest, the courteous lord placed by her, as I trow; Gawain and the gay lady together just in the middle, as the courses properly come; and afterwards the rest throughout all the hall, as it seemed best to them, each man in his degree was properly served. There was meat, there was mirth, there was much joy, that it were arduous for me to tell thereof, though to note it I took pains belike. But yet I know that Gawain and the lovely lady took comfort in each other's company, in the choice play of their sharp wits, and the pure courtesy of their modest talk; their disport surpassed indeed that of any royal game. Trumps and drums came playing loudly; each man minded his own business, and they two minded theirs.

21. Much delight was taken there that day, and the second; and the third followed as pleasantly. The joy of St. John's day was gentle to hear of; and it was the last of the festival, the people considered. There were guests to go upon the grey morn; therefore wondrous late they sat up and drank the wine, danced full gayly with sweet carols. At the last, when it was late, they took their leave, each good man to wend on his way. Gawain gave his host good day; but the good man takes him, and leads him to his own chamber, by the fireplace; and there he draws him aside and properly thanks him for the great worship that he had granted him in honouring his house on that high tide, in embellishing his castle with his good cheer. 'Indeed, sir, while I live I shall be the better that Gawain has been my guest at God's own feast."

"Gramercy, sir," quoth Gawain, "in good faith the merit is yours; all the honour is your own, — the high King reward you; and I am your man to work your behest in high and in low as I am bound by right."

The lord eagerly strives to hold the knight longer; but Gawain answers him that he can in no wise.

22. Then the hero asked of him full fairly what extraordinary deed had driven him at that dear time from the king's court, to go all alone so boldly, ere the holidays were wholly over.

"For sooth, sir," quoth the hero, "ye say but the truth; a high errand and a hasty had me from these dwellings; for I am summoned to such a place as I know not in the world whitherward to wend to find it. I would not for all the land in Logres fail to reach it on New Year's morn — so our Lord help me. Therefore, sir, this request I require of you here, that ye tell me truly if ever ye heard tale of the green chapel, where in the world it stands, and of the knight green in colour that keeps it. There was established by statute an agreement between us that I should meet that man at that landmark if I could but survive. And of that same New Year there now lacks but little, and by God's Son I would gladlier look on that person — if God would let me — than wield any possession in the world. Therefore, indeed — by your good will — it behooves me to wend; I have now at my disposal barely three days; and I were as fain fall dead as fail of mine errand."

Then laughing quoth the lord, "Now it behooves thee to stay; for I shall direct you to that spot by the time's end — the green chapel upon the ground. Grieve you no more; for ye shall be in your bed, sir, at thine ease some days yet, and set out on the first of the year and come to that place at midmorn, to do what you like. Stay till New Year's day; and rise and go then. One shall set you on your way; it is not two miles hence."

23. Then was Gawain full glad, and merrily he laughed; "Now I thank you especially for this above all other things; now that my quest is achieved, I shall dwell at your will, and do whatever else ye decide."

Then the sire seized him and set him beside him, and let the ladies be fetched to please them the better. Fair entertainment they had quietly among themselves; the lord in his jovial, friendly demeanor behaved as a man out of his wits that knew not what he did. Then he spake to the knight, crying loud, "Ye have agreed to do the deed that I bid. Will ye hold this hest here at once?"

"Yea, sir, forsooth," said the true hero, "while I stay in your castle I shall be obedient to your hest."

"Since ye have travelled from afar," quoth the warrior, "and then have sat late with me, ye are not well nourished, I know, either with sustenance or with sleep. Ye shall linger in your loft and lie at your ease tomorrow till mass time; and go to meat when ye will with my wife, who shall sit with you and comfort you with her company till I return home; and

I shall rise early and go hunting." Gawain grants all this, bowing courteously.

24. "Yet further," quoth the hero, "let us make an agreement. Whatsoever I win in the wood, it shall be yours; and whatsoever fortune ye achieve, exchange with me therefor. Sweet sir, swap we so, swear truly, whichever one of us gets the worse or the better."

"By God," quoth Gawain the good, "I consent thereto; and whatever game you like, agreeable it seems to me."

"On this beverage just brought the bargain is made," said the lord of that people; and both laughed.

Then they drank and played and amused themselves, these lords and ladies, so long as it pleased them; and then with polite demeanour and many fair gestures, they stood up and lingered a while, and talked quietly, kissed full comely, and took their leave. With many a gay servant and gleaming torches each hero was brought to his bed full softly at the last. Yet before they went to bed they oft rehearsed the covenants. The old lord of that people knew well how to keep up a jest.

## FYTTE THE THIRD

1. Full early before the day the folk arose; the guests that would go called their grooms, and these hastened to saddle the horses, arrange their gear, and truss their mails. The great ones arrayed themselves to ride, leaped up lightly and caught their bridles, each wight on his way where it well pleased him.

The dear lord of the land was not the last; arrayed for the riding, with retainers full many, he ate a sop[1] hastily after he had heard mass, and took his way quickly with his bugle to the field. By the time that any daylight gleamed upon earth, he with his heroes were mounted on their high horses. Then these hunters that understood it, coupled their hounds, unclosed the kennel doors and called them thereout, blew blithely on bugles three simple calls. At this the brachets[2] bayed and made a wild noise, and the hunters chastised and turned back those that wandered off, — a hundred hunters of the best there were, as I have heard tell. To their stations the trackers went; hunters cast off the couples; and then arose for the good blasts great uproar in that forest.

2. At the first noise of the quest the game quaked; the deer moved down into the dale, dazed for dread; hurried to the height; but quickly they were hindered by the beaters, who cried stoutly. They let the harts with the high heads go their way, the wild bucks also with their broad palms,[1] for the generous lord had forbidden that there should any man meddle with the male deer in the close season. But the hinds were held back with "Hay!" and "Ho!" and the does driven with great din to the deep glades. There might one see as they ran the flight of arrows; at each turn under the boughs out flew a shaft, that savagely bit on the brown hide with full broad heads. How they leaped and bled and died by the banks! And ever the hounds with a rush eagerly followed them; hunters with shrill horn hastened after with such a resounding cry as if cliffs had cracked. What game escaped the men who shot was all run down and torn at the stands. The deer were pestered at the heights, and worried at the waters; the people were so alert at the low stations, and the greyhounds so great, that got them quickly and pulled them down as fast as a man could see. The lord, shouting for joy, shot and alighted full oft, and passed the day thus with joy till the dark night.

3. So this lord sports by the eaves of the linden wood, and Gawain the good man lies in his gay bed; reposes till the day light gleams on the walls, under the beautiful coverlets, curtained about. And as he fell into a doze, faintly he heard a little din at the door, then distinctly; and he heaved up his head out of the clothes, caught up a corner of his curtain a little, and watched warily in that direction to see what it might be. It was the lady, loveliest to behold, who drew the door to after her right slyly and quietly, and turned toward the bed. The hero grew bashful and laid himself down cunningly and pretended that he slept. And she stepped quietly, and stole to his bed, cast up the curtain, and crept within, and seated herself full softly on the bedside, and stayed there surprisingly long, to see when he should awake. The man lay pretending a full great while, bothered in his conscience what this affair might mean or amount to. Marvellous it seemed to him. But yet he said to himself, "More seemly would it be to find out by asking what she would." Then he waked, and stretched, and turned to her; unlocked his eyelids, and made believe he was amazed, and crossed himself with his hand, to be the safer for his prayer. With chin and cheek

1 took a light repast.
2 hounds that hunt by scent.

1 The flat, broad part of the horn.

full sweet, of mingled white and red, right lovely she looked, with her small laughing lips.

4. "Good morrow, Sir Gawain!" said that fair lady. "Ye are a careless sleeper when one can enter thus. Now ye are certainly taken; unless we can make a truce I shall bind you in your bed, ye may be sure of that!" All laughing the lady shot those jests.

"Good morrow, fair one," quoth Gawain the blithe. "I shall be at your disposal, and that pleases me well, for I yield me outright and pray for grace, — and that is the best course, I judge, for I am in straits." And thus he returned the jests with many a blithe laugh. "But would ye, lovely lady, grant me leave, free your prisoner and bid him rise, I would leave this bed and dress myself better. Then I could talk with you in more comfort."

"Nay, forsooth, fair sir," said that sweet one, "ye shall not rise from your bed; I shall manage you better. I shall tie you up securely, and afterwards talk with my knight that I have caught; for I ween well, ye are indeed Sir Gawain, whom all the world worships whereso ye ride. Your honour, your courtesy, is heartily praised, by lords, by ladies, by all alive; and now ye are here, forsooth, and we all alone. My lord and his people are gone far away; the other men in their beds, and my maidens also; the door shut and closed with a strong hasp; and since I have in this house him whom all like, I shall make good use of my time while it lasts. Ye are welcome to my person, to do whatever you wish; I am perforce, and must remain, your servant."

5. "In good faith," quoth Gawain, "a great privilege it seems to me — though I be not now he that ye speak of. To reach such reverence as ye rehearse here, I am a man unworthy, I know well. By God, I should be glad — if it seemed good to you — to do what I might in speech or in service to enhance your worship; — it were a pure joy."

"In good faith, Sir Gawain," quoth the gay lady, "if I should speak ill of the fame and the prowess that pleases all others, or esteem it light, it would show but small discernment. But there are ladies enough who were liefer have this courteous one in their power — as I have thee here, — to dally dearly with your dainty words, to comfort themselves and dispel their cares, — than much of the treasure and gold that they have. But I praise the Lord who rules the skies that through his grace I have wholly in my hand that which all desire."

Great cheer she that was so fair of face made him; the knight with discreet speeches answered her every proposal.

6. "Madame," quoth the merry man, "Mary reward you, for in good faith I have found your generosity noble. People judge a person's deeds largely from the accounts of others; but the praise that they accord my deserts is but idle. It is simply your own nobility, who know nothing but good."

"By Mary," quoth the gracious one, "methinks it is otherwise; for were I worth all the store of women alive, and all the wealth of the world were in my hands, and I should bargain and choose to get me a lord, then for the good traits that I have found in the knight here, of beauty and graciousness and gay seeming, and from what I have heard before and hold in this case to be true, there should no hero in the world be chosen before you."

"Indeed, worthy one," quoth the hero, "ye might have chosen much better; but I am proud of the estimation that ye put upon me; and as your devoted servant I hold you my sovereign, and your knight I become; and Christ pay you for it."

Thus they spoke of various things till past the midmorn; and ever the lady behaved as if she loved him much. But the hero fared with caution and made courteous pretences. "Though I were the fairest of women," mused the lady, "little love would he show, because of the danger that he seeks without reproach — the blow that may slay him, but must needs be undergone." The lady then asked leave, and he granted her full soon.

7. Then she gave him good day, and of a sudden laughed; and as she stood there she astonished him with right sharp words: "Now may he that speeds each speech, pay you for this entertainment; but that ye are Gawain, it goes not in my mind."

"Wherefore?" quoth the hero; and eagerly he asks, afraid lest he had failed in the performance of his design. But the lady blessed him and spake in this wise: "A man as good as Gawain is properly held — and courtesy is closed so entirely in him — could not easily have lingered so long with a lady but he had on some trifling excuse or other courteously craved a kiss."

Then said Gawain, "Indeed, be it as you like; I shall kiss at your commandment as becomes a knight, and fear lest he displease

you; so urge that plea no more." She comes nearer at that and takes him in her arms; stoops graciously down and kisses the man. They courteously entrust each other to Christ. She goes forth at the door without more ado, and he prepares to rise, and hurries amain; calls to his chamberlain, chooses his weeds, steps forth blithely to mass when he is ready; and then he goes to his meat, behaving always courteously, and makes merry all day till the bright moon rises. Never was a hero fairer entertained by two such worthy dames, the older and the younger. Much disport they make together.

8. And ever the lord of the land is bound on his sport, to hunt in holts and heath at barren hinds. Such a sum of does and of other deer he slew there by the time the sun was low, that it were a marvel to estimate. Then eagerly they all flocked together at the last; and quickly of the slain deer they made a quarry. The leaders hastened thereto with men enough; gathered the greatest of grease,[1] and proceeded properly to undo[2] them as the occasion demands. Some that were there tried them at the assay[3] and found two fingers of fat on the leanest of all. Afterwards they slit the slot,[4] seized the arber,[5] cut it free with a sharp knife, and tied it up. Next they cut down along the four limbs and rent off the hide; then they opened the belly, took out the paunch, cutting eagerly, and laid aside the knot.[6] They began at the throat again and skilfully divided the weasand from the windpipe and threw out the guts. Then they cut out the shoulders with their sharp knives, and pulled them through by a little hole, so as to have whole sides. Next they divided the breast, and cut it in two; and once more they began at the throat, split the beast quickly right up to the crotch, took out the advancers,[7] and immediately severed all the fillets by the ribs, and took them off properly along the backbone even to the haunch, — all of which hung together. Then they heaved it up whole and cut it off there; and that they took for the numbles,[8] as it is rightly called. At the fork of the thighs they cut the flaps behind; hastily they hewed the carcass in two, and severed it along the backbone.

1 The correct hunting term for "the fattest."
2 cut up.
3 Probably at the side of the neck, or on the brisket.
4 Probably at the hollow of the breast bone.
5 The gullet probably.
6 i.e. the entrails, with the gullet knotted to prevent the filth from escaping.
7 This titbit is sometimes called a part of the numbles.
8 A choice cut; hence, capriciously, our humble-pie.

9. Both the head and the neck they hewed off then, and afterwards they sundered the sides swiftly from the chine, and the corbie's fee[1] they cast in a green tree. Then they pierced either thick side through by the rib, and hung them each by the hocks of the haunches — each man for his fee, as it befell him to have it. Upon a skin of a fair beast they fed their hounds with the liver and the lights, the leather of the paunches, and bread bathed in blood mingled thereamong. Loudly they blew the prize, and bayed their hounds; then they started to carry home their meat, blowing full stoutly many loud notes. By the time daylight was done the band had all arrived at the comely castle, where the knight is quietly waiting in comfort beside a bright fire. When the lord arrived and Gawain met him, there was joy enough.

10. Then the lord commanded to gather in the hall all the household, and both the ladies to come down with their maids. Before all the folk on the floor he bade men fetch his venison before him; and all in merry sport he called Gawain, told him the number of the choice beasts, and showed him the fat meat cut from the ribs; "How like you this play? Have I won the prize? Have I properly earned thanks by my woodcraft?"

"Yes, indeed," quoth the other hero; "here is the fairest store that I saw this seven year in the season of winter."

"And all I give you, Gawain," quoth the host, then; "for by our plighted covenant you can claim it as your own."

"That is true," replied the hero, "and I say to you the same; I too have won this worthy thing within doors; and I am sure that with quite as good will it belongs to you." He throws his arms about his fair neck and kisses him as courteously as he knew how. "Take you there my merchandise; I have won no more; though I should give it up willingly even if it were greater."

"It is good," quoth the good man; "gramercy therefor. Perchance it might be better if you would tell me where you won this same favour by your own wit."

"That was not the agreement," said he; "ask me no more, for ye have got all that belongs to you, be sure of that."

They laughed and made merry in low tones; then they went quickly to supper with new dainties enough.

11. And afterwards as they sat by a fireplace in a chamber, servants poured to them

1 A bit of the offal for the crows.

oft the choice wine; and again in their jesting they agreed to make the same bargain on the morning that they made before, — whatsoever chance betide to exchange their winnings at night when they met, whatsoever new they win. They made this agreement before all the court, and the beverage was brought forth merrily at that time.[1] Then at length they politely took leave; and everybody hurried to bed. When the cock had crowed and cackled but thrice, the lord had leaped from his bed; likewise his followers each one, so that the meat and the mass were promptly despatched, and the troop ready for the chase in the wood ere any day sprang. With hunters and horns they passed through the plains, and uncoupled the racing hounds among the thorns.

12. Soon they heard the cry of the dogs by a marsh side. The huntsman encouraged the hounds that first caught the scent, hurled sharp words at them with a great noise. The hounds that heard it hastened thither quickly, and fell immediately to the scent, forty at once. Then there rose such a resounding cry of gathered hounds that the rocks about rang. The hunters cheered them with horn and with mouth; then all together they swung in a troop between a pool in that wood and a wild crag. On a hill, beside a cliff at the side of the bog, where the rough rock was rudely fallen, they fared to the finding, and the hunters after them. The men surrounded both the rock and the hill, because they knew well that he was within them, — the beast that the bloodhounds were proclaiming there. Then they beat on the bushes and bade him rise up, and he savagely rushed out athwart the men, the most formidable of swine. Long since had he left the herd on account of his age, for he was a huge beast, the greatest of boars. His grinders when he grunted grieved many, for at his first burst he thrust three to the earth, and sped hastily forth at great speed without respite. And they hallooed "High!" full loudly, and cried "Hay, hay!" With horns to mouth lustily they blew the recheat.[2] Many were the merry cries of men and of hounds that hastened after this boar with hue and cry to kill him. Full oft he bides at bay, and maims the pack in the mêlée. He hurts many of the hounds and grievously they howl and yell.

13. The hunters pushed forward then to shoot at him, aimed at him with their arrows and hit him often. But the shafts that struck on his shields,[1] give way at the pith, and the barbs would not bite on his brawn though the shaven shafts shivered in pieces; the head hopped out again wheresoever it hit. But when the dints of their keen strokes scared him, then mad for destruction he rushed on the men, did them sore hurt where he hurled forth, and many a one grew wary thereat and gave back a little. But the lord on a light horse hurries after him, blowing his bugle like a bold hero. He winds the recheat as he rides through thick groves, following this wild swine till the sun declined. Thus they drive on the day with such doings while our lovely hero lies comfortably in his bed at home in clothes full rich of hue. The lady did not forget; she came to greet him; full early she was by him to change his mind.

14. She comes to the curtain and peeps at the knight. Sir Gawain at once welcomes her worthily, and she returns his greeting right promptly, seats herself softly by his side, laughs openly, and with a lovely look addresses these words to him: "Sir, if ye be Gawain, it seems to me a very strange thing that a man of such quality should not follow the conventions of good society; and should after making acquaintance with a person cast him utterly from his mind. Thou hast already forgotten what I taught you yesterday in the best language that I knew."

"What is that?" quoth the hero. "Forsooth I know not. If what ye say be true, I am to blame."

"Yet I taught you about kissing," replied the fair lady; "wherever a countenance is known, quickly to claim a kiss; that becomes every knight who practices courtesy."

"Cease such speech, my dear lady," said the ready man. "I durst not claim it lest I should be denied. If I proposed and were refused, I should certainly be wrong in proffering."

"By my faith," quoth the lovely dame, "ye cannot be refused. Ye are strong enough to compel it by strength if ye pleased, supposing any were so ill-bred as to deny you."

"Yea, by God," said Gawain, "your speech is good; but violence is considered discourteous among my people, as is any gift that is not given with a good will. I am at your command to kiss when ye like. Ye may begin when ye please, and leave off whenever it likes you."

The lady stoops down and gracefully kisses his face. They converse long of the fears and joys of love.

1 A drink ratifies the agreement — as before.
2 A call for collecting the hounds.

1 The tough skin of the flanks.

15. "I should like to know from you, sir," said the peerless lady, "if it vexes you not, — what might be the reason that so young and so gallant person as ye now are, one so courteous and so knightly as ye are known everywhere to be, have never spoken of love. For in relating the pains of true knights, the chief thing praised in all of chivalry is the royal sport of love, — and the science of arms: it is the title, token, and text of their works; how heroes for their true love adventured their lives, endured for their sweethearts doleful hours, and afterwards avenged themselves by their valour; dispersed their care, and brought bliss to bower, with plenteous rewards for themselves. And ye are the most renowned knight of your time; your fame and your worship walks everywhere, — and now I have sat by you here two separate times, yet have I never heard from your head a single word that pertained at all to love, less or more. And ye, that are so courteous and so distinguished in your vows, ought willingly to show and teach to a young thing some tokens of the art of true love. Why are ye so rude who are so praised? Is it that ye deem me too dull to hearken to your dalliance? For shame! I came hither all alone to sit and learn from you some accomplishment: do teach me part of your skill while my lord is from home."

16. "In good faith," quoth Gawain, "God reward you! Great is the entertainment, and huge the pleasure to me, that so worthy a one as ye should come hither, and take pains with so poor a man, and play with your knight in any wise; it delights me. But to take upon myself the task of expounding true love, of touching upon the themes of that text, and tales of arms before you, who I wot well have more knowledge of that sort by the half than I or a hundred such have, or ever shall have so long as I live, — that were a manifold folly by my troth, dear one. But I would work your will with all my might, highly beholden to you as I am; and I wish evermore to be your servant, so God save me."

Thus the fair lady besought him, and tried him oft, for to have won him to wrong, — whatever it was she purposed; but he defended himself so fairly that no fault appeared, nor any evil on either side; they knew nought but joy. They laughed and played a long time, till at last she kissed him, took her leave fairly, and went her way.

17. Then the hero bestirred himself and rose to the mass; and afterwards their dinner was dight and splendidly served. The hero sported with the ladies all day, but the lord raced over the land full oft, following his uncouth swine, that rushed along the banks and bit in sunder the backs of his best brachets.[1] There he abode at his bay till bowmen broke it, and maugre his head made him move forth. Many fell arrows there flew when the folk gathered about, but ye at times he made the stoutest to start; till at the last he was so weary he could no more run; but with the haste that he might he won to a hole in a cleft by a rock, where the burn runs. He got the bank at his back and began to scrape; the ugly froth foamed from the corners of his mouth, and he whet his white tusks. It was not pleasant for all the bold hunters that stood about him to approach him even remotely; and to go nigh him durst none for fear of harm. He had hurt so many before, that all seemed them full loath to be more torn with the tusks of that savage and crazed beast.

18. When the knight came himself, reining his steed, and saw him bide at the bay near his men, he lighted nimbly down, left his courser, pulled out a bright brand and boldly strode forth, and hurried fast through the stream where the fell one abode. The wild creature was ware of the wight with weapon in hand, and heaved on high his hairs; so fiercely he snorted that many feared for their lord lest to him befell the worse. The swine rushed directly upon the hero, so that man and boar were both in a heap in the wildest of the water; but the boar had the worse, for the man marked him well as they first met and skilfully set his point exactly in the slot,[2] pierced him up to the hilt so that his heart split, and he gave way squealing and went quickly down the water. A hundred hounds seized him and fiercely bit on him. Men brought him to land and the dog finished him.

19. There was blowing of the prize[3] on many a loud horn, high halloing aloft by mighty hunters; brachets bayed the beast as the masters bade who were the chief huntsmen of that swift chase. Then awight that was wise in woodcraft begins skilfully to unlace[4] this boar. First he hews off its head and sets it on high; and afterwards splits him all down his rough back, and takes out the bowels and singes them on the coals; then with bread mingled with these, he reward

1 hounds. 2 The proper piercing spot in the chest.
3 The horn-blowing for the game's death.
4 cut up.

s hounds. Afterwards he cuts the brawn fine broad shields, and has out the hast-ts [1] in the proper manner. And now they nd the halves all whole together, and after-ards stoutly hang them on a stiff staff. Now ith this same swine they take their way me. The boar's head was borne before e warrior who slew him at the stream rough the force of his own strong hand. seemed long to him until he saw Sir Ga-ain in the hall; then he called, and Gawain me promptly to take his fees there.

20. The lord jested full loudly, and mer-ly he laughed when he saw Sir Gawain; ith pleasure he spoke. The good ladies ere called and the household gathered. He owed them the shields and told them the le of the girth and length of the wild swine; d also of his viciousness in the wood where fled. That other knight full comely com-ended his deeds, and praised it as a great g that he had made; for such a brawn of a ast, the bold man said, nor such sides of a vine, saw he never before. Then they ndled the huge head; the courteous man raised it and made much of it to honour the rd.

"Now Gawain," quoth the good man, this game is your own, by fine and fast reword, truly ye know."

"It is sooth," quoth the hero; "and as uely all my getting I shall give you in turn, my troth." He took the warrior about e neck and courteously kissed him, and nother time he served him the same. "Now e are even," quoth the warrior, "to-night all the covenants that we knit by law nce I came hither."

Said the lord, "By St. Giles, ye are the st that I know! Ye will be rich in a short me, if ye drive such chaffer!"

21. Then they raised tables aloft on tres-es, and cast cloths upon them. The clear ght then appeared along the walls, as men t and distributed waxen torches all about e hall. Much mirth and glee rose up erein, about the fire on the hearth, and various wise at the supper and after. any noble songs they sang, as Christmas rols and new dance tunes, with all the annerly mirth that a man can tell of. And er our lovely knight sat beside the lady. uch seemly cheer she made to the hero, ught with such sly stolen glances to please e stalwart one, that the wight was all mazed, and wroth with himself. But he ould not on account of his breeding reprove her, but responded in all courtesy, howsoever outrageous she might be. When they had played in the hall as long as their will lasted, the lord called to bedwards, and to the room with a fireplace they passed.

22. And there they drank and talked, and the lord proposed again to make the same arrangement for New Year's Eve. But the knight craved leave to depart on the morn, for it was nigh at the term that he must keep. The lord hindered him from that, persuaded him to linger, and said, "As I am true man, I pledge my troth thou shalt reach the green chapel to do thy tasks, sir, by New Year's light, long before prime. Therefore lie in thy loft and take thine ease; and I shall hunt in this holt and keep the covenant — change merchandise with thee when I return hither; for I have tried thee twice, and faithful I find thee; now, 'third time, best time.' Think on the morrow. Make we merry while we may, and be joyful; for a man can catch trouble whensoever he likes."

This was readily granted and Gawain stayed. Drink was quickly brought to them, and to bed they went with lights. Sir Gawain lay and slept full still and soft all night; the lord, mindful of his hunting, was dight full early.

23. After mass he and his men took a morsel. Merry was the morning. He asks for his mount, and all the sportsmen who should accompany him on horse were ready mounted on their steeds before the hall gates. Wondrous fair was the field, for the frost still lingered. The sun rose in a rack of ruddy red, and drove all the clouds from the welkin. The hunters uncoupled by a holt side, and the rocks in the forest rang for the noise of their horns. Some dogs fell on a scent where the fox had loitered; followed it oft obliquely through the cunning of their wiles. A kennet [1] cried upon it; the huntsman encouraged him, and his fellows hastened after, panting thickly. They ran forth in a rabble on Reynard's very track, and he hurried before them. Soon they found him; and when they actually saw him they chased him fast, baying him full fiercely with a huge noise. And he trants [2] and turns through many a rough grove; doubles and hearkens by hedges full often. At the last by a little ditch he leaps over a spinny, and steals out full stilly by a rough rand.[3] Half escaped from the wood he turns with wiles from the hounds; but then he arrived, ere he knew it, at a chosen

1 cutlets.

1 small hound. 2 twists.
3 unploughed strip by woodside.

stand, where in an instant three stout hunters in gray threatened him at once. He blenched again quickly, and bravely started off; with all the woe in the world, he turned away to the wood.

24. Then was it a pure joy to listen to the hounds, when all the gathered mute[1] got view of him. The cry they set on his head at the sight was as if all the resounding cliffs had clattered down in a heap. Here he was halloed when the hunters met him, loudly cried upon with noisy calls; there he was threatened and often called thief; and ever the ticklers were at his tail so that he could not tarry. Oft he was run at when he raked out, and oft he reeled in again, so wily was Reynard. And ever he led the bespattered lord and his troop in this manner among the hills, now in them, now over, now under, while the courteous knight at home slept wholesomely within the comely curtains on the cold morn.

But the lady for love cared not to sleep nor to give up the purpose that bode in her heart; but up she rose quickly and took her way thither in a gay mantle meetly reaching to the earth, and furred full fine with skins of the best. No ornaments of gold on her head; but only the bright stones set about her tressour[2] in clusters of twenty. With her fair face and her lovely throat all naked, her breast bare before and behind too, she comes within the chamber door and closes it after her, throws up a window and calls on the wight, and smartly thus stirred him with her fair cheery words. "Ah man, how can you sleep, this morning is so clear!" Though he was drowsing deep, yet could he hear her.

25. In the dreary depths of a dream the noble was sunk, like a man suffering from many sad thoughts, how destiny should dight him his weird at the green chapel that day when he met the man, and had to abide his buffet without more debate. But when he had fairly recovered his wits, he emerged from his dreams and answered with haste. The lovely lady came laughing sweetly, stooped over his fair face and courteously kissed him. He welcomed her worthily with choice cheer. To see her so glorious, and so gaily attired, so faultless of feature, and so lovely of colour, warmed his heart with welling joy. With smooth and gracious smiling they straightway waxed mirthful. All was bliss and good cheer that passed between them. They exchanged goodly words; much happiness they felt, and great was the peril between them, unless Mary thought of he knight.

26. For that beauteous princess con strained him so sorely, and the dange pressed him so nigh, that of necessity it be hooved him either accept her love or rudel refuse it. He thought much of his courtesy lest he should prove a clown; and more o his villainy if he should do sin, and be traito to the hero who owned the castle. "Go shield!" quoth the warrior, "that shall no befall!" With a little love-dalliance he lai aside all the pointed speeches that spran from her mouth.

Quoth the lady to the hero: "Ye deserv blame if ye love not her who is so near you — of all creatures in the world most wounde in heart; — unless indeed ye have a sweet heart, a dearer being, that pleases you better and ye have plighted faith so firmly to tha gentle one that ye care not to loosen it. — Verily now that is what I believe, and I pra you that you tell me truly; for all the love in the world deny not the truth with guile."

"By St. John!" said the knight, and cour teously he smiled, "I have none, and non will I have."

27. "That is the worst of all!" quot the lady. "I am answered indeed, to m sorrow. Kiss me now comely and I shall g hence. I can only mourn in the world as maid that loved much."

Sighing she stooped down and kissed hir seemly; and then she severed from him, an said as she stood, "Now, dear, at this de parting do me this comfort; give me some what of thy gift, thy glove if it might be that I may think on thee, sir, to lessen m mourning."

"Now in truth," quoth that man, " would I had here for thy love, the deares thing that I wield; for truly ye have righ oft in reason deserved a greater reward tha I could reckon. But to exchange with yo love-tokens, that would profit but little. I is not for your honor to have at this time glove of Gawain's gift for a keepsake; an I am here on an errand in lands uncoutl and have no men with mails full of preciou things for remembrances at this momen and that mislikes me, lady. But every ma must act according to his circumstances, an none should take it ill or repine."

"Now, courteous and honourable one, quoth that lovesome lady, "though I sha have nothing of yours, yet shall ye have mine."

28. She reached him a rich ring of re

1 pack. 2 headdress, caul.

gold work with a gleaming stone standing aloft, that shed blushing beams like the bright sun; know ye well it was worth wealth full huge. But the man refused it, and readily he said: "I desire no great gifts, my gay one, at this time. I have naught to give you, and naught will I take."

She offered it him full pressingly, and he refused her offer, and swore swiftly on his sooth that he would not take it. And she sorrowed that he refused, and said thereafter, 'If ye refuse my ring, since it seems too rich, and ye would not be so highly beholden to me, I shall give you my girdle, that will enrich you less."

She lightly caught a lace that went about her sides, knit upon her kirtle under the bright mantle. It was adorned with green silk, and ornamented with gold, broidered all around, decked with fringes; and that she offered to the hero, and gaily besought that, though it were unworthy, he would take it. And he denied that he would in any wise take either gold or present ere God sent him grace to achieve the chance that he had chosen there. "And therefore, I pray you, be not displeased, and give over your attempt; for I intend never to consent. I am dearly beholden to you because of your entertainment; and ever in hot and in cold I will be your true servant."

29. "Now refuse ye this silk," said the lady then, "because it is simple in itself, as it certainly seems to be? Lo! little it is, and less it is worth; but whoso knew the virtues that are knit therein, he would esteem it at a greater price peradventure; for whatsoever man is girt with this green lace, while he has it fittingly wrapped about him, there is no warrior under heaven that can wound him; for he could not be slain by any device in the world."

Then the knight paused, and it came to his heart that it would be a jewel for the peril that awaited him when he arrived at the chapel to undergo his ordeal. Could he manage to be unslain, that were a noble device. Then he indulged her entreaties and suffered her to speak; and she pressed the belt on him and offered it to him eagerly. And he accepted it, and she gave it him with a good will, and besought him for her sake never to discover it, but to conceal it loyally from her lord. The man agreed that never person should know it indeed but they twain. Full oft he thanked her, right glad in heart and thought. By that she had kissed the stout knight three times.

30. Then she takes her leave and leaves him there, for more entertainment she could not get from that man. When she was gone Sir Gawain bestirs himself, rises and dresses in noble array. He lays up the love-lace the lady had given him, hides it full cleverly where he can find it again. Then promptly he takes his way to the chapel; quietly approaches to the priest and prays him there that he would elevate his life, and teach him better how his soul should be saved when he should go hence. Then he shrives him cleanly and shows his misdeeds, both the more and the less, beseeches mercy, and begs for absolution. And the priest assoils him thoroughly and set him as clean as if doomsday had been due on the morrow. And afterwards Gawain makes more mirth among the fair ladies that day with comely carols and all kinds of joy than ever he did before, till the dark night. Every one had pleasure of him there, and said indeed that he had never been so merry since he came hither.

31. Now let him linger in that place, where may love betide him. The lord is still in the field leading his men. He has overtaken this fox that he followed so long, as he sprinted over a spinny to spy the rascal, where he heard the hounds that hastened fast after him. Reynard came running through a rough grove, and all the rabble in a rout right at his heels. The man was ware of the game, and warily abode; pulled out his bright brand and struck at the beast; and he dodged from the sharp weapon and would have turned; but a dog seized him ere he could, and right before the horse's feet they all fell on him and worried this wily one with a great noise. The lord lighted quickly, and caught him forthwith; pulled him full hastily out of the dogs' mouths, and holding him high over his head, halloed fast; and there many fierce hounds bayed him. Hunters hied them thither with horns full many, ever blowing the recheat[1] till they saw the hero. As soon as his noble company was come, all that bare bugle blew at once, and all the others that had no horns halloed. It was the merriest mute[2] that ever men heard — the rich riot that there was raised for Reynard's soul. They rewarded the hounds there, stroked them and rubbed their heads; and afterwards they took Reynard and turned off his coat.

32. And then they hastened home, for it

1 The note that recalls all the dogs.
2 noise of the whole band.

was nigh night, blowing full stoutly in their great horns. The lord alighted at last at his dear home, found fire on the floor, and the hero beside it, Sir Gawain the good, that glad was withal among the ladies; in their love he had much joy. He wore a mantle of blue that reached to the earth; his surcoat, that was softly furred, became him well; and his hood of the same hung on his shoulder. Trimmed all about with fine fur were both. He met this good man in the middle of the floor, and all joyfully he greeted him, and goodly he said: "Now I shall fulfill our covenant, that we have just made, where no drink was spared." Then he embraces the knight and kisses him thrice with as much gusto and as soberly as he could give them.

"By Christ!" quoth the other knight, "ye get much bliss in the profits of this business — if ye drive good bargains!"

"Of the bargain, no matter," quoth curtly that other, "so long as the debts that I owed are properly paid."

"Mary!" quoth the other man, "my offering is the worse, for I have hunted all this day, and naught have I got but this foul fox-fell; the fiend have the good ones! And that is full poor to pay for such fine things as ye have given me here, three such rare kisses."

"It is enough," quoth Sir Gawain; "I thank you, by the rood." And as they stood there the lord told him how the fox was slain.

33. With mirth and minstrelsy, with meats at their will, they made as merry as any men could. With laughing of ladies, with merry jests, Gawain and the good man were both as glad as if the court were mad, or else drunk. Both the man and his retinue made many jokes till the season arrived when they must sever; the men had to go to their beds at last. Then humbly this gentle man takes his leave of the lord first; and fairly he thanks him. "For such a joyous sojourn as I have had here, for the honor you have shown me at this high feast, the high king reward you! I can only give you myself to be one of your men, if that pleases you. For I must needs, as ye know, proceed, to-morrow, if ye will grant me some men to show, as you promised, the way to the green chapel, as God will suffer me to take on New Year's day the doom of my fate."

"In good faith," quoth the good man, "with a good will! All that ever I promised you, I will perform." Therewith he assigns a servant to set him in the way, and conduct him by the downs, that he should without hesitation travel through the forest and fare at the best in the woods. The lord thanked Gawain for the worship he had been willing to show him. Then the knight took his leave of the beautiful ladies.

34. With care and with kissing he speaks to them, and many earnest thanks he presses upon them. And they returned him the same again promptly; they entrusted him to Christ with sighings full sad. Afterwards he graciously departs from the household; each man that he met he thanked him for his service and his solace, and the various pains with which they had been busy to serve him. And each man was as sad to sever from him there as if they had ever dwelt worthily with that hero. Then with people and with light he was led to his chamber and blithely brought to bed to be at his rest. Whether he slept soundly I dare not say, for he had much to think of on the morrow if he would. Let him lie there; he was near what he sought. If ye will be still a while I shall tell you how they fared.

## FYTTE THE FOURTH

1. Now nighs the New Year, and the night passes. The day drives on to the dark, as God bids; but outside wild storms wakened in the world; clouds cast the cold keenly to the earth; with discomfort enough to the naked, the snow from the north flew sharply, and nipped the game. The blustering wind blew from the heights, and drove each dale full of great drifts. The man who lay in his bed heard it right well; though he locks his lids, full little he sleeps. By each cock that crew he knew well the hour. Promptly he leaped up ere the day sprang, for there was the light of a lamp that gleamed in his chamber. He called to his chamberlain, who quickly answered him, and bade him bring his burnie and saddle his horse. The chamberlain gets up and fetches him his weeds, and arrays Sir Gawain in proper fashion. First he dressed him in his clothes to keep out the cold, and then he put on the rest of his harness, that had been well kept, both mail and plate, and brightly polished. The rings of his rich burnie had been rocked from the rust,[1] and all was fresh as at first; and Gawain was fain to give thanks for it. The attendant had wiped each piece well and often. Then the noblest man betwixt here and Greece bade his steed be brought.

2. Meanwhile, he threw upon himself his

1 That is, in a barrel of sand.

finest weeds; his surcoat with its cognisance of excellent work, virtuous stones set upon velvet, all wrought about and bound with embroidered seams, and fairly furred within with rare skins. Yet left he not the lace, the lady's gift, — that forgot not Gawain for his own good. When he had belted his brand upon his broad haunches, he dressed his love-token double about him, the knight swathed sweetly about his waist the girdle of green silk, which became him well, upon the royal red cloth that was fair to see. But this hero wore not the girdle for its wealth, for pride of the pendants, though they were polished, and though the glittering gold gleamed on the ends; but to save himself when it behoved him to suffer, to await his doom without resistance, with no brand or knife to defend him. By this the good man is ready and goes out quickly. Full often he thanks the distinguished company.

3. Gringolet the huge and strong was ready, who had been kept skilfully in the safest manner. The proud horse in his splendid condition longed for spurring. The hero approached him, noticed his coat, and said soberly, and by his sooth swore — "Here, in this castle, is a company that are mindful of courtesy. The man who maintains them, joy may he have; the dear lady, love betide her in this life, since they for charity cherish a guest and uphold honor in their hand. May the Being reward them who holds the heaven on high — and also you all. And if I might live any longer in the world I should give you some reward if I could." Then he stepped into stirrup and strode aloft. His servant offered him his shield; he put it on his shoulder. He spurred Gringolet with his gilt heels, and the steed jumped on the stone; no longer he stood still, but pranced. Gawain's servant, who bore his lance and helm, was by then on the horse. "This castle I entrust to Christ; may he give it aye good chance!"

4. The bridge was let down, and the broad gates unbarred and borne open on both sides. The hero crossed himself quickly and passed the boards, praised the porter, who knelt before him giving good day and praying God that he save Gawain. And so he went on his way with his one man that should teach him how to find that dismal place where he should receive the rueful blow. They rode by banks where boughs are bare; they climbed by cliffs where the cold clings; the sky was upheld, but it was ugly beneath; mist hung on the moor and melted on the mount; each hill had a hat, a huge mist-cloak. Brooks boiled and broke from the banks about, shattering sheer on their shores where they showered down. Dreary was the way, where they should travel by the wood, till soon came the season when the sun rises at that time. They were on a hill full high, the white snow about them, when the man that rode beside him bade his master abide.

5. "I have brought you hither, sir, at this time; and now ye are not far from that famous spot that ye have asked and inquired so specially after. But I shall say to you forsooth, since I know you, and ye are a man that I love well, if ye would work by my wit ye should be the better for it. The place that ye press to is held full perilous. There dwells in that waste a wight the worst upon earth; for he is stiff and stern and loves to strike; and greater he is than any man in the world, and his body bigger than the four best that are in Arthur's house, and bigger than Hector or any other. He maintains that adventure at the green chapel. There passes by that place none so proud in arms but he dins him to death with dint of his hand. For he is a man without measure and uses no mercy; for be it churl or chaplain that rides by the chapel, monk or mass-priest, or any man else, he likes as well to kill him as to go alive himself. Therefore I tell ye as truly as ye sit in the saddle, come ye there ye shall be killed — trust me well — though ye had twenty lives to spend. He has dwelt here full long and caused much strife in the land. Against his sore dints ye cannot defend yourself.

6. "Therefore, good Sir Gawain, let the fellow alone, and go away some other road, for God's sake. Repair to some other country, where Christ may speed you; and I shall hie me home again, and promise you further — which I will swear by God and all his good saints, so help me God and the halidom and oaths enough — that I will loyally conceal you, and never tell tale that ever ye fled for any man that I know of."

"Gramercy," quoth Gawain. And sternly he added. "Well worth thee, man, who wishes my good; and I well believe thou wouldst loyally conceal me. But if thou kept promise never so faithfully, and I gave up here, sought for fear to fly as you advise, I were a knight coward; I could not be excused. But I will go to the chapel whatever chance may fall, and talk with that same man the tale that I like, be it good or evil, as it pleases fate to have it. Though he be

a stern champion to cope with, and armed with a club, full well can God manage to save his servants."

7. "Mary!" quoth that other man, "now thou sayest as much as that thou wilt take upon thyself thine own destruction; if it pleases thee to lose thy life, I shall not let nor hinder thee. Have here thy helm on thy head, thy spear in thy hand; and ride down this same lane by yon rock-side till thou be brought to the bottom of the rugged valley; then look a little up the grassy slope on thy left hand, and thou shalt see in that ravine the chapel itself, and the burly man on the field who keeps it. Now farewell in God's name, Gawain the noble, for all the gold in the world I would not go with thee nor bear thee fellowship through this wood a foot further."

At that the man turned his bridle in the wood, hit the horse with the heels as hard as he could; leaped over the land, and left the knight there all alone.

"By God's self," quoth Gawain, "I will neither grieve nor groan. To God's will I am full obedient, and to him I have entrusted myself."

8. Then he spurs Gringolet and follows the path; pushes in by a hollow beside a thicket; rides through the rough slope right to the dale; and then he looked about him, and wild it seemed to him. He saw no sign of dwelling anywhere around, but on both sides high steep banks, and rough hunched crags with projecting stones; the shadows of the cliffs seemed to him terrible. Then he paused and held back his horse, and oft changed his cheer while seeking the chapel. He saw none such on any side, and strange it seemed to him. But soon, a little distance off on a grassy spot he descried a mound as it were, a smooth hill by the bank of the stream near a ford of the flood that ran there. The burn bubbled there as if it were boiling. The knight urges his steed, and comes to the hill; lights nimbly down, and ties the rein and his rich bridle to a tree by a rough branch; then he turns to the hill and walks about it, debating with himself what it might be. It had a hole at the end and on either side, and was overgrown with grass in clumps everywhere, and was all hollow within — nothing but an old cave or a crevice of an old crag. He could not understand it at all. "Alas, Lord," quoth the gentle knight, "can this be the green chapel? Here about midnight the devil might tell his matins."

9. "Now," quoth Gawain, "it certainly is mysterious here; this oratory is ugly, overgrown with herbs. Well it beseems the wight clad in green here to do his devotions in the devil's wise. Now I feel in my five wits it is the fiend that has made this bar gain with me, to destroy me here. This is a chapel of mischance; may ill fortune betide it! It is the cursedest kirk that ever I came in!"

With high helm on his head, his lance in his hand, he strides up to the rock of the rude dwelling. Then he heard from that high hill, in a rough cave, on a bank beyond the brook, a marvellously savage noise. Lo, the cliff clattered as though it would split, as if one were grinding a scythe on a grindstone. It whirred and screeched like water at a mill; it rushed and rang that it was ruth to hear.

"By God," quoth Gawain then, "that gear, I fancy, is being prepared to give me a good reception. Yet though I must lose my life, fear shall never make me change colour."

10. Then the knight called full high: "Who dwells in this place to keep covenant with me? For now the good Gawain is passing right here. If any wight wishes ought, let him come hither fast, now or never, to fulfill his need!"

"Abide!" quoth one on the bank over his head. "Thou shalt have in all haste that which I promised thee once."

Yet he kept on with that noise sharply for a while, turning and whetting, ere he would come down. And then he crossed by a crag and came from a hole, whirling out of a dark place with a fell weapon — a Danish axe new dight, to give the blow with. It had fast to the helve a great head, sharpened on the stone. Four feet long was the weapon — no less, by that lace that gleamed full bright. And the man in the green was arrayed as before — both his skin and his limbs, locks, and beard; save that on foot he strides fairly on the earth. He set the steel shaft to the stone and stalked beside it. When he came to the water, where he did not wish to wade, he hopped over on his axe, and fiercely advanced, with savage ferocity pacing the broad snow-covered glade. Sir Gawain met the knight and bowed to him, not at all low. The other said, "Now, sweet sir, in a covenant a man can trust thee."

11. "Gawain," quoth the green warrior, "may God preserve thee. Indeed thou art

lcome, hero, to my place; and thou hast ned thy travel as a true man should. And ou knowest the covenants made between ; at this time twelve month, thou tookest at fell to thee, — and I at this New Year is to repay you handsomely. And now we e in this valley entirely alone; here are no en to part us, however we may behave. ave thy helm off thy head, and have here y pay. Make no more debate than I of- red thee then, when thou whipped off my ad at one blow."

"Nay," quoth Gawain, "by God that lent e life, I shall grudge thee not a whit what- er misfortune falls. But arrange thee for y one stroke, and I shall stand still and nder thee not the least from doing the work you like."

He bent the neck and bowed down, show- g the flesh all bare; and behaved as if he red not. For no dread would he flinch.

12. Then the man in the green got ready ickly, gathered up his grim tool to smite awain. With all the might in his body he re it aloft, and aimed a savage blow as ough he wished to kill him. Had it driven wn as earnestly as he feinted, the ever ughty one would have been dead of his nt. But Gawain glanced to one side on e gisarm as it came gliding down to slay m there in the glade, and shrank a little th the shoulders from the sharp iron. The her warrior with a quick motion withheld e bright weapon, and then he reproved the ince with many proud words. "Thou t not Gawain," said the man, "who is ld so good, who never flinched for any my by hill nor by vale; and now thou est for fear before thou feelest any harm. ch cowardice I never heard of that knight. neither winced nor fled, sir, when thou dst strike, nor tried any tricks in King rthur's house. My head flew to my foot, d yet I never budged; and thou, ere any rm taken, art fearful in heart. Wherefore e better man I ought to be called for it."

"I flinched once," quoth Gawain, "and ill do so no more. Yet if my head should ll on the stones, I cannot restore it.

13. "But make ready, sir, by thy faith, d bring me to the point. Deal to me my stiny, and do it promptly; for I shall and thee a stroke, and not start again till ine axe has hit me — have here my troth."

"Have at thee then!" quoth the other, d heaves it aloft, and aims as savagely if he were mad. He strikes at him ightily, but touches the man not; for he withheld his hand cleverly ere it could hurt. Gawain awaits it properly and flinches with no member, but stands still as a stone, or a stump that is twisted into the rocky ground with a hundred roots.

Then merrily spoke the man in the green: "So, now thou hast thy heart whole it behoves me to hit. Now keep back the fine hood that Arthur gave thee, and see if thou canst keep thy neck whole from this stroke."

Said Gawain in great anger: "Why, thrash on, thou wild man! Thou threatenest too long. I guess that thine own heart is timid!"

"Forsooth," quoth the other warrior, "thou speakest so fiercely that I will not delay thine errand a bit longer." Then he takes his stride to strike and knits both brow and lip. No wonder Gawain mislikes it and gives up all thought of escape.

14. Lightly he lifts his axe and lets the edge come down fairly on the bare neck. Yet though he smote rudely, it hurt him but little; only cut him on one side so that it severed the skin. The sharp bit reached the flesh through the fair fat, so that the bright blood shot over his shoulders to the earth. And when the hero saw the blood glint on the snow, he leaped forth more than a spear's length, eagerly seized his helm, cast it on his head, threw his shoulders under his fair shield, pulled out a bright sword and fiercely spoke. Never in this world since he was born of his mother was he half so blithe.

"Cease, sir, of thy blow! Offer me no more. I have without strife taken a stroke in this place; and if thou givest me more, I shall promptly repay and yield quickly again, trust thou that! Only one stroke falls to me here. The covenant which we made in Arthur's halls provided just that; and therefore, courteous sir, now hold!"

15. The warrior turned from him and rested on his axe. He set the shaft on the ground, leaned on the head, and beheld how the doughty hero stood his ground grimly, fully armed and devoid of fear. In his heart it pleased him. Then with a great voice, and a huge laugh, he spoke merrily to the hero: "Bold sir, in this place be not so savage. Nobody has here unmannerly mishandled thee, nor done but according to covenant made at the king's court. I promised thee a stroke and thou hast it; hold thee well paid. I release thee of the remnant, of all other rights. If I had been skilful peradventure I could have given you a worse buffet. First I menaced you merrily with a pure feint, and gave thee no blow;

which was but justice, considering the covenant which we made on the first night, and which thou held with me trustily; for truly all the gain thou gave me as a good man should. The second feint this morning, sir, I proffered thee, because thou didst kiss my fair wife and didst hand the kisses over to me; for these two occasions I gave thee here but two bare feints without harm. A true man truly restores; such an one need dread no harm. At the third time thou didst fail; and so take thee that tap.

16. "For it is my weed that thou wearest, that same woven girdle. Mine own wife gave it thee, I know well, forsooth. Now know I well the thy kisses, and thy virtues also. And as for the wooing of my wife, I managed it myself. I sent her to try thee, and truly it seems to me thou art the most faultless hero that ever went on foot. As a pearl is of greater price than white peas, so is Gawain, in good faith, compared with other gay knights. But in this case, sir, you lacked a little, and loyalty failed you. But that was for no amorous work, nor wooing either, but because ye loved your life, — the less I blame you."

That other brave man stood a great while in a study; so stricken was he for grief that he groaned within. All the blood of his breast rushed to his face; and he shrank for shame when the warrior talked. This was the first word that the man spoke — "Cursed be cowardice and covetousness both! In you is villainy and vice, that destroy virtue." Then he caught at the knot and loosed the fastening; fiercely reached the belt to the warrior himself. "Lo! there is the deception, foul may it fall! For fear of thy knock cowardice taught me to make a truce with covetousness, to forsake my nature, which is generosity and loyalty, that belong to knights. Now am I faulty and false, and a coward have ever been. From treachery and untruth ever come sorrow and care. Here I confess to you, knight, that my conduct is all faulty. Let me but please you now, and after I shall beware."

17. Then the other laughed and said courteously: "I hold it quite remedied, the harm that I had. Thou hast made a clean confession, acknowledging all thy misdeeds, and hast received the penance openly from the point of my edge. I hold thee quit of that plight, and purified as clean as if thou hadst never forfeited since thou was first born. And I give thee, sir, the girdle that is gold hemmed. Since it is green, as is my gown, Sir Gawain, ye may think upon this same adventure where thou goest forth among great princes; and this shall be a genuine token among chivalrous knights of the adventure of the green chapel, and ye shall come again this New Year to my dwelling and we shall revel the remnant of this rich feast full well." The lord pressed the invitation and said, "With my wife, who was you great enemy, I think we shall reconcile you."

18. "Nay, forsooth," quoth the hero and seizing his helm, he took it off quickly and thanked the warrior. "I have had a good visit, bliss betide you; and may He pay you well who directs all mercies. Commend me to that courteous one, your comely mate; both the one and the other, my honoured ladies, who have thus with their craft quaintly beguiled their knight. But it is no wonder that a fool should rave, and through wiles of women be won to sorrow. For so was Adam beguiled by one, and Solomon by many, indeed; and Samson also Delilah dealt him his weird; and David thereafter was deceived by Bathsheba, who suffered much sorrow. Since these men were plagued by their wiles, it were a hugegain to love them well and believe them not — if a person but could; for these men were of old the best, and the most fortunate, excellent above all others under the heavens; and all they were beguiled by women whom they had to do with. If I be now deceived, meseems I might be excused."

19. "But your girdle," quoth Gawain "God reward you for it! That will I keep with good will; not for the precious gold nor the samite nor the silk, nor the widependants, for its wealth nor for its beauty nor for its fine work; but in sign of my fault I shall behold it oft; when I ride in renown I shall lament to myself the fault and the deceit of the crabbed flesh, how tender it is to catch stains of filth; and thus when pride shall prick me for prowess of arms, a look on this love-lace shall moderate my heart. But one thing I would pray you — may it displease you not — since ye are lord of the land yonder where I have stayed worshipfully with you — may the Being who upholds the heaven and sits on high repay you for it! — how name ye your right name and then no more."

"That shall I tell thee truly," quoth the other then. "Bernlak de Hautdesert I am called in this land through the might of Morgan la Fay, who dwells in my house She has acquired deep learning, hard-won

:ill, many of the masteries of Merlin; — r she has at times dealt in rare magic with iat renowned clerk, who knows all your ights at home. Morgan the Goddess is nerefore her name; no person is so haughty it she can tame him.

20. "She sent me in this wise to your rich ill to assay its pride and try if it were true iat circulates about the great renown of ie Round Table. She prepared for me this onder to take away your wits, to have ieved Guinevere and caused her to die irough fright of that same man, that ostly speaker with his head in his hand fore the high table. That is she, the ant ent lady at home. She is even thine aunt, rthur's half-sister, the daughter of that uchess of Tintagel upon whom dear Uther terwards begot Arthur, that is now king. herefore, I beg you, sir, to come to thine int; make merry in my house; my people ve thee, and I like thee as well, sir, by my ith as I do any man under God for thy eat truth."

But he answered him nay, he would in no ise. They embraced and kissed, each ntrusted other to the Prince of Paradise, id they parted right there in the cold. Gaain on horse full fair rides boldly to the ng's court, and the knight all in green hithersoever he would.

21. Wild ways in the world Gawain now des on Gringolet, he who had got the boon his life. Oft he harboured in houses, id oft without; and many an adventure in ile he had, and won oft; but that I care ot at this time to mention in my tale. The irt was whole that he had got in his neck; id he bare the glistening belt about him, ossed obliquely like a baldric, the lace stened under his left arm with a knot, in oken that he was taken in a fault. And thus e comes to the court, the knight all sound. here wakened joy in that dwelling when the great ones knew that good Gawain had come; joyous it seemed to them. The king kisses the knight, and the queen also; and afterwards many a sure knight, who sought to embrace him and asked him of his journey. And wondrously he tells it, confessing all the trials that he had, the adventure of the chapel, the behavior of the knight, the love of the lady — and, at the last, the lace. He showed them the nick in his neck that he caught at the lord's hands for his unloyalty. He grieved when he had to tell it; he groaned for sorrow, and the blood rushed to his face for shame when he declared it.

22. "Lo! lord," quoth the hero, as he handled the lace, "this that I bear in my neck is the badge of this blame. This is the evil and the loss that I have got from the cowardice and covetousness that I showed there. This is the token of untruth that I am taken in, and I must needs wear it while I may last; for none may hide this shame without mishap, for where it once is incurred, depart will it never."

The king and all the court comfort the knight. They laugh loud at his tale, and lovingly agree that the lords and ladies that belong to the Table, each knight of the brotherhood, should have a baldric, an oblique band about him of a bright green, and wear that for the sake of the hero. And that emblem was accorded the renown of the Round Table, and he was ever after honoured that had it.

As it is told in the best book of romance, thus in Arthur's day this adventure betid, which the Brutus books bear witness of. After Brutus the bold hero first came hither, when the siege and the assault had ceased at Troy, many adventures of this sort happened. Now may He that bore the crown of thorns bring us to his bliss. Amen.

Hony Soit Qui Mal Pence

# THE POPULAR BALLADS

The Popular Ballads are not, in the strict sense of the word, literature at all. They were not written, but composed or improvised about some topic of popular interest to the music of a popular tune. Once started on their way, they passed from generation to generation only by oral tradition. Any singer of them felt quite free to change the wording or to add new stanzas of his own invention, till they became a composite of many minds, the creation not of a single poet but of a whole people. Nor have they any single correct and authentic form; most of them have been preserved to us in several varying versions. Many of them originated as long ago as the fourteenth century, or even earlier; but few of them found their way into printed books before the latter part of the eighteenth century, when their great poetical value was first generally recognized. In 1765, Bishop Percy published a collection of them which he found written down in a manuscript which dates from the

middle of the seventeenth century. Others were collected by Sir Walter Scott, who wrote them down from the lips of Scottish peasants to whom they had descended by oral tradition. The standard collection is that of the American scholar, F. J. Child, in five volumes — *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, Boston, 1882–98 — where each ballad is given in many variant versions. An abridgement of this great work by Sargent and Kittredge is published in the Cambridge Poets series by Houghton Mifflin Company. An interesting critical study of the ballads is that of F. B. Gummere: *The Popular Ballad*, Boston, 1907.

Though the creation and possession of humble peasant folk, the ballads concern themselves usually with the fortunes of lords and ladies and gentlefolk — nearly always with their tragic fortunes. The world of the ballads is filled with battle and murder and sudden death. The story is told — or often not so much told as dramatically revealed — with complete objectivity, with hardly a trace of moralizing or comment. The method of the ballad conforms to certain established conventions. Favorite devices, stock epithets, occur again and again; events happen in threes or sevens or nines. Most characteristic is the use of repetition — a peculiar sort of repetition, which with each iteration of a given phrase or formula adds a new significant element to the situation.

## THE DOUGLAS TRAGEDY

1. "Rise up, rise up, now, Lord Douglas," she says,
"And put on your armour so bright,
Let it never be said that a daughter of thine
Was married to a lord under night.

2. "Rise up, rise up, my seven bold sons,
And put on your armour so bright,
And take better care of your youngest sister,
For your eldest's awa the last night."

3. He's mounted her on a milk-white steed,
And himself on a dapple grey,
With a bugelet horn hung down by his side,
And lightly they rode away.

4. Lord William lookit oer his left shoulder,
To see what he could see,
And there he spy'd her seven brethren bold,
Come riding over the lee.

5. "Light down, light down, Lady Margret," he said,
"And hold my steed in your hand,
Until that against your seven brethren bold,
And your father I mak a stand."

6. She held his steed in her milk-white hand,
And never shed one tear,
Until that she saw her seven brethren fa,
And her father hard fighting, who lovd her so dear.

7. "O hold your hand, Lord William!" she said,
"For your strokes they are wondrous sair;
True lovers I can get many a ane,
But a father I can never get mair."

8. O she's taen out her handkerchief,
It was o the holland sae fine,
And aye she dighted[1] her father's bloody wounds,
That were redder than the wine.

9. "O chuse, O chuse, Lady Margret," he said,
"O whether will ye gang or bide?"
"I'll gang, I'll gang, Lord William," she said,
"For ye have left me no other guide."

10. He's lifted her on a milk-white steed,
And himself on a dapple grey,
With a bugelet horn hung down by his side,
And slowly they baith rade away.

11. O they rade on, and on they rade,
And a' by the light of the moon,
Until they came to yon wan water,
And there they lighted down.

12. They lighted down to tak a drink
Of the spring that ran sae clear,
And down the stream ran his gude heart's blood,
And sair she gan to fear.

13. "Hold up, hold up, Lord William," she says,
"For I fear that you are slain;"
"'Tis naething but the shadow of my scarlet cloak,
That shines in the water sae plain."

14. O they rade on, and on they rade,
And a' by the light of the moon,

[1] dressed.

Until they cam to his mother's ha door,
And there they lighted down.

15. "Get up, get up, lady mother," he says,
"Get up, and let me in!
Get up, get up, lady mother," he says,
"For this night my fair lady I've win.

16. "O mak my bed, lady mother," he says,
"O mak it braid and deep,
And lay lady Margret close at my back,
And the sounder I will sleep."

17. Lord William was dead lang ere midnight,
Lady Margret lang ere day,
And all true lovers that go thegither,
May they have mair luck than they!

18. Lord William was buried in St. Mary's kirk,
Lady Margret in Mary's quire;
Out o the lady's grave grew a bonny red rose,
And out o the knight's a brier.

19. And they twa met, and they twa plat,[1]
And fain they wad be near;
And a' the warld might ken right weel
They were twa lovers dear.

20. But bye and rade the Black Douglas,
And wow but he was rough!
For he pulld up the bonny brier,
And flang 't in St. Mary's Loch.

## EDWARD

1. "Why dois your brand sae drap wi bluid,
Edward, Edward,
Why dois your brand sae drap wi bluid,
And why sae sad gang yee O?"
"O I hae killed my hauke sae guid,
Mither, mither,
O I hae killed my hauke sae guid,
And I had nae mair bot hee O."

2. "Your haukis bluid was nevir sae reid,
Edward, Edward,
Your haukis bluid was nevir sae reid,
My deir son I tell thee O."
"O I hae killed my reid-roan steid,
Mither, mither,
O I hae killed my reid-roan steid,
That erst was sae fair and frie O."

1 intertwined.

3. "Your steid was auld, and ye hae gat mair,
Edward, Edward,
Your steid was auld, and ye hae gat mair,
Sum other dule [1] ye drie [2] O."
"O I hae killed my fadir deir,
Mither, mither,
O I hae killed my fadir deir,
Alas, and wae is mee O!"

4. "And whatten penance wul ye drie for that,
Edward, Edward,
And whatten penance wul ye drie for that?
My deir son, now tell me O."
"Ile set my feit in yonder boat,
Mither, mither,
Ile set my feit in yonder boat,
And Ile fare ovir the sea O."

5. "And what wul ye doe wi your towirs and your ha,
Edward, Edward?
And what wul ye doe wi your towirs and your ha,
That were sae fair to see O?"
"Ile let thame stand tul they doun fa,
Mither, mither,
Ile let thame stand tul they down fa,
For here nevir mair maun [3] I bee O."

6. "And what wul ye leive to your bairns and your wife,
Edward, Edward?
And what wul ye leive to your bairns and your wife,
Whan ye gang ovir the sea O?"
"The warldis room, late them beg thrae life,
Mither, mither,
The warldis room, late them beg thrae life,
For thame nevir mair wul I see O."

7. "And what wul ye leive to your ain mither deir,
Edward, Edward?
And what wul ye leive to your ain mither deir?
My deir son, now tell me O."
"The curse of hell frae me sall ye beir,
Mither, mither,
The curse of hell frae me sall ye beir,
Sic counseils ye gave to me O."

1 sorrow. 2 endure.
3 must.

## BABYLON; OR, THE BONNIE BANKS O FORDIE

1. There were three ladies lived in a bower,
Eh vow bonnie,
And they went out to pull a flower,
On the bonnie banks o Fordie.

2. They hadna pu'ed a flower but ane,
When up started to them a banisht man.

3. He's taen the first sister by her hand,
And he's turned her round and made her stand.

4. "It's whether will ye be a rank robber's wife,
Or will ye die by my wee pen-knife?"

5. "It's I'll not be a rank robber's wife,
But I'll rather die by your wee pen-knife."

6. He's killed this may,[1] and he's laid her by,
For to bear the red rose company.

7. He's taken the second ane by the hand,
And he's turned her round and made her stand.

8. "It's whether will ye be a rank robber's wife,
Or will ye die by my wee pen-knife?"

9. "I'll not be a rank robber's wife,
But I'll rather die by your wee pen-knife."

10. He's killed this may, and he's laid her by,
For to bear the red rose company.

11. He's taken the youngest ane by the hand,
And he's turned her round and made her stand.

12. Says, "Will ye be a rank robber's wife,
Or will ye die by my wee pen-knife?"

13. "I'll not be a rank robber's wife,
Nor will I die by your wee pen-knife.

14. "For I hae a brother in this wood,
And gin ye kill me, it's he'll kill thee."

15. "What's thy brother's name? come tell to me."
"My brother's name is Baby Lon."

16. "O sister, sister, what have I done!
O have I done this ill to thee!

17. "O since I've done this evil deed,
Good sall never be seen o me."

18. He's taken out his wee pen-knife,
And he's twyned [1] himsel o his ain sweet life.

1 maid

## LORD THOMAS AND FAIR ANNET

1. Lord Thomas and Fair Annet
Sate a' day on a hill;
Whan night was cum, and sun was sett,
They had not talkt their fill.

2. Lord Thomas said a word in jest,
Fair Annet took it ill:
"A, I will nevir wed a wife
Against my ain friends' will."

3. "Gif ye wull nevir wed a wife,
A wife wull neir wed yee:"
Sae he is hame to tell his mither,
And knelt upon his knee.

4. "O rede,[2] O rede, mither," he says,
"A gude rede gie to mee;
O sall I tak the nut-browne bride,
And let Faire Annet bee?"

5. "The nut-browne bride haes gowd and gear,
Fair Annet she has gat nane;
And the little beauty Fair Annet haes
O it wull soon be gane."

6. And he has till his brother gane:
"Now, brother, rede ye mee;
A, sall I marrie the nut-browne bride,
And let Fair Annet bee?"

7. "The nut-browne bride has oxen, brother,
The nut-browne bride has kye;[3]
I wad hae ye marrie the nut-browne bride,
And cast Fair Annet bye."

8. "Her oxen may dye i the house, billie,
And her kye into the byre,[4]
And I sall hae nothing to mysell
Bot a fat fadge [5] by the fyre."

1 deprived. 2 counsel. 3 kine.
4 cow-barn. 5 clumsy woman

9. And he has till his sister gane:
"Now, sister, rede ye mee;
O sall I marrie the nut-browne bride,
And set Fair Annet free?"

10. "I'se rede ye tak Fair Annet, Thomas,
And let the browne bride alane;
Lest ye sould sigh, and say, Alace,
What is this we brought hame!"

11. "No, I will tak my mither's counsel,
And marrie me owt o hand;
And I will tak the nut-browne bride,
Fair Annet may leive the land."

12. Up then rose Fair Annet's father,
Twa hours or it wer day,
And he is gane into the bower
Wherein Fair Annet lay.

13. "Rise up, rise up, Fair Annet," he says,
"Put on your silken sheene;[1]
Let us gae to St. Marie's kirke,
And see that rich weddeen."

14. "My maides, gae to my dressing-roome,
And dress to me my hair;
Whaireir yee laid a plait before
See yee lay ten times mair.

15. "My maids, gae to my dressing-room,
And dress to me my smock;
The one half is o the holland[2] fine,
The other o needle-work."

16. The horse Fair Annet rade upon,
He amblit like the wind;
Wi siller he was shod before,
Wi burning gowd behind.

17. Four and twanty siller bells
Wer a' tyed till his mane,
And yae tift[3] o the norland wind,
They tinkled ane by ane.

18. Four and twanty gay gude knichts
Rade by Fair Annet's side,
And four and twanty fair ladies,
As gin she had bin a bride.

19. And whan she cam to Marie's kirk,
She sat on Marie's stean:[4]
The cleading[5] that Fair Annet had on
It skinkled[6] in their een.

20. And whan she cam into the kirk,
She shimmerd like the sun;
The belt that was about her waist
Was a' wi pearles bedone.

21. She sat her by the nut-browne bride,
And her een they wer sae clear,
Lord Thomas he clean forgat the bride,
Whan Fair Annet drew near.

22. He had a rose into his hand,
He gae it kisses three,
And reaching by the nut-browne bride,
Laid it on Fair Annet's knee.

23. Up than spak the nut-browne bride,
She spak wi meikle spite:
"And whair gat ye that rose-water,
That does mak yee sae white?"

24. "O I did get the rose-water
Whair ye wull neir get nane,
For I did get that very rose-water
Into my mither's wame."[1]

25. The bride she drew a long bodkin
Frae out her gay head-gear,
And strake Fair Annet unto the heart,
That word spak nevir mair.

26. Lord Thomas he saw Fair Annet wex pale,
And marvelit what mote bee;
But whan he saw her dear heart's blude,
A' wood-wroth[2] wexed hee.

27. He drew his dagger, that was sae sharp,
That was sae sharp and meet,[3]
And drave it into the nut-browne bride,
That fell deid at his feit.

28. "Now stay for me, dear Annet," he sed,
"Now stay, my dear," he cry'd;
Then strake the dagger untill his heart,
And fell deid by her side.

29. Lord Thomas was buried without kirkwa,[4]
Fair Annet within the quiere,
And o the tane thair grew a birk,[5]
The other a bonny briere.

30. And ay they grew, and ay they threw,[6]
As they wad faine be neare;

1 finery. 2 linen. 3 one whiff.
4 stone. 5 clothing. 6 sparkled.

1 womb. 2 mad with anger. 3 straight.
4 As a suicide, he could not be buried in holy ground.
5 birch. 6 twisted.

And by this ye may ken right weil
They were twa luvers deare.

## LAMKIN

1. It's Lamkin was a mason good
as ever built wi stane;
He built Lord Wearie's castle,
but payment got he nane.

2. "O pay me, Lord Wearie,
come, pay me my fee:"
"I canna pay you, Lamkin,
for I maun [1] gang oer the sea."

3. "O pay me now, Lord Wearie,
come, pay me out o hand:"
"I canna pay you, Lamkin,
unless I sell my land."

4. "O gin ye winna pay me,
I here sall mak a vow,
Before that ye come hame again,
ye sall hae cause to rue."

5. Lord Wearie got a bonny ship,
to sail the saut sea faem;
Bade his lady weel the castle keep,
ay till he should come hame.

6. But the nourice [2] was a fause limmer [3]
as eer hung on a tree;
She laid a plot wi Lamkin,
whan her lord was oer the sea.

7. She laid a plot wi Lamkin,
when the servants were awa,
Loot him in at a little shot-window,
and brought him to the ha.

8. "O whare's a' the men o this house,
that ca me Lamkin?"
"They're at the barn-well thrashing;
'twill be lang ere they come in."

9. "And whare's the women o this house,
that ca me Lamkin?"
"They're at the far well washing;
'twill be lang ere they come in."

10. "And whare's the bairns o this house,
that ca me Lamkin?"
"They're at the school reading;
'twill be night or they come hame."

11. "O whare's the lady o this house,
that ca's me Lamkin?"
"She's up in her bower sewing,
but we soon can bring her down."

12. Then Lamkin's tane a sharp knife,
that hang down by his gaire,[1]
And he has gien the bonny babe
a deep wound and a sair.

13. Then Lamkin he rocked,
and the fause nourice sang,
Till frae ilkae bore [2] o the cradle
the red blood out sprang.

14. Then out it spak the lady,
as she stood on the stair:
"What ails my bairn, nourice,
that he's greeting [3] sae sair?

15. O still my bairn nourice,
O still him with the pap!"
"He winna still, lady,
for this nor for that."

16. "O still my bairn, nourice,
O still him wi the wand!"
"He winna still, lady,
for a' his father's land."

17. "O still my bairn, nourice,
O still him wi the bell!"
"He winna still, lady,
till ye come down yoursel."

18. O the firsten step she steppit,
she steppit on a stane;
But the neisten step she steppit,
she met him Lamkin.

19. "O mercy, mercy, Lamkin,
hae mercy upon me!
Though you've taen my young son's life,
ye may let mysel be."

20. "O sall I kill her, nourice,
or sall I lat her be?"
"O kill her, kill her, Lamkin,
for she neer was good to me."

21. "O scour the bason, nourice,
and mak it fair and clean,
For to keep this lady's heart's blood,
for she's come o noble kin."

22. "There need nae bason, Lamkin,
lat it run through the floor;
What better is the heart's blood
o the rich than o the poor?"

1 must. 2 nurse. 3 rascal.

1 gore. 2 hole. 3 crying.

But ere three months were at an end,
Lord Wearie came again;
But dowie,[1] dowie was his heart
when first he came hame.

"O wha's blood is this," he says,
"that lies in the chamer?" [2]
"It is your lady's heart's blood;
'tis as clear as the lamer." [3]

"And wha's blood is this," he says,
"that lies in my ha?"
"It is your young son's heart's blood;
'tis the clearest ava." [4]

O sweetly sang the black-bird
that sat upon the tree;
But sairer grat [5] Lamkin,
when he was condemnd to die.

And bonny sang the mavis,[6]
out o the thorny brake;
But sairer grat the nourice,
when she was tied to the stake.

## THE GAY GOSS-HAWK

"O well's me o my gay goss-hawk,
That he can speak and flee;
He'll carry a letter to my love,
Bring back another to me."

"O how can I your true-love ken,
Or how can I her know?
Whan frae her mouth I never heard couth,[7]
Nor wi my eyes her saw."

"O well sal ye my true-love ken,
As soon as you her see;
For, of a' the flowrs in fair Englan,
The fairest flowr is she.

"At even at my love's bowr-door
There grows a bowing birk,[8]
An sit ye down and sing thereon,
As she gangs to the kirk.

"An four-and-twenty ladies fair
Will wash and go to kirk,
But well sal ye my true-love ken,
For she wears goud on her skirt.

"An four and twenty gay ladies
Will to the mass repair,
But well sal ye my true-love ken,
For she wears goud on her hair."

O even at that lady's bowr-door
There grows a bowin birk,
An he set down and sang thereon,
As she ged to the kirk.

"O eet and drink, my marys [1] a',
The wine flows you among,
Till I gang to my shot-window,
An hear yon bonny bird's song.

"Sing on, sing on, my bonny bird,
The song ye sang the streen,[2]
For I ken by your sweet singin
You're frae my true-love sen."

O first he sang a merry song,
An then he sang a grave,
An then he peckd his feathers gray,
To her the letter gave.

"Ha, there's a letter frae your love,
He says he sent you three;
He canna wait your love langer,
But for your sake he'll die.

"He bids you write a letter to him;
He says he's sent you five;
He canna wait your love langer,
Tho you're the fairest woman alive."

"Ye bid him bake his bridal-bread,
And brew his bridal-ale,
An I'll meet him in fair Scotlan
Lang, lang or it be stale."

She's doen her to her father dear,
Fa'n low down on her knee:
"A boon, a boon, my father dear,
I pray you, grant it me."

"Ask on, ask on, my daughter,
An granted it sal be;
Except ae squire in fair Scotlan,
An him you sall never see."

"The only boon, my father dear,
That I do crave of the,
Is, gin I die in southin lands,
In Scotland to bury me.

"An the firstin kirk that ye come till,
Ye gar [3] the bells be rung,
An the nextin kirk that ye come till,
Ye gar the mess be sung.

1 sad. 2 chamber. 3 amber. 4 of all. 5 wept. 6 thrush. 7 sound, word. 8 birch

1 maids 2 yesterday evening. 3 cause.

18. "An the thirdin kirk that ye come till,
You deal gold for my sake,
An the fourthin kirk that ye come till,
You tarry there till night."

19. She is doen her to her bigly [1] bowr,
As fast as she coud fare,
An she has tane a sleepy draught,
That she had mixed wi care.

20. She's laid her down upon her bed,
An soon she's fa'n asleep,
And soon oer every tender limb
Cauld death began to creep.

21. Whan night was flown, an day was come,
Nae ane that did her see
But thought she was as surely dead
As ony lady coud be.

22. Her father an her brothers dear
Gard make to her a bier;
The tae half was o guide red gold,
The tither o silver clear.

23. Her mither an her sisters fair
Gard work for her a sark; [2]
The tae half was o cambrick fine,
The tither o needle wark.

24. The firstin kirk that they came till,
They gard the bells be rung,
An the nextin kirk that they came till,
They gard the mess be sung.

25. The thirdin kirk that they came till,
They dealt gold for her sake,
An the fourthin kirk that they came till,
Lo, there they met her make! [3]

26. "Lay down, lay down the bigly bier.
Lat me the dead look on;"
Wi cherry cheeks and ruby lips
She lay an smil'd on him.

27. "O ae sheave [4] o your bread, true-love,
An ae glass o your wine,
For I hae fasted for your sake
These fully days is nine.

28. "Gang hame, gang hame, my seven bold brothers,
Gang hame and sound your horn;
An ye may boast in southin lans
Your sister's playd you scorn."

1 commodious. 2 shirt. 3 lover. 4 slice.

## THE THREE RAVENS

1. There were three ravens sat on a tree,
Downe a downe, hay down, hay downe
There were three ravens sat on a tree,
With a downe
There were three ravens sat on a tree,
They were as blacke as they might be.
With a downe derrie, derrie, derrie downe, downe.

2. The one of them said to his mate,
"Where shall we our breakefast take?"

3. "Downe in yonder greene field,
There lies a knight slain under his shield.

4. "His hounds they lie downe at his feete
So well they can their master keepe.

5. "His haukes they flie so eagerly,
There's no fowle dare him come nie."

6. Downe there comes a fallow doe,
As great with yong as she might goe.

7. She lift up his bloudy hed,
And kist his wounds that were so red.

8. She got him up upon her backe,
And carried him to earthen lake [1]

9. She buried him before the prime,
She was dead herselfe ere even-song time.

10. God send every gentleman,
Such haukes, such hounds, and such a leman.[2]

## THE TWA CORBIES

1. As I was walking all alane,
I heard twa corbies [3] making a mane; [4]
The tane unto the t' other say,
"Where sall we gang and dine to-day?"

2. "In behint yon auld fail [5] dyke,
I wot there lies a new slain knight;
And naebody kens that he lies there,
But his hawk, his hound, and lady fair.

3. "His hound is to the hunting gane,
His hawk to fetch the wild-fowl hame,

1 pit. 2 sweetheart. 3 ravens.
4 moan. 5 turf.

His lady's ta'en another mate,
So we may mak our dinner sweet.

4. "Ye'll sit on his white hause-bane,[1]
And I'll pike out his bonny blue een;
Wi ae lock o his gowden hair
We'll theek[2] our nest when it grows bare.

5. "Mony a one for him makes mane,
But nane sall ken where he is gane;
Oer his white banes when they are bare,
The wind sall blaw for evermair."

## SIR PATRICK SPENCE

1. The king sits in Dumferling toune,
Drinking the blude-reid wine:
"O whar will I get a guid sailor,
To sail this schip of mine?"

2. Up and spak an eldern knicht,
Sat at the kings richt kne:
"Sir Patrick Spence is the best sailor
That sails upon the se."

3. The king has written a braid[3] letter,
And signd it wi his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spence,
Was walking on the sand.

4. The first line that Sir Patrick red,
A loud lauch[4] lauched he;
The next line that Sir Patrick red,
The teir blinded his ee.

5. "O wha is this has don this deid,
This ill deid don to me,
To send me out this time o' the yeir,
To sail upon the se!

6. "Mak hast, mak haste, my mirry men all,
Our guid schip sails the morne:"
"O say na sae, my master deir,
For I feir a deadlie storme.

7. "Late late yestreen I saw the new moone,
Wi the auld moone in her arme,
And I feir, I feir, my deir master,
That we will cum to harme."

8. O our Scots nobles wer richt laith[5]
To weet their cork-heild schoone;
Bot lang owre[6] a' the play wer playd,
Thair hats they swam aboone.[7]

9. O lang, lang may their ladies sit,
Wi thair fans into their hand,
Or eir they se Sir Patrick Spence
Cum sailing to the land.

10. O lang, lang may the ladies stand,
Wi thair gold kems[1] in their hair,
Waiting for thair ain deir lords,
For they'll se thame na mair.

11. Haf owre, half owre to Aberdour,
It's fiftie fadom deip,
And thair lies guid Sir Patrick Spence,
Wi the Scots lords at his feit.

1 neck-bone. 2 thatch. 3 broad.
4 laugh. 5 loath. 6 before. 7 above.

## THE WIFE OF USHER'S WELL

1. There lived a wife at Usher's Well,
And a wealthy wife was she;
She had three stout and stalwart sons,
And sent them oer the sea.

2. They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely ane,
Whan word came to the carline wife[2]
That her three sons were gane.

3. They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely three,
Whan word came to the carlin wife
That her sons she'd never see.

4. "I wish the wind may never cease,
Nor fashes[3] in the flood,
Till my three sons come hame to me,
In earthly flesh and blood."

5. It fell about the Martinmass,[4]
When nights are lang and mirk,[5]
The carlin wife's three sons came hame,
And their hats were o the birk.[6]

6. It neither grew in syke[7] nor ditch,
Nor yet in ony sheugh;[8]
But at the gates o Paradise,
That birk grew fair eneugh.

. . . . . .

7. "Blow up the fire, my maidens,
Bring water from the well;
For a' my house shall feast this night,
Since my three sons are well."

8. And she has made to them a bed,
She's made it large and wide,

1 combs. 2 old woman. 3 troubles.
4 November 11. 5 dark. 6 birch.
7 trench. 8 furrow.

And she's taen her mantle her about,
Sat down at the bed-side.

. . . . . .

9. Up then crew the red, red cock,
And up and crew the gray,
The eldest to the youngest said,
"'Tis time we were away."

10. The cock he hadna crawd but once,
And clappd his wings at a',
When the youngest to the eldest said,
"Brother, we must awa.

11. "The cock doth craw, the day doth daw,
The channerin[1] worm doth chide;
Gin we be mist out o our place,
A sair pain we maun bide.

12. "Fare ye weel, my mother dear!
Fareweel to barn and byre![2]
And fare ye weel, the bonny lass
That kindles my mother's fire!"

## THE DÆMON LOVER

1. "O where have you been, my long, long love,
This long seven years and mair?"
"O I'm come to seek my former vows
Ye granted me before."

2. "O hold your tongue of your former vows,
For they will breed sad strife;
O hold your tongue of your former vows,
For I am become a wife."

3. He turned him right and round about,
And the tear blinded his ee:
"I wad never hae trodden on Irish ground,
If it had not been for thee.

4. "I might hae had a king's daughter,
Far, far beyond the sea;
I might have had a king's daughter,
Had it not been for love o thee."

5. "If ye might have had a king's daughter,
Yersel ye had to blame;
Ye might have taken the king's daughter,
For ye kend that I was nane.

6. "If I was to leave my husband dear,
And my two babes also,
O what have you to take me to,
If with you I should go?"

7. "I hae seven ships upon the sea —
The eighth brought me to land —
With four-and-twenty bold mariners,
And music on every hand."

8. She has taken up her two little babes,
Kissd them baith cheek and chin:
"O fair ye weel, my ain two babes,
For I'll never see you again."

9. She set her foot upon the ship,
No mariners could she behold;
But the sails were o the taffetie,
And the masts o the beaten gold.

10. She had not saild a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
When dismal grew his countenance,
And drumlie[1] grew his ee.

11. They had not saild a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
Until she espied his cloven foot,
And she wept right bitterlie.

12. "O hold your tongue of your weeping," says he,
"Of your weeping now let me be;
I will shew you how the lilies grow
On the banks of Italy."

13. "O what hills are yon, yon pleasant hills,
That the sun shines sweetly on?"
"O yon are the hills of heaven," he said,
"Where you will never win."

14. "O whaten a mountain is yon," she said,
"All so dreary wi frost and snow?"
"O yon is the mountain of hell," he cried,
"Where you and I will go."

15. He strack the tap-mast wi his hand,
The fore-mast wi his knee,
And he brake that gallant ship in twain,
And sank her in the sea.

## HUGH OF LINCOLN

1. Four and twenty bonny boys
Were playing at the ba,
And by it came him sweet Sir Hugh,
And he playd oer them a'.

1 grumbling. 2 cow-barn.

1 gloomy.

2. He kicked the ba with his right foot,
And catchd it wi his knee,
And throuch-and-thro the Jew's window
He gard [1] the bonny ba flee.

3. He's doen him to the Jew's castell,
And walkd it round about;
And there he saw the Jew's daughter,
At the window looking out.

4. "Throw down the ba, ye Jew's daughter,
Throw down the ba to me!"
"Never a bit," says the Jew's daughter,
"Till up to me come ye."

5. "How will I come up? How can I come up?
How can I come to thee?
For as ye did to my auld father,
The same ye'll do to me."

6. She's gane till her father's garden,
And pu'd an apple red and green;
'Twas a' to wyle him sweet Sir Hugh,
And to entice him in.

7. She's led him in through ae dark door,
And sae has she thro nine;
She's laid him on a dressing-table,
And stickit him like a swine.

8. And first came out the thick, thick blood,
And syne [2] came out the thin,
And syne came out the bonny heart's blood;
There was nae mair within.

9. She's rowd [3] him in a cake o lead,
Bade him lie still and sleep;
She's thrown him in Our Lady's draw-well,
Was fifty fathom deep.

10. When bells were rung, and mass was sung,
And a' the bairns came hame,
When every lady gat hame her son,
The Lady Maisry gat nane.

11. She's taen her mantle her about,
Her coffer by the hand,
And she's gane out to seek her son,
And wanderd oer the land.

12. She's doen her to the Jew's castell,
Where a' were fast asleep:
"Gin ye be there, my sweet Sir Hugh,
I pray you to me speak."

13. She's doen her to the Jew's garden,
Thought he had been gathering fruit:
"Gin ye be there, my sweet Sir Hugh,
I pray you to me speak."

14. She neard Our Lady's deep draw-well,
Was fifty fathom deep:
"Whareer ye be, my sweet Sir Hugh,
I pray you to me speak."

15. "Gae hame, gae hame, my mither dear,
Prepare my winding sheet,
And at the back o merry Lincoln
The morn [1] I will you meet."

16. Now Lady Maisry is gane hame,
Made him a winding sheet,
And at the back o merry Lincoln
The dead corpse did her meet.

17. And a' the bells o merry Lincoln
Without men's hands were rung,
And a' the books o merry Lincoln
Were read without man's tongue,
And neer was such a burial
Sin Adam's days begun.

[1] made. [2] then. [3] rolled.

## CHEVY CHASE

1. God prosper long our noble king,
our liffes and saftyes all!
A woefull hunting once there did
in Chevy Chase befall.

2. To drive the deere with hound and horne
Erle Pearcy took the way:
The child may rue that is unborne
the hunting of that day!

3. The stout Erle of Northumberland
a vow to God did make
His pleasure in the Scottish woods
three sommers days to take,

4. The cheefest harts in Chevy C[h]ase
to kill and beare away:
These tydings to Erle Douglas came
in Scottland, where he lay.

5. Who sent Erle Pearcy present word
he would prevent his sport;

[1] to-morrow.

The English erle, not fearing that,
did to the woods resort,

6. With fifteen hundred bowmen bold,
All chosen men of might,
Who knew ffull well in time of neede
to ayme their shafts arright.

7. The gallant greyhound[s] swiftly ran
to chase the fallow deere;
On Munday they began to hunt,
ere daylight did appeare.

8. And long before high noone the[1] had
a hundred fat buckes slaine;
Then having dined, the drovyers went
to rouze the deare againe.

9. The bowmen mustered on the hills,
well able to endure;
Theire backsids all with speciall care
that day were guarded sure.

10. The hounds ran swiftly through the woods
the nimble deere to take,
That with their cryes the hills and dales
an eccho shrill did make.

11. Lord Pearcy to the querry went
to view the tender deere;
Quoth he, "Erle Douglas promised once
this day to meete me heere;

12. "But if I thought he wold not come,
noe longer wold I stay."
With that a brave younge gentlman
thus to the erle did say:

13. "Loe, yonder doth Erle Douglas come,
hys men in armour bright;
Full twenty hundred Scottish speres
all marching in our sight.

14. "All men of pleasant Tivydale,
fast by the river Tweede:"
"O ceaze your sportts!" Erle Pearcy said,
"and take your bowes with speede.

15. "And now with me, my countrymen,
your courage forth advance!
For there was never champion yett,
in Scottland nor in Ffrance,

16. "That ever did on horsbacke come,
[but], and if my hap it were,
I durst encounter man for man,
with him to break a spere."

1 they.

17. Erle Douglas on his milke-white steede,
most like a baron bold,
Rode formost of his company,
whose armor shone like gold.

18. "Shew me," sayd hee, "whose men you bee
that hunt soe boldly heere,
That without my consent doe chase
and kill my fallow deere."

19. The first man that did answer make
was noble Pearcy hee,
Who sayd, "Wee list not to declare
nor shew whose men wee bee;

20. "Yett wee will spend our deerest blood
thy cheefest harts to slay."
Then Douglas swore a solempne oathe,
and thus in rage did say:

21. "Ere thus I will outbraved bee,
one of us tow shall dye;
I know thee well, an erle thou art;
Lord Pearcy, soe am I.

22. "But trust me, Pearcye, pittye it were,
and great offence, to kill
Then any of these our guiltlesse men,
for they have done none ill.

23. "Let thou and I the battell trye,
and set our men aside:"
"Accurst bee [he!]" Erle Pearcye sayd,
"by whome it is denyed."

24. Then stept a gallant squire forth —
Witherington was his name —
Who said, "I wold not have it told
To Henery our king, for shame,

25. "That ere my captaine fought on foote,
and I stand looking on.
You bee two Erles," quoth Witherington,
"and I a squier alone;

26. "I'le doe the best that doe I may,
while I have power to stand;
While I have power to weeld my sword,
I'le fight with hart and hand."

27. Our English archers bent thier bowes;
their harts were good and trew;
Att the first flight of arrowes sent,
full foure score Scotts the slew.

28. To drive the deere with hound and horne,
Douglas bade on the bent;
Two captaines moved with mickle might,
their speres to shivers went.

29. They closed full fast on everye side,
noe slacknes there was found,
But many a gallant gentleman
lay gasping on the ground.

30. O Christ! it was great greeve to see
how eche man chose his spere,
And how the blood out of their brests
did gush like water cleare.

31. At last these two stout erles did meet,
like captaines of great might;
Like lyons woode [1] they layd on lode; [2]
the made a cruell fight.

32. The fought untill they both did sweat,
with swords of tempered steele,
Till blood downe their cheekes like raine
the trickling downe did feele.

33. "O yeeld thee, Pearcye!" Douglas sayd,
"And in faith I will thee bringe
Where thou shall high advanced bee
by James our Scottish king.

34. "Thy ransome I will freely give,
and this report of thee,
Thou art the most couragious knight
[that ever I did see.]"

35. "Noe, Douglas!" quoth Erle Percy then,
"thy profer I doe scorne;
I will not yeelde to any Scott
that ever yett was borne!"

36. With that there came an arrow keene,
out of an English bow,
Which stroke Erle Douglas on the brest
a deepe and deadlye blow.

37. Who never sayd more words than these;
"Fight on, my merry men all!
For why, my life is att [an] end,
lord Pearcy sees my fall."

38. Then leaving liffe, Erle Pearcy tooke
the dead man by the hand;
Who said, "Erle Dowglas, for thy life,
wold I had lost my land!

39. "O Christ! my verry hart doth bleed
for sorrow for thy sake,
For sure, a more redoubted knight
mischance cold never take."

40. A knight amongst the Scotts there was
which saw Erle Douglas dye,
Who streight in hart did vow revenge
upon the Lord Pearcye.

41. Sir Hugh Mountgomerye was he called,
who, with a spere full bright,
Well mounted on a gallant steed,
ran feircly through the fight,

42. And past the English archers all,
without all dread or feare,
And through Erle Percyes body then
he thrust his hatfull spere.

43. With such a vehement force and might
his body he did gore,
The staff ran through the other side
a large cloth-yard and more.

44. Thus did both those nobles dye,
whose courage none cold staine;
An English archer then perceived
the noble erle was slaine.

45. He had [a] good bow in his hand,
made of a trusty tree;
An arrow of a cloth-yard long
to the hard head haled hee.

46. Against Sir Hugh Mountgomerye
his shaft full right he sett;
The grey-goose-winge that was there-on
in his harts bloode was wett.

47. This fight from breake of day did last
till setting of the sun,
For when the rung the evening-bell
the battele scarse was done.

48. With stout Erle Percy there was slaine
Sir John of Egerton,
Sir Robert Harcliffe and Sir William,
Sir James, that bold barron.

49. And with Sir George and Sir James,
both knights of good account,
Good Sir Raphe Rebbye there was slaine,
whose prowesse did surmount.

50. For Witherington needs must I wayle
as one in dolefull dumpes,

1 mad. 2 they laid on heavily.

For when his leggs were smitten of,
he fought upon his stumpes.

51. And with Erle Dowglas there was slaine
Sir Hugh Mountgomerye,
And Sir Charles Morrell, that from feelde
one foote wold never flee;

52. Sir Roger Hever of Harcliffe tow,
his sisters sonne was hee;
Sir David Lambwell, well esteemed,
but saved he cold not bee.

53. And the Lord Maxwell, in like case,
with Douglas he did dye;
Of twenty hundred Scottish speeres,
scarce fifty-five did flye.

54. Of fifteen hundred Englishmen
went home but fifty-three;
The rest in Chevy Chase were slaine,
under the greenwoode tree.

55. Next day did many widdowes come
their husbands to bewayle;
They washt their wounds in brinish teares,
but all wold not prevayle.

56. Theyr bodyes, bathed in purple blood,
the bore with them away;
They kist them dead a thousand times
ere the were cladd in clay.

57. The newes was brought to Eddenborrow,
where Scottlands king did rayne,
That brave Erle Douglas soddainlye
was with an arrow slaine.

58. "O heavy newes!" King James can say;
"Scottland may wittenesse bee
I have not any captaine more
of such account as hee."

59. Like tydings to King Henery came,
within as short a space,
That Pearcy of Northumberland
was slaine in Chevy Chase.

60. "Now God be with him!" said our king,
"sith it will noe better bee;
I trust I have within my realme
five hundred as good as hee.

61. "Yett shall not Scotts nor Scottland say
but I will vengeance take,
And be revenged on them all
for brave Erle Percyes sake."

62. This vow the king did well performe
after on Humble-downe;
In one day fifty knights were slayne,
with lords of great renowne.

63. And of the rest, of small account,
did many hundreds dye:
Thus endeth the hunting in Chevy Chase,
made by the Erle Pearcye.

64. God save our king, and blesse this land
with plentye, joy, and peace,
And grant hencforth that foule debate
twixt noble men may ceaze!

## ROBIN HOOD RESCUING THE WIDOW'S THREE SONS

1. There are twelve months in all the year
As I hear many men say,
But the merriest month in all the year.
Is the merry month of May.

2. Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone,
With a link a down and a day,
And there he met a silly old woman,
Was weeping on the way.

3. "What news? what news, thou silly old woman?
What news hast thou for me?"
Said she, "There's three squires in Nottingham town
To-day is condemned to die."

4. "O have they parishes burnt?" he said,
"Or have they ministers slain?
Or have they robbed any virgin,
Or with other men's wives have lain?"

5. "They have no parishes burnt, good sir,
Nor yet have ministers slain,
Nor have they robbed any virgin,
Nor with other men's wives have lain."

6. "O what have they done?" said bold Robin Hood,
"I pray thee tell to me":
"It's for slaying of the king's fallow deer,
Bearing their long bows with thee."

7. "Dost thou not mind, old woman," he said,
"Since thou made me sup and dine?
By the truth of my body," quoth bold Robin Hood,
"You could not tell it in better time."

8. Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone,
With a link a down and a day,
And there he met with a silly old palmer,
Was walking along the highway.

9. "What news? what news, thou silly old man?
What news, I do thee pray?"
Said he, "Three squires in Nottingham town
Are condemnd to die this day."

10. "Come change thy apparel with me, old man,
Come change thy apparel for mine;
Here is forty shillings in good silver,
Go drink it in beer or wine."

11. "O thine apparel is good," he said,
"And mine is ragged and torn;
Wherever you go, wherever you ride,
Laugh neer an old man to scorn."

12. "Come change thy apparel with me, old churl,
Come change thy apparel with mine;
Here are twenty pieces of good broad gold,
Go feast thy brethren with wine."

13. Then he put on the old man's hat,
It stood full high on the crown:
"The first bold bargain that I come at,
It shall make thee come down."

14. Then he put on the old man's cloak,
Was patchd black, blew, and red;
He thought no shame all the day long
To wear the bags of bread.

15. Then he put on the old man's breeks,[1]
Was patchd from ballup[2] to side;
"By the truth of my body," bold Robin can say,
"This man lovd little pride."

16. Then he put on the old man's hose,
Were patched from knee to wrist;
"By the truth of my body," said bold Robin Hood,
"I'd laugh if I had any list."[3]

17. Then he put on the old man's shoes,
Were patched both beneath and aboon;
Then Robin Hood swore a solemn oath,
"It's good habit that makes a man."

18. Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone,
With a link a down and a down,
And there he met with the proud sheriff,
Was walking along the town.

19. "O save, O save, O sheriff," he said,
"O save, and you may see!
And what will you give to a silly old man
To-day will your hangman be?"

20. "Some suits, some suits," the sheriff he said,
"Some suits I'll give to thee;
Some suits, some suits, and pence thirteen
To-day's a hangman's fee."

21. Then Robin he turns him round about,
And jumps from stock to stone;
"By the truth of my body," the sheriff he said,
"That's well jumpt, thou nimble old man."

22. "I was neer a hangman in all my life,
Nor yet intends to trade;
But curst be he," said bold Robin,
"That first a hangman was made.

23. "I've a bag for meal, and a bag for malt,
And a bag for barley and corn;
A bag for bread, and a bag for beef,
And a bag for my little small horn.

24. "I have a horn in my pocket,
I got it from Robin Hood,
And still when I set it to my mouth,
For thee it blows little good."

25. "O wind thy horn, thou proud fellow,
Of thee I have no doubt;[1]
I wish that thou give such a blast
Till both thy eyes fall out."

26. The first loud blast that he did blow,
He blew both loud and shrill;
A hundred and fifty of Robin Hood's men
Came riding over the hill.

27. The next loud blast that he did give,
He blew both loud and amain,

1 breeches. 2 front flap. 3 inclination.

1 fear.

And quickly sixty of Robin Hood's men
Came shining over the plain.

28. "O who are yon," the sheriff he said,
"Come tripping over the lee?"
"The're my attendants," brave Robin did say,
"They'll pay a visit to thee."

29. They took the gallows from the slack,[1]
They set it in the glen,
They hangd the proud sheriff on that,
Releasd their own three men.

## ROBIN HOOD'S DEATH AND BURIAL

1. When Robin Hood and Little John
Down a down a down a down
Went oer yon bank of broom,
Said Robin Hood bold to Little John,
"We have shot for many a pound."
Hey down, a down, a down.

2. "But I am not able to shoot one shot more,
My broad arrows will not flee;
But I have a cousin lives down below,
Please God, she will bleed me."

3. Now Robin he is to fair Kirkly gone,
As fast as he can win;[2]
But before he came there, as we do hear,
He was taken very ill.

4. And when he came to fair Kirkly hall,
He knockd all at the ring,
But none was so ready as his cousin herself
For to let bold Robin in.

5. "Will you please to sit down, cousin Robin," she said,
"And drink some beer with me?"
"No, I will neither eat nor drink,
Till I am blooded by thee."

6. "Well, I have a room, cousin Robin," she said,
"Which you did never see,
And if you please to walk therein,
You blooded by me shall be."

7. She took him by the lily-white hand,
And led him to a private room,
And there she blooded bold Robin Hood,
While one drop of blood would run down.

8. She blooded him in a vein of the arm,
And locked him up in the room;
Then did he bleed all the live-long day,
Until the next day at noon.

9. He then bethought him of a casement there,
Thinking for to get down;
But was so weak he could not leap,
He could not get him down.

10. He then bethought him of his bugle-horn,
Which hung low down to his knee;
He set his horn unto his mouth,
And blew out weak blasts three.

11. Then Little John, when hearing him,
As he sat under a tree,
"I fear my master is now near dead,
He blows so wearily."

12. Then Little John to fair Kirkly is gone,
As fast as he can dree;[1]
But when he came to Kirkly-hall,
He broke locks two or three:

13. Until he came bold Robin to see,
Then he fell on his knee;
"A boon, a boon," cries Little John,
"Master, I beg of thee."

14. "What is that boon," said Robin Hood,
"Little John, [thou] begs of me?"
"It is to burn fair Kirkly-hall,
And all their nunnery."

15. "Now nay, now nay," quoth Robin Hood,
"That boon I'll not grant thee;
I never hurt woman in all my life,
Nor men in woman's company.

16. "I never hurt fair maid in all my time,
Nor at mine end shall it be;
But give me my bent bow in my hand,
And a broad arrow I'll let flee;
And where this arrow is taken up,
There shall my grave digged be.

17. "Lay me a green sod under my head,
And another at my feet;

1 low ground. 2 arrive.

1 endure, manage.

And lay my bent bow by my side,
Which was my music sweet;
And make my grave of gravel and green,
Which is most right and meet.

18. "Let me have length and breadth enough,
With a green sod under my head;
That they may say, when I am dead
Here lies bold Robin Hood."

19. These words they readily granted him,
Which did bold Robin please:
And there they buried bold Robin Hood,
Within the fair Kirkleys.

## MARY HAMILTON

1. Word's gane to the kitchen,
And word's gane to the ha,
That Marie Hamilton gangs wi bairn [1]
To the hichest Stewart of a'.

2. He's courted her in the kitchen,
He's courted her in the ha,
He's courted her in the laigh [2] cellar,
And that was warst of a'.

3. She's tyed it in her apron
And she's thrown it in the sea;
Says, "Sink ye, swim ye, bonny wee babe!
You'l neer get mair o me."

4. Down then cam the auld queen,
Goud tassels tying her hair:
"O Marie, where's the bonny wee babe
That I heard greet sae sair?"

5. "There was never a babe intill my room,
As little designs to be;
It was but a touch o my sair side,
Come oer my fair bodie."

6. "O Marie, put on your robes o black,
Or else your robes o brown,
For ye maun gang wi me the night,
To see fair Edinbro town."

7. "I winna put on my robes o black,
Nor yet my robes o brown;
But I'll put on my robes o white,
To shine through Edinbro town."

8. When she gaed up the Cannogate,
She laughd loud laughters three;
But whan she cam down the Cannogate
The tear blinded her ee.

9. When she gaed up the Parliament stair,
The heel cam aff her shee;
And lang or she cam down again
She was condemnd to dee.

10. When she cam down the Cannogate,
The Cannogate sae free,
Many a ladie lookd oer her window,
Weeping for this ladie.

11. "Ye need nae weep for me," she says,
"Ye need nae weep for me;
For had I not slain mine own sweet babe,
This death I wadna dee.

12. "Bring me a bottle of wine," she says,
"The best that eer ye hae,
That I may drink to my weil-wishers,
And they may drink to me.

13. "Here's a health to the jolly sailors,
That sail upon the main;
Let them never let on to my father and mother
But what I'm coming hame.

14. "Here's a health to the jolly sailors,
That sail upon the sea;
Let them never let on to my father and mother
That I cam here to dee.

15. "Oh little did my mother think,
The day she cradled me,
What lands I was to travel through,
What death I was to dee.

16. "Oh little did my father think,
The day he held up me,
What lands I was to travel through,
What death I was to dee.

17. "Last night I washd the queen's feet,
And gently laid her down;
And a' the thanks I've gotten the nicht
To be hangd in Edinbro town!

18. "Last nicht there was four Maries,
The nicht there'l be but three;
There was Marie Seton, and Marie Beton,
And Marie Carmichael, and me."

1 is with child. 2 low.

# SIR THOMAS MALORY

Of Sir Thomas Malory we know very little. He is probably to be identified with a knight of that name who was born early in the fifteenth century, served in France under the earl of Warwick, and was member of Parliament for Warwickshire in 1445. He tells us himself at the conclusion of *Morte Darthur* that the book was "ended the ninth year of the reign of king Edward the Fourth," i.e. 1469–70. In the course of the work he frequently refers to a "French book" as his authority. The *Morte Darthur*, which tells the adventures of Arthur from his birth to his death, is a compilation from a great mass of Old French romances of King Arthur and his Round Table. Whether Malory made the compilation himself, or merely translated a French compilation, we do not know. The work was printed by the famous printer William Caxton in 1485, who divided it into twenty-one books. It is the intermediary through which the romances of King Arthur have been most widely known to English readers, and is one of the great masterpieces of our earlier prose — stately, dignified, yet easy and graceful in movement.

The selection here printed — the first seven chapters of Book XXI — contains the account of Arthur's last battle and death. The love of Sir Launcelot for Queen Guenever has been discovered; Launcelot has fled to his castle; Sir Mordred has gathered to himself many of the discontented and has proclaimed himself king.

The authoritative edition is that of Sommer, which reproduces exactly Caxton's text. In the selection here given the spelling is modernized, but the text is not otherwise changed.

## LE MORTE DARTHUR

### Book XXI

#### CHAPTER I

*How Sir Mordred presumed and took on him to be King of England, and would have married the Queen, his uncle's wife*

As Sir Mordred was ruler of all England, he did do make letters as though that they came from beyond the sea, and the letters specified that King Arthur was slain in battle with Sir Launcelot. Wherefore Sir Mordred made a parliament, and called the lords together, and there he made them to choose him king; and so he was crowned at Canterbury, and held a feast there fifteen days; and afterward he drew him unto Winchester, and there he took the Queen Guenever, and said plainly that he would wed her which was his uncle's wife and his father's wife. And so he made ready for the feast, and a day prefixed that they should be wedded; wherefore Queen Guenever was passing heavy. But she durst not discover her heart, but spake fair, and agreed to Sir Mordred's will. Then she desired of Sir Mordred for to go to London, to buy all manner of things that longed unto the wedding. And because of her fair speech Sir Mordred trusted her well enough, and gave her leave to go. And so when she came to London she took the Tower of London, and suddenly in all haste possible she stuffed it with all manner of victual, and well garnished it with men, and so kept it. Then when Sir Mordred wist and understood how he was beguiled, he was passing wroth out of measure. And a short tale for to make, he went and laid a mighty siege about the Tower of London, and made many great assaults thereat, and threw many great engines unto them, and shot great guns. But all might not prevail Sir Mordred, for Queen Guenever would never for fair speech nor for foul, would never trust to come in his hands again. Then came the Bishop of Canterbury, the which was a noble clerk and an holy man, and thus he said to Sir Mordred: "Sir, what will ye do? will ye first displease God and sithen shame yourself, and all knighthood? Is not King Arthur your uncle, no farther but your mother's brother, and on her himself King Arthur begat you upon his own sister,[1] therefore how may you wed your father's wife?" "Sir," said the noble clerk, "leave this opinion or I shall curse you with book and bell and candle." "Do thou thy worst," said Sir Mordred, "wit thou well I shall defy thee." "Sir," said the Bishop, "and wit you well I shall not fear me to do that me ought to do. Also where ye noise where my lord Arthur is slain, and that is not so, and therefore ye will make a foul work in this land." "Peace, thou false priest," said Sir Mordred, "for an thou chafe me any more I shall make strike off thy head." So the Bishop departed and did the cursing in the most orgulist[2] wise that might be done. And then Sir Mordred sought the Bishop of Canterbury, for to have slain him. Then the Bishop fled, and took part of his goods with him, and went nigh unto Glaston-

1 Mordred was the illegitimate son of Arthur. His mother was Arthur's half-sister, a fact of which Arthur was at the time ignorant (Book I, Chap. xvii).

2 haughtiest.

ury; and there he was as priest hermit in a hapel, and lived in poverty and in holy rayers, for well he understood that mis-hievous war was at hand. Then Sir Mordred ought on Queen Guenever by letters and onds,[1] and by fair means and foul means, or to have her to come out of the Tower of ondon; but all this availed not, for she an-wered him shortly, openly and privily, that e had liefer slay herself than to be married ith him. Then came word to Sir Mordred hat King Arthur had araised the siege for ir Launcelot, and he was coming homeward ith a great host, to be avenged upon Sir Iordred; wherefore Sir Mordred made rite writs to all the barony of this land, and uch people drew to him. For then was the ommon voice among them that with Arthur as none other life but war and strife, and ith Sir Mordred was great joy and bliss. hus was Sir Arthur depraved, and evil said f. And many there were that King Arthur ad made up of nought, and given them nds, might not then say him a good word. o ye all Englishmen, see ye not what a mis-hief here was! for he that was the most king nd knight of the world, and most loved the ellowship of noble knights, and by him they ere all upholden, now might not these nglishmen hold them content with him. o thus was the old custom and usage of his land; and also men say that we of this nd have not yet lost nor forgotten that ustom and usage. Alas, this is a great de-ault of us Englishmen, for there may no hing please us no term. And so fared the eople at that time, they were better pleased ith Sir Mordred than they were with King rthur; and much people drew unto Sir Mor-red, and said they would abide with him or better and for worse. And so Sir Mor-red drew with a great host to Dover, for here he heard say that Sir Arthur would rrive, and so he thought to beat his own ather from his lands; and the most part of ll England held with Sir Mordred, the peo-le were so new-fangle.

## CHAPTER II

*How after that King Arthur had tidings, he returned and came to Dover, where Sir Mordred met him to let his landing; and of the death of Sir Gawaine*

And so as Sir Mordred was at Dover with his host, there came King Arthur with a great navy of ships, and galleys, and carracks. And there was Sir Mordred ready awaiting upon his landing, to let[1] his own father to land upon the land that he was king over. Then there was launching of great boats and small, and full of noble men of arms; and there was much slaughter of gentle knights, and many a full bold baron was laid full low, on both parties. But King Arthur was so courageous that there might no manner of knights let him to land, and his knights fiercely followed him; and so they landed maugre Sir Mordred and all his power, and put Sir Mordred aback, that he fled and all his people. So when this battle was done, King Arthur let bury his people that were dead. And then was noble Sir Gawaine found in a great boat, lying more than half dead. When Sir Arthur wist that Sir Gawaine was laid so low, he went unto him; and there the king made sorrow out of measure, and took Sir Gawaine in his arms, and thrice he there swooned. And then when he awaked, he said: "Alas, Sir Gawaine, my sister's son, here now thou liest, the man in the world that I loved most; and now is my joy gone, for now, my nephew Sir Gawaine, I will discover me unto your person: in Sir Launcelot and you I most had my joy, and mine affiance, and now have I lost my joy of you both; wherefore all mine earthly joy is gone from me." "Mine uncle King Arthur," said Sir Gawaine, "wit you well my death-day is come, and all is through mine own hastiness and wilfulness; for I am smitten upon the old wound the which Sir Launcelot gave me, on the which I feel well I must die; and had Sir Launcelot been with you as he was, this unhappy war had never begun; and of all this am I causer, for Sir Launcelot and his blood, through their prowess, held all your cankered enemies in subjection and daunger. And now," said Sir Gawaine, "ye shall miss Sir Launcelot. But alas, I would not accord with him, and therefore," said Sir Gawaine, "I pray you, fair uncle, that I may have paper, pen, and ink, that I may write to Sir Launcelot a cedle[2] with mine own hands." And then when paper and ink was brought, then Gawaine was set up weakly by King Arthur, for he was shriven a little to-fore; and then he wrote thus, as the French book maketh mention: "Unto Sir Launcelot, flower of all noble knights that ever I heard of or saw by my days, I, Sir Gawaine, King Lot's son of Orkney, sister's son unto the noble King Arthur, send thee greeting, and let thee have

1 messages.

1 hinder. 2 note.

knowledge that the tenth day of May I was smitten upon the old wound that thou gavest me afore the city of Benwick, and through the same wound that thou gavest me I am come to my death-day. And I will that all the world wit, that I, Sir Gawaine, knight of the Table Round, sought my death, and not through thy deserving, but it was mine own seeking; wherefore I beseech thee, Sir Launcelot, to return again unto this realm, and see my tomb, and pray some prayer more or less for my soul. And this same day that I wrote this cedle, I was hurt to the death in the same wound, the which I had of thy hand, Sir Launcelot; for of a more nobler man might I not be slain. Also Sir Launcelot, for all the love that ever was betwixt us, make no tarrying, but come over the sea in all haste, that thou mayst with thy noble knights rescue that noble king that made thee knight, that is my lord Arthur; for he is full straightly bestad with a false traitor, that is my half-brother, Sir Mordred; and he hath let crown him king, and would have wedded my lady Queen Guenever, and so had he done had she not put herself in the Tower of London. And so the tenth day of May last past, my lord Arthur and we all landed upon them at Dover; and there we put that false traitor, Sir Mordred, to flight, and there it misfortuned me to be stricken upon thy stroke. And at the date of this letter was written, but two hours and a half afore my death, written with mine own hand, and so subscribed with part of my heart's blood. And I require thee, most famous knight of the world, that thou wilt see my tomb." And then Sir Gawaine wept, and King Arthur wept; and then they swooned both. And when they awaked both, the king made Sir Gawaine to receive his Saviour. And then Sir Gawaine prayed the king for to send for Sir Launcelot, and to cherish him above all other knights. And so at the hour of noon Sir Gawaine yielded up the spirit; and then the king let inter him in a chapel within Dover Castle; and there yet all men may see the skull of him, and the same wound is seen that Sir Launcelot gave him in battle. Then was it told the king that Sir Mordred had pight a new field upon Barham Down. And upon the morn the king rode thither to him, and there was a great battle betwixt them, and much people was slain on both parties; but at the last Sir Arthur's party stood best, and Sir Mordred and his party fled unto Canterbury.

## CHAPTER III

*How after, Sir Gawaine's ghost appeared to King Arthur, and warned him that he should not fight that day*

And then the king let search all the town for his knights that were slain, and interred them; and salved them with soft salves that so sore were wounded. Then much people drew unto King Arthur. And then they said that Sir Mordred warred upon King Arthur with wrong. And then King Arthur drew him with his host down by the seaside westward toward Salisbury; and there was a day assigned betwixt King Arthur and Sir Mordred, that they should meet upon a down beside Salisbury, and not far from the sea side; and this day was assigned on a Monday after Trinity Sunday, whereof King Arthur was passing glad, that he might be avenged upon Sir Mordred. Then Sir Mordred araised much people about London, for the men of Kent, Southsex, and Surrey, Estsex, and of Southfolk, and of Northfolk, held the most part with Sir Mordred; and many a full noble knight drew unto Sir Mordred and to the king: but they that loved Sir Launcelot drew unto Sir Mordred. So upon Trinity Sunday at night, King Arthur dreamed a wonderful dream, and that was this: that him seemed he sat upon a chaflet[1] in a chair, and the chair was fast to a wheel, and there upon sat King Arthur in the richest cloth of gold that might be made; and the king thought there was under him, far from him, an hideous deep black water, and therein were all manner of serpents, and worms, and wild beasts, foul and horrible; and suddenly the king thought the wheel turned up-so-down, and he fell among the serpents, and every beast took him by a limb; and then the king cried as he lay in his bed and slept, "Help." And then knights, squires, and yeomen, awaked the king; and then he was so amazed that he wist not where he was; and then he fell on slumbering again, not sleeping nor thoroughly waking. So the king seemed verily that there came Sir Gawaine unto him with a number of fair ladies with him. And when King Arthur saw him, then he said, "Welcome, my sister's son; I weened thou hadst been dead, and now I see thee alive much am I beholding unto almighty Jesu. O fair nephew and my sister's son, what be these ladies that hither be come with you?" "Sir," said Sir Gawaine, "all these be ladies for whom I have foughten when I was man

1 platform. 2 it seemed to the king.

ving, and all these are those that I did bat-
e for in righteous quarrel; and God hath
ven them that grace at their great prayer,
ecause I did battle for them, that they
ould bring me hither unto you: thus much
ith God given me leave, for to warn you of
our death; for an ye fight as to-morn with
r Mordred, as ye both have assigned, doubt
e not ye must be slain, and the most part of
our people on both parties. And for the
reat grace and goodness that almighty Jesu
ath unto you, and for pity of you, and many
ore other good men there shall be slain,
od hath sent me to you of his special grace,
o give you warning that in no wise ye do
attle as to-morn, but that ye take a treaty
r a month day; and proffer you largely, so
s to-morn to be put in a delay. For within a
onth shall come Sir Launcelot with all his
oble knights, and rescue you worshipfully,
nd slay Sir Mordred, and all that ever will
old with him." Then Sir Gawaine and all
ne ladies vanished. And anon the king
alled upon his knights, squires, and yeomen,
nd charged them wightly [1] to fetch his noble
rds and wise bishops unto him. And when
ney were come, the king told them his
vision, what Sir Gawaine had told him, and
arned him that if he fought on the morn
e should be slain. Then the king com-
anded Sir Lucan the Butler, and his brother
ir Bedivere, with two bishops with them,
nd charged them in any wise, an they might,
Take a treaty for a month day with Sir
Mordred, and spare not, proffer him lands
nd goods as much as ye think best." So
nen they departed, and came to Sir Mor-
red, where he had a grim host of an hundred
housand men. And there they entreated
ir Mordred long time; and at the last Sir
Mordred was agreed for to have Cornwall
nd Kent, by Arthur's days: after, all Eng-
and, after the days of King Arthur.

## CHAPTER IV

*How by misadventure of an adder the battle began, where Mordred was slain, and Arthur hurt to the death*

Then were they condescended [2] that King
Arthur and Sir Mordred should meet betwixt
both their hosts, and everich [3] of them should
bring fourteen persons; and they came with
this word unto Arthur. Then said he: "I
am glad that this is done:" and so he went
into the field. And when Arthur should
depart, he warned all his host that an they
see any sword drawn: "Look ye come on
fiercely, and slay that traitor, Sir Mordred,
for I in no wise trust him." In like wise Sir
Mordred warned his host that: "An ye see
any sword drawn, look that ye come on
fiercely, and so slay all that ever before you
standeth; for in no wise I will not trust for
this treaty, for I know well my father will be
avenged on me." And so they met as their
appointment was, and so they were agreed
and accorded thoroughly; and wine was
fetched, and they drank. Right soon came
an adder out of a little heath bush, and it
stung a knight on the foot. And when the
knight felt him stung, he looked down and
saw the adder, and then he drew his sword
to slay the adder, and thought of none other
harm. And when the host on both parties
saw that sword drawn, then they blew
beams,[1] trumpets, and horns, and shouted
grimly. And so both hosts dressed them
together. And King Arthur took his horse,
and said: "Alas this unhappy day!" and
so rode to his party. And Sir Mordred in
like wise. And never was there seen a more
dolefuller battle in no Christian land; for
there was but rushing and riding, foining and
striking, and many a grim word was there
spoken either to other, and many a deadly
stroke. But ever King Arthur rode through-
out the battle of Sir Mordred many times,
and did full nobly as a noble king should,
and at all times he fainted never; and Sir
Mordred that day put him in devoir, and in
great peril. And thus they fought all the
long day, and never stinted till the noble
knights were laid to the cold earth; and ever
they fought still till it was near night, and
by that time was there an hundred thousand
laid dead upon the down. Then was Arthur
wood [2] wroth out of measure, when he saw
his people so slain from him. Then the king
looked about him, and then was he ware, of
all his host and of all his good knights, were
left no more alive but two knights; that one
was Sir Lucan the Butler, and his brother
Sir Bedivere, and they were full sore
wounded. "Jesu mercy," said the king,
"where are all my noble knights become?
Alas that ever I should see this doleful day,
for now," said Arthur, "I am come to mine
end. But would to God that I wist where
were that traitor Sir Mordred, that hath
caused all this mischief." Then was King
Arthur ware where Sir Mordred leaned
upon his sword among a great heap of dead
men. "Now give me my spear," said Arthur

1 swiftly. 2 agreed. 3 each.

1 clarions. 2 mad.

unto Sir Lucan, "for yonder I have espied the traitor that all this woe hath wrought." "Sir, let him be," said Sir Lucan, "for he is unhappy;[1] and if ye pass this unhappy day ye shall be right well revenged upon him. Good lord, remember ye of your night's dream, and what the spirit of Sir Gawaine told you this night, yet God of his great goodness hath preserved you hitherto. Therefore, for God's sake, my lord, leave off by this, for blessed be God ye have won the field, for here we be three alive, and with Sir Mordred is none alive; and if ye leave off now, this wicked day of destiny is past." "Tide me death, betide me life," saith the king, "now I see him yonder alone he shall never escape mine hands, for at a better avail shall I never have him." "God speed you well," said Sir Bedivere. Then the king gat his spear in both his hands, and ran toward Sir Mordred, crying: "Traitor, now is thy death day come." And when Sir Mordred heard Sir Arthur, he ran until him with his sword drawn in his hand. And there King Arthur smote Sir Mordred under the shield, with a foin of his spear, throughout the body, more than a fathom. And when Sir Mordred felt that he had his death wound he thrust himself with the might that he had up to the bur of King Arthur's spear. And right so he smote his father Arthur, with his sword holden in both his hands, on the side of the head, that the sword pierced the helmet and the brain-pan, and therewithal Sir Mordred fell stark dead to the earth; and the noble Arthur fell in a swoon to the earth, and there he swooned ofttimes. And Sir Lucan the Butler and Sir Bedivere ofttimes heaved him up. And so weakly they led him betwixt them both, to a little chapel not far from the seaside. And when the king was there he thought him well eased. Then heard they people cry in the field. "Now go thou, Sir Lucan," said the king, "and do me to wit what betokens that noise in the field." So Sir Lucan departed, for he was grievously wounded in many places. And so as he yede,[2] he saw and hearkened by the moonlight, how that pillers and robbers were come into the field, to pill and to rob many a full noble knight of brooches, and beads, of many a good ring, and of many a rich jewel; and who that were not dead all out, there they slew them for their harness and their riches. When Sir Lucan understood this work, he came to the king as soon as he might, and told him all what he had heard and seen. "Therefore by my rede," sa Sir Lucan, "it is best that we bring you some town." "I would it were so," said t king.

1 of ill omen to you. 2 went.

## CHAPTER V

*How King Arthur commanded to cast h sword Excalibur into the water, and how was delivered to ladies in a barge*

"But I may not stand, mine head wor so. Ah Sir Launcelot," said King Arthu "this day have I sore missed thee: alas, th ever I was against thee, for now have I n death, whereof Sir Gawaine me warned my dream." Then Sir Lucan took up t king the one part, and Sir Bedivere the oth part, and in the lifting the king swoone and Sir Lucan fell in a swoon with the lif that the part of his guts fell out of his bod and therewith the noble knight's hea brast. And when the king awoke, he behel Sir Lucan, how he lay foaming at the mout and part of his guts lay at his feet. "Alas, said the king, "this is to me a full heav sight, to see this noble duke so die for m sake, for he would have holpen me, that ha more need of help than I. Alas, he woul not complain him, his heart was so set to hel me: now Jesu have mercy upon his soul!" Then Sir Bedivere wept for the death of h brother. "Leave this mourning and weep ing," said the king, "for all this will nc avail me, for wit thou well an I might liv myself, the death of Sir Lucan would griev me evermore; but my time hieth fast," sai the king. "Therefore," said Arthur unt Sir Bedivere, "take thou Excalibur, my goo sword, and go with it to yonder water side and when thou comest there I charge the throw my sword in that water, and com again and tell me what thou there seest." "My lord," said Bedivere, "your command ment shall be done, and lightly bring yo word again." So Sir Bedivere departed, an by the way he beheld that noble sword, tha the pommel and the haft was all of precious stones; and then he said to himself: "If throw this rich sword in the water, thereo shall never come good, but harm and loss." And then Sir Bedivere hid Excalibur under a tree. And so, as soon as he might, he came again unto the king, and said he had been a the water, and had thrown the sword in the water. "What saw thou there?" said the king. "Sir," he said, "I saw nothing but waves and winds." "That is untruly said of thee," said the king, "therefore go thou lightly again,

nd do my commandment; as thou art to
e lief and dear, spare not, but throw it in."
Then Sir Bedivere returned again, and took
he sword in his hand; and then him thought
in and shame to throw away that noble
word, and so eft he hid the sword, and re-
urned again, and told to the king that he had
been at the water, and done his command-
ment. "What saw thou there?" said the
king. "Sir," he said, "I saw nothing but
he waters wap[1] and waves wan." "Ah,
traitor untrue," said King Arthur, "now hast
thou betrayed me twice. Who would have
weened that, thou that hast been to me so
lief and dear? and thou art named a noble
knight, and would betray me for the richness
of the sword. But now go again lightly, for
thy long tarrying putteth me in great jeop-
ardy of my life, for I have taken cold. And
but if thou do now as I bid thee, if ever I may
see thee, I shall slay thee with mine own
hands; for thou wouldst for my rich sword
see me dead." Then Sir Bedivere departed,
and went to the sword, and lightly took it
up, and went to the water side; and there he
bound the girdle about the hilts, and then he
threw the sword as far into the water, as he
might; and there came an arm and an hand
above the water and met it, and caught it,
and so shook it thrice and brandished, and
then vanished away the hand with the sword
in the water. So Sir Bedivere came again
to the king, and told him what he saw.
"Alas," said the king, "help me hence, for
I dread me I have tarried over long." Then
Sir Bedivere took the king upon his back, and
so went with him to that water side. And
when they were at the water side, even fast
by the bank hoved a little barge with many
fair ladies in it, and among them all was a
queen, and all they had black hoods, and all
they wept and shrieked when they saw King
Arthur. "Now put me into the barge," said
the king. And so he did softly; and there
received him three queens with great mourn-
ing; and so they set them down, and in one
of their laps King Arthur laid his head. And
then that queen said: "Ah, dear brother, why
have ye tarried so long from me? alas, this
wound on your head hath caught over-much
cold." And so then they rowed from the
land, and Sir Bedivere beheld all those ladies
go from him. Then Sir Bedivere cried: "Ah
my lord Arthur, what shall become of me,
now ye go from me and leave me here alone
among mine enemies?" "Comfort thyself,"
said the king, "and do as well as thou may-
est, for in me is no trust for to trust in; for I
will into the vale of Avilion to heal me of my
grievous wound: and if thou hear never more
of me, pray for my soul." But ever the
queens and ladies wept and shrieked, that
it was pity to hear. And as soon as Sir
Bedivere had lost the sight of the barge, he
wept and wailed, and so took the forest; and
so he went all that night, and in the morning
he was ware betwixt two holts hoar, of a
chapel and an hermitage.

[1] ripple.

## CHAPTER VI

*How Sir Bedivere found him on the morrow dead in an hermitage, and how he abode there with the hermit*

Then was Sir Bedivere glad, and thither he
went; and when he came into the chapel, he
saw where lay an hermit grovelling on all
four, there fast by a tomb was new graven.
When the hermit saw Sir Bedivere he knew
him well, for he was but little to-fore Bishop
of Canterbury, that Sir Mordred flemed.[1]
"Sir," said Bedivere, "what man is there
interred that ye pray so fast for?" "Fair
son," said the hermit, "I wot not verily, but
by deeming. But this night, at midnight,
here came a number of ladies, and brought
hither a dead corpse, and prayed me to bury
him; and here they offered an hundred tapers,
and they gave me an hundred besants."
"Alas," said Sir Bedivere, "that was my
lord King Arthur, that here lieth buried in
this chapel." Then Sir Bedivere swooned;
and when he awoke he prayed the hermit he
might abide with him still there, to live with
fasting and prayers. "For from hence will
I never go," said Sir Bedivere, "by my will,
but all the days of my life here to pray for
my lord Arthur." "Ye are welcome to me,"
said the hermit, "for I know ye better than
ye ween that I do. Ye are the bold Bedivere,
and the full noble duke, Sir Lucan the Butler,
was your brother." Then Sir Bedivere told
the hermit all as ye have heard to-fore. So
there bode Sir Bedivere with the hermit that
was to-fore Bishop of Canterbury, and there
Sir Bedivere put upon him poor clothes, and
served the hermit full lowly in fasting and in
prayers. Thus of Arthur I find never more
written in books that be authorised, nor
more of the very certainty of his death heard
I never read, but thus was he led away in a
ship wherein were three queens; that one
was King Arthur's sister, Queen Morgan le
Fay; the other was the Queen of Northalgis;

[1] put to flight.

the third was the Queen of the Waste Lands. Also there was Nimue, the chief lady of the lake, that had wedded Pelleas the good knight; and this lady had done much for King Arthur, for she would never suffer Sir Pelleas to be in no place where he should be in danger of his life; and so he lived to the uttermost of his days with her in great rest. More of the death of King Arthur could I never find, but that ladies brought him to his burials; and such one was buried there, that the hermit bare witness that sometime was Bishop of Canterbury, but yet the hermit knew not in certain that he was verily the body of King Arthur: for this tale Sir Bedivere, knight of the Table Round, made it to be written.

## CHAPTER VII

*Of the opinion of some men of the death of King Arthur; and how Queen Guenever made her a nun in Almesbury*

Yet some men say in many parts of England that King Arthur is not dead, but had by the will of our Lord Jesu into another place; and men say that he shall come again, and he shall win the holy cross. I will not say it shall be so, but rather I will say, here in this world he changed his life. But many men say that there is written upon his tomb this verse: **Hic iacet Arthurus, Rex quondam Rexque futurus.**[1] Thus leave I here Sir Bedivere with the hermit, that dwelled that time in a chapel beside Glastonbury, and there was his hermitage. And so they lived in their prayers, and fastings, and great abstinence. And when Queen Guenever understood that King Arthur was slain, and all the noble knights, Sir Mordred and all the remnant, then the queen stole away, and five ladies with her, and so she went to Almesbury; and there she let make herself a nun, and ware white clothes and black, and great penance she took, as ever did sinful lady in this land, and never creature could make her merry but lived in fasting, prayers, and alms-deeds, that all manner of people marvelled how virtuously she was changed. Now leave we Queen Guenever in Almesbury, a nun in white clothes and black, and there she was abbess and ruler as reason would; and turn we from her, and speak we of Sir Launcelot du Lake.

1 Here lies Arthur, King aforetime, and King to be

# THE ELIZABETHAN PERIOD

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The age of Elizabeth is England's Renaissance, appearing about a century later than the Renaissance on the Continent. This revival began in Italy at the close of the Middle Ages, after the Crusades and the fall of Constantinople had brought East and West in contact once more; and men of letters and even courtiers were reminded of the splendor of ancient civilization. The classics, especially Greek, which had been forgotten in western Europe, were studied with renewed eagerness. Through Italy and northward spread an enthusiasm for literature, the fine arts, and the joy of living. The invention and development of printing made books more easily accessible, and stimulated public interest in literature and learning. New aids to navigation, like the compass and Mercator's chart, made possible explorations and colonization beyond the seas. The old feudal system had broken up. Nationalism grew. And the claims of the Church were submitted to a close scrutiny, which culminated in the Protestant Reformation.

Like all "ages," the age of Elizabeth has no definite beginning or ending. True enough, *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557), which introduced two great literary forms into England, is almost coincident with the accession of Elizabeth in 1558; and 1603, the year of her death, saw the publication of *Hamlet*. For convenience' sake, these dates may be assumed as limits, but the spirit of the age may be found beyond these arbitrary markers.

The dominant figure of the period was Queen Elizabeth, the ablest of English rulers. Like her father, Henry VIII, she was skilled in statecraft, and surrounded herself with able advisers. She restored Protestantism, which Henry VIII had introduced into England and which her predecessor, Queen Mary, had abolished. She stabilized the government and maintained peace throughout most of her long reign. Under her rule, England advanced rapidly in commerce and colonization. Above all, she was the patroness Queen, whom all her courtiers and poets were eager to honor and to please.

It was, we have said, the time of the "revival of learning." Accompanying the enthusiasm for Latin and Greek arose in England a renewed interest in the literatures of France and especially Italy, the two countries which had a pronounced influence upon English letters in this period. Those who knew no foreign language had at their disposal the many splendid Elizabethan translations, like Lord Berners's *Froissart* (1525) and *Marcus Aurelius* (1534), Phaer's *Æneid* (1558–62), Golding's *Ovid* (1565–75), Paynter's *Palace of Pleasure* (1566, 1567), North's *Plutarch* (1579), Harrington's *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto (1591), Chapman's *Iliad* (1598–1611), and *Odyssey* (1614, 1615), Fairfax's *Jerusalem Delivered* of Tasso (1600), and Florio's *Montaigne* (1603).

In England, moreover, it was the age of discovery and a time of national pride. Explorations followed rapidly upon Columbus's success. Names like Frobisher, Raleigh, and Drake became household words. The romantic accounts of these voyages were published by Hakluyt, Purchas, and others, to inspire poets from Shakespeare to Coleridge. Likewise, the stimulating past of England was made easily available in the chronicles of Fabyan, Stowe, and Holinshed, and in turn became the subject-matter of numerous chronicle plays treating the glorious epochs in England's history. National pride received additional inspiration from the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588.

In brief, the imagination of England was aroused. Men were exuberantly conscious of life, proud of individuality, eager to develop personality according to some pattern, to become well-rounded or "complete" gentlemen. There was a universal regard for craftsmanship. Even the ordinary man took delight in splendor, in dress, in pageantry, in elaborate language, in music. England was truly "merry," singing England.

Poetry was the language of the age. Numerous poets appeared, writing for the joy of it, because they had to express their feelings, or for the sake of emulation, often with no thought of publication or lasting fame. Some of the poems of these anonymous poets have been preserved in the various collections of the period, like *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557), *A Paradise of Dainty Devices* (1576), the most popular of all, *A Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions* (1578), and *England's Helicon* (1600). Many have been lost. Small poet and great poet alike experimented with verse forms. Some tried to establish English verse on classical or quantitative principles. Two noteworthy forms, the sonnet and blank verse, were developed, and in them the great Elizabethans achieved the utmost in artistic skill — extreme flexibility within a fixed form.

Prose developed more slowly. In the early part of the sixteenth century, Latin or even Greek was still the accepted vehicle for expressing thoughts or ideas. Sir Thomas More, in fact, first wrote his *Utopia* (1516) in Latin. The translators, chroniclers, and writers of books of instruction were the chief employers of prose. Noble passages occur in Berners's translation of Froissart, in

Coverdale's and Tyndale's versions of the Bible (1539), in Florio's rendering of Montaigne's *Essays*, in Hakluyt, and in Raleigh. Sir Thomas Elyot in *The Book of the Governor* (1531) and Ascham wrote simple, direct prose, which fitted their purpose — education and instruction. The language of *The Book of Common Prayer*, compiled in 1548, is in itself edifying. In belles-lettres Lyly, Sidney, Nash, and Lodge in his *Rosalind* (1590) developed individual styles; and they helped to evolve a new literary form — prose fiction.

The glory of the age, however, was its drama, a remarkable literary phenomenon. Foreign influences did much to hasten and to help Elizabethan drama, but its chief characteristics remained essentially English. From abroad came many of its plots. From the classics, especially from Seneca, came the division of plays into five acts (a custom which prevailed until the days of Fielding), and much of the paraphernalia of the tragedy of blood, as well as the use of Latin stage directions, some of which have persisted to this day. These elements appear, for instance, in the first English tragedy in blank verse, Sackville and Norton's *Gorboduc* (first acted in 1561). They appear also in Shakespeare. From Plautus and Terence were derived such stock characters as the parasite and the *miles gloriosus* or braggart soldier; likewise, the type of plot that we find in Udall's *Ralph Roister Doister* and in the *Comedy of Errors*. In a short space of time the morality play and interlude of the beginning of the century were superseded by a new type of playwriting, to which Lyly, Kyd, Greene, and Peele contributed important and essential features, helping to make possible the astoundingly quick development of England's greatest dramatists, Marlowe and Shakespeare.

For a description of Elizabethan times the reader may consult H. T. Stephenson, *Shakespeare's London* (New York, 1905), J. D. Wilson, *Life in Shakespeare's England* (Cambridge, 1911), Stow's contemporary *Survey of London* (Everyman's Library), and volumes 3 and 4 of H. D. Traill, *Social England*. For the drama of the period see A. H. Thorndike, *Tragedy* (Houghton Mifflin Company), C. F. Tucker Brooke, *Tudor Drama* (Houghton Mifflin Company), and F. E. Schelling, *Elizabethan Drama* (Houghton Mifflin Company). The representative plays of the age may be found in W. A. Neilson, *Chief Elizabethan Dramatists* (Houghton Mifflin Company). F. E. Schelling, *A Book of Elizabethan Lyrics* (Ginn & Co.) contains a good survey of the poetry of the period.

## SIR THOMAS WYATT (1503–1542)

The names of Sir Thomas Wyatt, baronet, 1503–1542, and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey 1517?–1547, are usually connected in literary history, not as collaborators, after the manner of Beaumont and Fletcher, but as the writers who were the first to introduce into England the sonnet form — which was already well known in France, whither it had come from Italy. Surrey also earned the distinction of being the first English author to use blank verse, in his fragmentary translations from the *Æneid*. The works of both poets, after circulating about the court in manuscript, were printed for the first time in a collection of poems called *Tottel's Miscellany*, published in 1557, the year before Elizabeth's accession. In this volume, which appeared after the death of the writers, were gathered over ninety of Wyatt's poems and forty of Surrey's.

Of the lives of Wyatt and Surrey, it need only be said that both were well-educated, accomplished gentlemen at the court of Henry VIII. Surrey, the younger of the two, was son and heir of the third Duke of Norfolk. Both were engaged in various diplomatic missions, and both were, at times, imprisoned in the Tower, where Surrey, in 1547, was beheaded, five years after his cousin Catherine Howard, the Queen, had met a similar fate.

The fame of Wyatt and Surrey is due to the fact that they are the first writers to bring the spirit of the Italian Renaissance into English poetry. This influence is most evident in their sonnets, although even in them the English element is strong.

The Italian or Petrarchan sonnet consists of an octave — eight lines in iambic pentameter rhyming *abba abba;* and a sestet — six lines rhyming in any fashion, provided the last two lines are not a couplet. Both Wyatt and Surrey, however, inclined more to the form of the sonnet used later by Shakespeare and called after him Shakespearian. This consists of three groups of four lines, with a concluding couplet, thus: *abab cdcd efef gg*. Sometimes a rhyme used in one group might be employed in another also.

The blank verse of Surrey, destined to be the vehicle of expression for the great Elizabethan dramatists, is the same line as in the sonnet or in the couplets of Chaucer, without, of course, the rhyme.

Besides these two forms, Wyatt and Surrey used other verse structures also, as will be seen below.

## THE LOVER COMPARETH HIS STATE TO A SHIP IN PERILOUS STORM TOSSED ON THE SEA

My galley charged with forgetfulness
Thorough sharp seas, in winter nights doth pass,
'Tween rock and rock; and eke my foe, alas,
That is my lord, steereth with cruelness,
And every hour, a thought in readiness,
As though that death were light in such a case.
An endless wind doth tear the sail apace
Of forced sighs, and trusty fearfulness.
A rain of tears, a cloud of dark disdain
Hath done the wearied cords great hinderance,
Wreathed with error, and with ignorance.
The stars be hid that led me to this pain;
Drowned is reason that should be my comfort,
And I remain, despairing of the port.

## THE LOVER HAVING DREAMED OF ENJOYING OF HIS LOVE, COMPLAINETH THAT THE DREAM IS NOT EITHER LONGER OR TRUER

Unstable dream, according to the place,
Be steadfast once, or else at least be true.
By tasted sweetness make me not to rue
The sudden loss of thy false feigned grace.
By good respect in such a dangerous case
Thou broughtst not her into these tossing seas,
But madest my spirit to live, my care t'encrease,
My body in tempest her delight t'embrace.
The body dead, the spirit had his desire;
Painless was th' one, the other in delight.
Why then, alas! did it not keep it right,
But thus return to leap into the fire,
And where it was at wish, could not remain?
Such mocks of dreams do turn to deadly pain!

## A RENOUNCING OF LOVE

Farewell, Love, and all thy laws for ever!
Thy baited hooks shall tangle me no more:
Senec and Plato call me from thy lore
To perfect wealth my wit for to endeavor.
In blind error when I did persever,
Thy sharp repulse, that pricketh aye so sore,
Taught me in trifles that I set no store;
But 'scape forth thence, since liberty is lever.[1]
Therefore, farewell! go trouble younger hearts,
And in me claim no more authority.
With idle youth go use thy property,
And thereon spend thy many brittle darts;
For hitherto though I have lost my time,
Me list no longer rotten boughs to climb.

## THE LOVER BESEECHETH HIS MISTRESS NOT TO FORGET HIS STEADFAST FAITH AND TRUE INTENT

Forget not yet the tried intent
Of such a truth as I have meant;
My great travail so gladly spent,
Forget not yet!
Forget not yet when first began
The weary life ye know, since whan
The suit, the service none tell can;
Forget not yet!

Forget not yet the great assays,
The cruel wrong, the scornful ways,
The painful patience in delays,
Forget not yet!

Forget not! O, forget not this,
How long ago hath been, and is,
The mind that never meant amiss —
Forget not yet!

Forget not then thine own approved,
The which so long hath thee so loved,
Whose steadfast faith yet never moved:
Forget not this!

## AN EARNEST SUIT TO HIS UNKIND MISTRESS NOT TO FORSAKE HIM

And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay, say nay, for shame!
To save thee from the blame
Of all my grief and grame.[2]
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!

And wilt thou leave me thus,
That hath loved thee so long

1 dearer. 2 sadness.

In wealth and woe among:
And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!

And wilt thou leave me thus,
That hath given thee my heart
Never for to depart
Neither for pain nor smart:
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!

And wilt thou leave me thus,
And have no more pity
Of him that loveth thee?
Alas, thy cruelty!
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!

## THE LOVER COMPLAINETH THE UNKINDNESS OF HIS LOVE

My lute, awake, perform the last
Labor that thou and I shall waste,
And end that I have now begun.
And when this song is sung and past,
My lute, be still, for I have done.

As to be heard where ear is none,
As lead to grave [1] in marble stone,
My song may pierce her heart as soon.
Should we then sigh, or sing, or moan?
No, no, my lute, for I have done.

The rocks do not so cruelly
Repulse the waves continually,
As she my suit and affection;
So that I am past remedy,
Whereby [2] my lute and I have done.

Proud of the spoil that thou hast got
Of simple hearts through Lovës shot,
By whom unkind thou hast them won,
Think not he hath his bow forgot,
Although my lute and I have done.

Vengeance shall fall on thy disdain,
That makest but game of earnest pain;
Trow [3] not alone under the sun
Unquit [4] to cause thy lovers plain,
Although my lute and I have done.

May chance thee lie [5] withered and old
In winter nights, that are so cold,
Plaining in vain unto the moon;
Thy wishes then dare not be told:
Care then who list, for I have done.

And then may chance thee to repent
The time that thou hast lost and spent,
To cause thy lovers sigh and swoon:
Then shalt thou know beauty but lent,
And wish and want, as I have done.

Now cease, my lute! This is the last
Labor that thou and I shall waste;
And ended is that we begun:
Now is thy song both sung and past;
My lute, be still, for I have done.

1 cut into, inlay. 2 wherefore. 3 think.
4 without punishment.
5 It may happen that you will lie.

## OF THE MEAN AND SURE ESTATE

### WRITTEN TO JOHN POINS [1]

My mother's maids, when they did sew and spin,
They sang sometime a song of the field mouse
That, for because her livelihood was but thin,
Would needs go seek her townish sister's house.
She thought herself endured too much pain;
The stormy blasts her cave so sore did souse
That when the furrows swimmed with the rain,
She must lie cold and wet in sorry plight;
And worse than that, bare meat there did remain
To comfort her when she her house had dight; [2]
Sometime a barly corn; sometime a bean,
For which she labored hard both day and night
In harvest time whilst she might go and glean;
And where store [3] was stroyed [4] with the flood,
Then welaway! for she undone was clean.
Then was she fain to take instead of food
Sleep, if she might, her hunger to beguile.
"My sister," quoth she, "hath a living good,
And hence from me she dwelleth not a mile.
In cold and storm she lieth warm and dry
In bed of down, the dirt doth not defile
Her tender foot, she laboreth not as I.
Richly she feedeth and at the richman's cost,
And for her meat she needs not crave nor cry.
By sea, by land, of the delicates, the most

1 A friend of Wyatt's. 2 put in shape.
3 supply. 4 destroyed.

er cater [1] seeks and spareth for no peril,
e feedeth on boiled bacon, meat and roast,
nd hath thereof neither charge nor travail;
nd when she list, the liquor of the grape
oth glad her heart till that her belly swell."
And at this journey she maketh but a jape; [2]
forth she goeth, trusting of all this wealth
ith her sister her part so for to shape,
at if she might keep herself in health,
live a lady while her life doth last.
And to the door now is she come by stealth,
nd with her foot anon she scrapeth full fast.
n' other for fear durst not well scarce appear,
every noise so was the wretch aghast.
last she asked softly who was there,
nd in her language as well as she could.
Peep!" quoth the other sister, "I am here."
Peace," quoth the town mouse, "why speakest thou so loud?"
nd by the hand she took her fair and well.
Welcome," quoth she, "my sister, by the Rood!"
She feasted her, that joy it was to tell
ne fare they had; they drank the wine so clear,
nd as to purpose now and then it fell,
ne cheered her with "Ho, sister, what cheer!"
Amid this joy befell a sorry chance,
nat, welaway! the stranger bought full dear
ne fare she had, for, as she looks askance,
nder a stool she spied two steaming [3] eyes
a round head with sharp ears. In France
as never mouse so feared, for, though unwise
ad not i-seen such a beast before,
et had nature taught her after her guise
o know her foe and dread him evermore.
ne towney mouse fled, she knew whither to go;
n' other had no shift, but wanders sore
eard of her life. At home she wished her tho,[4]
nd to the door, alas! as she did skip,
he heaven it would, lo! and eke her chance was so,
t the threshold her silly foot did trip;
nd ere she might recover it again,
he traitor cat had caught her by the hip,
nd made her there against her will remain,
hat had forgot her poor surety and rest
or seeming wealth wherein she thought to reign.

1 caterer. 2 jest. 3 glittering. 4 then.

Alas, my Poins, how men do seek the best
And find the worst by error as they stray!
And no marvel; when sight is so opprest,
And blinds the guide, anon out of the way
Goeth guide and all in seeking quiet life.
O wretched minds, there is no gold that may
Grant that you seek; no war, no peace, no strife.
No, no, although thy head were hooped with gold,
Sergeant with mace, halbred, sword, nor knife,
Cannot repulse the care that follow should.
Each kind of life hath with him his disease.
Live in delight even as thy lust would,
And thou shalt find, when lust doth most thee please,
It irketh straight, and by itself doth fade.
A small thing is it that may thy mind appease.
None of ye all there is that is so mad
To seek for grapes on brambles or on briars;
Nor none, I trow, that hath his wit so bad
To set his hay [1] for conies [2] over rivers,
Nor ye set not a drag-net for an hare;
And yet the thing that most is your desire
Ye do mis-seek with more travail and care.
Make plain thine heart, that it be not knotted
With hope or dread, and see thy will be bare
From all effects whom vice hath ever spotted.
Thyself content with that is thee assigned,
And use it well that is to thee allotted.
Then seek no more out of thyself to find
The thing that thou hast sought so long before,
For thou shalt feel it sticking in thy mind.
Mad, if ye list to continue your sore,
Let present pass and gape on time to come,
And deep yourself in travail more and more.
Henceforth, my Poins, this shall be all and some,
These wretched fools shall have naught else of me;
But to the great God and to his high dome [3]
None other pain pray I for them to be,
But, when the rage doth lead them from the right,
That, looking backward, virtue they may see,
Even as she is so goodly fair and bright,
And whilst they clasp their lusts in arms across,
Grant them, good Lord, as thou mayst of thy might,
To fret inward for losing such a loss.

1 trap. 2 rabbits. 3 judgment.

# HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF SURREY (1517?–1547)

## DESCRIPTION OF SPRING

### WHEREIN EACH THING RENEWS, SAVE ONLY THE LOVER

The soote [1] season that bud and bloom forth brings,
With green hath clad the hill and eke the vale;
The nightingale with feathers new she sings;
The turtle [2] to her make [3] hath told her tale:
Summer is come, for every spray now springs;
The hart hath hung his old head on the pale; [4]
The buck in brake his winter coat he flings:
The fishes flete [5] with new repaired scale;
The adder all her slough away she slings;
The swift swallow pursueth the flies smale;
The busy bee her honey now she mings.[6]
Winter is worn, that was the flowers' bale:
And thus I see among these pleasant things
Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs!

## COMPLAINT OF A LOVER REBUKED

Love, that liveth and reigneth in my thought,
That built his seat within my captive breast,
Clad in the arms wherein with me he fought,
Oft in my face he doth his banner rest.
She that me taught to love and suffer pain,
My doubtful hope and eke my hot desire
With shamefast cloak to shadow and refrain,
Her smiling grace converteth straight to ire.
The coward Love then to the heart apace
Taketh his flight, whereas he lurks and plains,[7]
His purpose lost, and dare not show his face.
For my lord's guilt thus faultless bide I pains.
Yet from my lord shall not my foot remove;
Sweet is his death that takes his end by love.

## A COMPLAINT BY NIGHT OF THE LOVER NOT BELOVED

Alas, so all things now do hold their peace!
Heaven and earth disturbed in nothing;
The beasts, the air, the birds their song do cease,
The nightës chair the stars about doth brin
Calm is the sea; the waves work less a
less;
So am not I, whom love, alas, doth wring,
Bringing before my face the great increase
Of my desires, whereat I weep and sing,
In joy and woe, as in a doubtful ease.
For my sweet thoughts sometime do pleasu
bring;
But by and by, the cause of my disease
Gives me a pang, that inwardly doth sting
When that I think what grief it is again
To live and lack the thing should rid m
pain.

## PRISONED IN WINDSOR, HE RECOUNTETH HIS PLEASURE THERE PASSED

So cruel prison how could betide, alas,
As proud Windsor? where I in lust and joy
With a King's son, my childish years did pas
In greater feast than Priam's sons of Troy.
Where each sweet place returns a taste fu
sour,
The large green courts, where we were wor
to hove,[1]
With eyes cast up into the maiden's tower,
And easy sighs, such as folk draw in love.
The stately seats, the ladies bright of hue,
The dances short, long tales of great d
light;
With words and looks, that tigers could bu
rue;
When each of us did plead the other's righ
The palme-play [2] where, despoiled for th
game,
With dazed eyes oft we by gleams of love
Have missed the ball, and got sight of o
dame,
To bait [3] her eyes, which kept the lea
above.
The gravelled ground, with sleeves tied o
the helm,
On foaming horse, with swords and friendl
hearts;
With cheer, as though one should anothe
whelm,
When we have fought, and chased oft wit
darts;
With silver drops the mead yet spread fo
ruth,

1 sweet. 2 turtle-dove 3 mate.
4 stake, picket. 5 float. 6 mixes. 7 complains.

1 linger. 2 tennis. 3 allure.

...t active games of nimbleness and strength,
...here we did strain, trained with swarms of youth,
...ur tender limbs, that yet shot up in length.
...he secret groves, which oft we made resound
...f pleasant plaint, and of our ladies' praise;
...ecording oft what grace each one had found,
...hat hope of speed, what dread of long delays.
...he wild forest, the clothed holts with green;
...ith reins availed,[1] and swift ybreathed horse,
...ith cry of hounds, and merry blasts between,
...hen we did chase the fearful hart of force.
...he void walls eke, that harbored us each night:
...herewith, alas! reviveth in my breast
...he sweet accord, such sleeps as yet delight;
...he pleasant dreams, the quiet bed of rest;—
...he secret thoughts, imparted with such trust;
...he wanton talk, the divers change of play;
...he friendship sworn, each promise kept so just,
...herewith we passed the winter night away.
...nd with this thought the blood forsakes the face;
...he tears berain my cheeks of deadly hue:
...he which, as soon as sobbing sighs, alas!
...psupped have, thus I my plaint renew:
...O place of bliss, renewer of my woes!
...ive me account, where is my noble fere,[2]
...hom in thy walls thou dost each night enclose,
...o other lief,[3] but unto me most dear."
...cho, alas! that doth my sorrow rue
...eturns thereat a hollow sound of plaint.
...hus I alone, where all my freedom grew,
...n prison pine, with bondage and restraint;
...nd with remembrance of the greater grief,
...o banish the less, I find my chief relief.

## THE MEANS TO ATTAIN HAPPY LIFE

Martial,[4] the things that do attain
  The happy life be these, I find;
The riches left, not got with pain;
  The fruitful ground, the quiet mind.

The equal friend, no grudge, no strife,
  No charge of rule nor governance;
Without disease, the healthful life;
  The household of continuance.

The mean[1] diet, no delicate fare;
  True wisdom joined with simpleness;
The night discharged of all care,
  Where wine the wit may not oppress.

The faithful wife, without debate;
  Such sleeps as may beguile the night;
Contented with thine own estate,
  Ne wish for death, ne fear his might.

1 slackened. 2 companion. 3 dear.
4 The Latin poet, 43–104 A.D.

## ON THE DEATH OF SIR T[HOMAS] W[YATT]

W[yatt] resteth here that quick could never rest;
  Whose heavenly gifts increased by disdain
And virtue sank the deeper in his breast;
  Such profit he by envy could obtain.

A head where wisdom mysteries did frame,
  Whose hammers beat still in that lively brain,
As on a stithe[2] where that some work of fame
  Was daily wrought, to turn to Britain's gain.

A visage stern and mild: where both did grow
  Vice to contemn, in virtue to rejoice;
Amid great storms whom grace assured so
  To live upright, and smile at fortune's choice.

A hand that taught what might be said in rhyme;
  That reft Chaucer the glory of his wit;
A mark, the which (unperfected for time)
  Some may approach, but never none shall hit.

A tongue that served in foreign realms his king;
  Whose courteous talk to virtue did inflame
Each noble heart: a worthy guide to bring
  Our English youth by travail unto fame.

An eye whose judgment none affect[3] could blind,
  Friends to allure and foes to reconcile,
Whose piercing look did represent a mind
  With virtue fraught reposed void of guile.

1 moderate. 2 anvil. 3 no affection.

A heart where dread was never so imprest
To hide the thought that might the truth advance;
In neither fortune loft,[1] nor yet represt,
To swell in wealth, or yield unto mischance.

A valiant corpse, where force and beauty met,
Happy alas, too happy but for foes,
Lived, and ran the race that nature set;
Of manhood's shape where she the mould did lose.

But to the heavens that simple soul is fled,
Which left with such as covet Christ to know
Witness of faith that never shall be dead,
Sent for our health, but not received so.

Thus, for our guilt, this jewel have we lost;
The earth his bones, the heavens possess his ghost!

## VIRGIL'S ÆNEID

*Book II, lines* 1–28

They whisted[2] all, with fixed face attent,
When Prince Æneas from the royal seat
Thus 'gan to speak: "O Queen, it is thy will
I should renew a woe cannot be told;
How that the Greeks did spoil and overthrow
The Phrygian[1] wealth and wailful[2] realm of Troy.
Those ruthful things that I myself beheld,
And whereof no small part fell to my share
Which to express, who could refrain from tears?
What Myrmidon?[3] or yet what Dolopes?[3]
What stern Ulysses' waged soldier?
And lo! moist night now from the welkin falls
And stars declining counsel us to rest;
But since so great is thy delight to hear
Of our mishaps and Troyës last decay,
Though to record the same my mind abhors
And plaint eschews,[4] yet thus will I begin:—
The Greekës chieftains, all irked with the war
Wherein they wasted had so many years,
And oft repulsed by fatal destiny,
A huge horse made, high raised like a hill,
By the divine science of Minerva, —
Of cloven fir compacted were his ribs, —
For their return a feigned sacrifice,—
The fame whereof so wandered it at point.[5]
In the dark bulk they closed bodies of men
Chosen by lot, and did enstuff by stealth
The hollow womb with armed soldiers.

# ROGER ASCHAM (1515–1568)

Ascham was born in 1515 in Yorkshire. He was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, where later he became a teacher. His great interest was in Greek, the study of which had been fostered by the humanistic revival. Besides his academic duties, he served, in various capacities, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth. He was Latin Secretary to the last three; and before her accession he was tutor of languages to Queen Elizabeth, the best educated woman of her time. Ascham died in 1568.

Ascham was primarily a scholar and a teacher. In line with his vocation, he wrote three books, two of which have lasted because of their style and subject-matter. They are *Toxophilus*, 1545, a treatise on the educational and patriotic advantages of archery, and *The Schoolmaster*, published in 1570 after his death, a plan for a better system for "the bringing up of youth," based upon the new humanism which had arisen during the Renaissance.

In spite of the inspiration that he received from foreign literatures, Ascham remained a thorough Englishman. "I write English, and to Englishmen," he declared in *The Schoolmaster*. He despised Italianate Englishmen, regretting, like a Puritan, that many of the books "late translated out of Italian" did "harm with enticing men to ill living." Yet he was not stubborn, and could, in the midst of the intellectual arguments of his day, remark with humorous detachment, "I have been a looker-on in the cockpit of learning these many years."

## INTRODUCTION TO TOXOPHILUS

### To All Gentlemen and Yeomen of England

Bias the wise man came to Crœsus[3] the rich king, on a time when he was making new ships, purposing to have subdued by water the out-isles lying betwixt Greece and Asia Minor. "What news now in Greece?" saith the king to Bias. "None other news but these," saith Bias: "that the isles of Greece have prepared a wonderful company of horsemen to over-run Lydia withal."

1 proud. 2 became silent.
3 King of Lydia, sixth century B.C.

1 Troy was in Phrygia. 2 sorrowful.
3 The Myrmidons and the Dolopes fought for Greece.
4 avoids complaining. 5 fitly.

'There is nothing under heaven," saith the King, "that I would so soon wish, as that they durst be so bold to meet us on the land with horse." "And think you," saith Bias, 'that there is any thing which they would sooner wish, than that you should be so fond [1] to meet them on the water with ships?" And so Crœsus, hearing not the true news, but perceiving the wise man's mind and counsel, both gave then over making of his ships, and left also behind him a wonderful example for all commonwealths to follow: that is, evermore to regard and set most by that thing whereunto nature hath made them most apt, and use hath made them most fit.

By this matter I mean the shooting in the long bow, for Englishmen; which thing with all my heart I do wish, and if I were of authority,[2] I would counsel all the gentlemen and yeomen of England, not to change it with any other thing, how good soever it seems to be; but that still, according to the old wont [3] of England, youth should use it for the most honest pastime in peace, that men might handle it as a most sure weapon in war. Other strong weapons, which both experience doth prove to be good, and the wisdom of the King's Majesty and his council provides to be had, are not ordained to take away shooting; but that both, not compared together whether should be better than the other, but so joined together that the one should be always an aid and help for the other, might so strengthen the realm on all sides, that no kind of enemy, in any kind of weapon, might pass and go beyond us.

For this purpose I, partly provoked by the counsel of some gentlemen, partly moved by the love which I have always borne toward shooting, have written this little treatise; wherein, if I have not satisfied any man, I trust he will the rather be content with my doing, because I am (I suppose) the first which hath said any thing in this matter, (and few beginnings be perfect, saith wise men:) and also because, if I have said amiss, I am content that any man amend it: or, if I have said too little, any man that will, to add what him pleaseth to it.

My mind is, in profiting and pleasing every man, to hurt or displease no man, intending none other purpose, but that youth might be stirred to labor, honest pastime, and virtue, and as much as lieth in me, plucked from idleness, unthrifty games, and vice: which thing I have labored only in this book, showing how fit shooting is for all kinds of men; how honest a pastime for the mind; how wholesome an exercise for the body; not vile for great men to use, not costly for poor men to sustain, not lurking in holes and corners for ill men at their pleasure to misuse it, but abiding in the open sight and face of the world, for good men, if it fault, by their wisdom to correct it.

And here I would desire all gentlemen and yeomen to use this pastime in such a mean, that the outrageousness of great gaming should not hurt the honesty of shooting, which, of his own nature, is always joined with honesty; yet for men's faults oftentimes blamed unworthily, as all good things have been, and evermore shall be.

If any man would blame me, either for taking such a matter in hand, or else for writing it in the English tongue, this answer I may make him, that when the best of the realm think it honest for them to use, I, one of the meanest sort, ought not to suppose it vile for me to write; and though to have written it in another tongue, had been both more profitable for my study, and also more honest for my name, yet I can think my labor well bestowed, if with a little hinderance of my profit and name, may come any furtherance to the pleasure or commodity of the gentlemen and yeomen of England, for whose sake I took this matter in hand. And as for the Latin or Greek tongue, every thing is so excellently done in them, that none can do better: in the English tongue, contrary, every thing in a manner so meanly both for the matter and handling, that no man can do worse. For therein the least learned, for the most part, have been always most ready to write. And they which had least hope in Latin, have been most bold in English: when surely every man that is most ready to talk, is not most able to write. He that will write well in any tongue, must follow this counsel of Aristotle, to speak as the common people do, to think as wise men do: and so should every man understand him, and the judgment of wise men allow [1] him. Many English writers have not done so, but using strange words, as Latin, French, and Italian, do make all things dark and hard. Once I communed [2] with a man which reasoned the English tongue to be enriched and increased thereby, saying, "Who will not praise that feast where a man shall drink at a dinner

1 foolish. 2 influence.

3 An Englishman would recall the battle of Crécy in 1346, when Edward III and the Black Prince defeated the French, largely through the skill of the English bowmen.

1 approve. 2 conversed.

both wine, ale, and beer?" "Truly (quoth I) they be all good, every one taken by himself alone, but if you put malmsey and sack, red wine and white, ale and beer, and all in one pot, you shall make a drink neither easy to be known, nor yet wholesome for the body." Cicero, in following Isocrates, Plato, and Demosthenes, increased the Latin tongue after another sort. This way, because divers men that write do not know, they can neither follow it, because of their ignorance, nor yet will praise it for very arrogancy, two faults, seldom the one out of the other's company.

English writers by diversity of time have taken divers matters in hand. In our fathers' time nothing was read but books of feigned chivalry,[1] wherein a man by reading should be led to none other end, but only to manslaughter and bawdry. If any man suppose they were good enough to pass the time withal, he is deceived. For surely vain words do work no small thing in vain, ignorant, and young minds, especially if they be given any thing thereunto of their own nature. These books (as I have heard say) were made the most part in abbeys and monasteries, — a very likely and fit fruit of such an idle and blind kind of living. In our time now, when every man is given to know, much rather than to live well, very many do write, but after such a fashion as very many do shoot. Some shooters take in hand stronger bows than they be able to maintain.[2] This thing maketh them sometime to outshoot the mark, sometime to shoot far wide, and perchance hurt some that look on. Other that never learned to shoot, nor yet knoweth good shaft nor bow, will be as busy as the best, but such one commonly plucketh[3] down a side, and crafty archers which be against him, will be both glad of him, and also ever ready to lay and bet with him: it were better for such one to sit down than shoot. Other there be, which have very good bow and shafts, and good knowledge in shooting, but they have been brought up in such evil favored shooting, that they can neither shoot fair[4] nor yet near.[5] If any man will apply these things together, he shall not see the one far differ from the other. And I also, amongst all other, in writing this little treatise, have followed some young shooters, which both will begin to shoot, for a little money, and also will use[1] to shoot once or twice about the mark for nought afore they begin a-good. And therefore did I take this little matter in hand, to assay[2] myself, and hereafter, by the Grace of God, if the judgment of wise men, that look on, think that I can do any good, I may perchance cast my shaft among other, for better game. Yet in writing this book, some man will marvel perchance, why that I, being an unperfect shooter, should take in hand to write of making a perfect archer: the same man, peradventure, will marvel how a whetstone, which is blunt, can make the edge of a knife sharp. I would the same man should consider also, that in going about any matter, there be found things to be considered, doing, saying, thinking, and perfectness: first, there is no man that doth so well, but he can say better, or else some men, which be now stark nought,[3] should be too good: again, no man can utter with his tongue so well as he is able to imagine with his mind, and yet perfectness itself is far above all thinking: then, seeing that saying is one step nearer perfectness than doing, let every man leave marvelling why my word shall rather express, than my deed shall perform, perfect shooting.

I trust no man will be offended with this little book, except it be some fletchers[4] and bowyers,[5] thinking hereby that many that love shooting shall be taught to refuse such naughty[6] wares as they would utter.[7] Honest fletchers and bowyers do not so, and they that be unhonest, ought rather to amend themselves for doing ill, than being angry with me for saying well. A fletcher hath even as good a quarrel to be angry with an archer that refuseth an ill shaft, as a blade-smith hath to a fletcher that forsaketh[8] to buy of him a naughty knife: for as an archer must be content that a fletcher know a good shaft in every point for the perfecter making of it, so an honest fletcher will also be content that a shooter know a good shaft in every point, for the perfecter using of it; because the one knoweth like a fletcher how to make it, the other knoweth like an archer how to use it. And seeing the knowledge is one in them both, yet the end divers, surely that fletcher is an enemy to archers and artillery[9] which cannot be content that an archer know a shaft as well for his use in shooting, as he himself should know a shaft

1 e.g., the mediæval romances and Malory.
2 handle easily.
3 A technical term, meaning to shoot in a slovenly manner.
4 gracefully. 5 accurately.

1 make a practice. 2 try.
3 absolutely worthless. 4 arrow-makers.
5 bow makers. 6 worthless. 7 produce.
8 refuses. 9 equipment for shooting.

for his advantage in selling. And the rather, because shafts be not made so much to be sold, but chiefly to be used. And seeing that use and occupying [1] is the end why a shaft is made, the making, as it were, a mean for occupying, surely the knowledge in every point of a good shaft, is more to be required in a shooter than a fletcher.

Yet, as I said before, no honest fletcher will be angry with me, seeing I do not teach how to make a shaft, which belongeth only to a good fletcher, but to know and handle a shaft, which belongeth to an archer. And this little book, I trust, shall please and profit both parties; for good bows and shafts shall be better known to the commodity [1] of all shooters, and good shooting may, perchance, be the more occupied to the profit of all bowyers and fletchers. And thus I pray God that all fletchers, getting their living truly, and all archers using shooting honestly, and all manner of men that favor artillery, may live continually in health and merriness, obeying their prince as they should, and loving God as they ought: to whom, for all things, be all honor and glory for ever. Amen.

[1] employment, use.

[1] advantage.

## EDMUND SPENSER (1552?–1599)

The life of Spenser, "the poet's poet," began in obscurity and possibly poverty. He was born in London, in the countryside just outside the walls of the old city, about 1552. At the age of nine he entered the newly established Merchant Taylors' School, and in 1569 was admitted as a sizar, that is, an indigent student, to Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, the university that attracted most of England's poets. Aside from the fact that he took his B.A. in 1573 and his M.A. in 1576, the great event in Spenser's life at Cambridge was his friendship with Gabriel Harvey, the critic who later tried to introduce the quantitative scansion of classical verse into English. Through Harvey, in 1578, he met in London Sir Philip Sidney and Sidney's uncle, the Earl of Leicester, who was then the favorite of Queen Elizabeth. Leicester gave Spenser a secretarial position in his household. This enabled the poet to write and publish (anonymously in 1579) the twelve eclogues of *The Shepherd's Calendar*, dedicated to Sidney, and to begin *The Faerie Queene*. During this time he belonged to an informal club, the Areopagus, whose members for a while proposed the use of classical metres in English verse. Harvey and Sidney belonged to the coterie, as did Fulke Greville, later Sidney's biographer, and Dyer, the author of the well-known poem, "My Mind to me a Kingdom is."

The following year Spenser was appointed secretary to the Lord Deputy of Ireland. From this time until his death twenty years later the poet lived in Ireland, with the exception of three visits to London. During the next ten years he received several promotions, and a castle and estate in County Cork. The death of Sidney in 1586 affected him deeply. To commemorate his friend he wrote *Astrophel*.

Spenser had as near neighbor in Ireland, about this time, Sir Walter Raleigh, to whom he read much of *The Faerie Queene*. With Raleigh in 1590 he went to London on his first leave, and published the first three books of his masterpiece, which he dedicated to the Queen. These were enthusiastically received and brought him a pension from Elizabeth.

After a year he took up again his official position in Ireland. In 1594 he married Elizabeth Boyle, to whom he had addressed his sonnet sequence *Amoretti;* and for the wedding he wrote his splendid *Epithalamium*. Both were published in 1595. In the following year he returned to London, published the next three books of *The Faerie Queene* as well as the *Prothalamium*, written to celebrate the marriage of the two daughters of the Earl of Worcester. Shortly afterwards he returned to Ireland, where in 1598 his castle was burned during a rebellion. He escaped with his wife and children, went to London, and died there early in the new year, January 16, 1599. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, in the Poets' Corner, near Chaucer.

Spenser is second to Chaucer among all English poets up to his time, surpassed only by Shakespeare, and possibly Marlowe, among poets of the glorious Elizabethan age. He is read less to-day than Chaucer, Shakespeare, or Milton, largely because readers look for qualities in him which he does not possess. He is not great as a narrative or allegorical poet, and students reading for enjoyment will do well, at first, to ignore the story and the symbolism of *The Faerie Queene*. He is primarily a painter and musician in words, a forerunner of Keats in this respect, as Keats is of the modern imagists. Beauty was his aim, romantic beauty, sensuous, emotional or luxuriant, although often enough it is beauty which the poet could have created only after deep reflection upon the vanity and pain of life. Spenser is not a poet for a reader who seeks realistic verisimilitude even though he did, like all great artists, derive his material from experience. He must, frequently, be read after the manner in which one listens to music. We do not ask, "What does

the piece mean?" We feel it, we sense the meaning — a meaning which often could not be expressed in mere words; and above all, we enjoy the contexture of sounds.

Excellent one-volume editions of Spenser, with critical material, are R. E. N. Dodge's in the Cambridge Poets (Houghton Mifflin Company), and The Oxford, with an introduction by E. de Selincourt.

## THE FAERIE QUEENE

The plan and general idea of *The Faerie Queene* is outlined clearly by Spenser in his letter to Raleigh, given below.

In reading the poem, one should bear in mind that the final *-e* is not regularly pronounced, that the ending *-ed* is; that all syllables of a word should be given full value, *-ion* being, for instance, two syllables; that often the meaning of a strange-looking word will be apparent as soon as the word is pronounced; that *y-* is the prefix of the past participle, like *ge-* in modern German; and that Spenser often uses inversions and transpositions not common in ordinary English.

For this poem Spenser evolved a new stanza. To a stanza of eight iambic pentameter lines rhyming *ababbcbc* (which resembles somewhat Chaucer's *rime royal*), he added an Alexandrine or iambic hexameter, rhyming with the previous line. This stanza, the Spenserian, used later by Thomson in *The Castle of Indolence* and by Byron in *Childe Harold*, is the best stanza in the language for word painting. The Alexandrine interrupts the flow of the story, but it makes a unit, as Spenser uses the stanza, exceptional in its descriptive and melodious qualities.

TO

THE MOST HIGH, MIGHTIE, AND MAGNIFICENT

EMPRESSE,

RENOWMED FOR PIETIE, VERTVE, AND ALL GRATIOVS GOVERNMENT,

ELIZABETH,

BY THE GRACE OF GOD,

Qveene of England, Fravnce, and Ireland, and of Virginia, Defendovr of the Faith, &c.

HER MOST HVMBLE SERVAVNT

EDMVND SPENSER,

DOTH, IN ALL HVMILITIE,

DEDICATE, PRESENT, AND CONSECRATE

THESE HIS LABOVRS,

TO LIVE WITH THE ETERNITIE OF HER FAME.

## A LETTER OF THE AUTHORS,

EXPOUNDING HIS WHOLE INTENTION IN THE COURSE OF THIS WORKE: WHICH, FOR THAT IT GIVETH GREAT LIGHT TO THE READER, FOR THE BETTER UNDERSTANDING IS HEREUNTO ANNEXED.

TO THE RIGHT NOBLE AND VALOROUS

SIR WALTER RALEIGH, KNIGHT,

LORD WARDEIN OF THE STANNERVES, AND HER MAIESTIES LIEFETENAUNT OF THE COUNTY OF CORNEWAYLL.

SIR, knowing how doubtfully all Allegories may be construed, and this booke of mine, which I have entituled the Faery Queene, being a continued Allegory, or darke conceit, I haue thought good, as well for avoyding of gealous opinions and misconstructions, as also for your better light in reading thereof, (being so by you commanded,) to discover unto you the general intention and meaning, which in the whole course thereof I have fashioned, without expressing of any particular purposes, or by accidents, therein occasioned. The generall end therefore of all the booke is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline: Which for that I conceived shoulde be most plausible and pleasing, being coloured with an historicall fiction, the which the most part of men delight to read, rather for variety of matter then for profite of the ensample, I chose the historye of King Arthure, as most fitte for the excellency of his person, being made famous by many mens former workes, and also furthest from the daunger of envy, and suspition of present time. In which I have followed all the antique Poets historicall; first Homere, who in the Persons of Agamemnon and Ulysses hath ensampled a good governour and a vertuous man, the one in his Ilias, the other in his Odysseis: then Virgil, whose like intention was to doe in the person of Aeneas: after him Ariosto comprised them both in his Orlando: and lately Tasso dissevered them againe, and formed both parts in two persons, namely that part which they in Philosophy call Ethice, or vertues of a private man, coloured in his Rinaldo; the other named Politice in his Godfredo. By

nsample of which excellente Poets, I labour o puortraict in Arthure, before he was king, he image of a brave knight, perfected in the welve private morall vertues, as Aristotle ath devised; the which is the purpose of hese first twelve bookes:[1] which if I finde to e well accepted, I may be perhaps encoraged o frame the other part of polliticke vertues n his person, after that hee came to be king.

To some, I know, this Methode will seeme lispleasaunt, which had rather have good liscipline delivered plainly in way of pre-epts, or sermoned at large, as they use, then hus clowdily enwrapped in Allegoricall de-ises. But such, me seeme, should be satis-ide with the use of these dayes, seeing all hings accounted by their showes, and no-hing esteemed of, that is not delightfull and leasing to commune sence. For this cause s Xenophon preferred before Plato, for that he one, in the exquisite depth of his judge-nent, formed a Commune welth, such as it hould be; but the other in the person of Cyrus, and the Persians, fashioned a governe-nent, such as might best be: So much more profitable and gratious is doctrine by en-sample, then by rule. So haue I laboured to doe in the person of Arthure: whome I con-ceive, after his long education by Timon, to whom he was by Merlin delivered to be brought up, so soone as he was borne of the Lady Igrayne, to have seene in a dream or vision the Faery Queen, with whose excel-lent beauty ravished, he awaking resolved to seeke her out; and so being by Merlin armed, and by Timon throughly instructed, he went to seeke her forth in Faerye land. In that Faery Queene I meane glory in my generall intention, but in my particular I conceive the most excellent and glorious per-son of our soveraine the Queene, and her kingdome in Faery land. And yet, in some places els, I doe otherwise shadow her. For considering she beareth two persons, the one of a most royall Queene or Empresse, the other of a most vertuous and beautiful Lady, this latter part in some places I doe expresse in Belphœbe, fashioning her name according to your owne excellent conceipt of Cynthia, (Phœbe and Cynthia being both names of Diana.) So in the person of Prince Arthure I sette forth magnificence in particular; which vertue, for that (according to Aristotle and the rest) it is the perfection of all the rest, and conteineth in it them all, therefore in the whole course I mention the deedes of Arthure applyable to that vertue, which I write of in that booke. But of the xii. other vertues, I make xii. other knights the patrones, for the more variety of the history: Of which these three bookes contayn three.

The first of the knight of the Redcrosse, in whome I expresse Holynes: The seconde of Sir Guyon, in whome I sette forth Temperaunce: The third of Britomartis, a Lady Knight, in whome I picture Chastity. But, because the beginning of the whole worke seemeth abrupte, and as depending upon other antecedents, it needs that ye know the occasion of these three knights seuerall adventures. For the Methode of a Poet historical is not such, as of an Historiographer. For an Historiographer discourseth of affayres orderly as they were donne, accounting as well the times as the actions; but a Poet thrusteth into the middest, even where it most concerneth him, and there recoursing to the thinges forepaste, and divining of thinges to come, maketh a pleasing Analysis of all.

The beginning therefore of my history, if it were to be told by an Historiographer should be the twelfth booke, which is the last; where I devise that the Faery Queene kept her Annuall feaste xii. dayes; uppon which xii. severall dayes, the occasions of the xii. severall adventures hapned, which, being undertaken by xii. severall knights, are in these xii. books severally handled and discoursed. The first was this. In the beginning of the feast, there presented him selfe a tall clownishe younge man, who falling before the Queene of Faries desired a boone (as the manner then was) which during that feast she might not refuse; which was that hee might have the atchievement of any adventure, which during that feaste should happen: that being graunted, he rested him on the floore, unfitte through his rusticity for a better place. Soone after entred a faire Ladye in mourning weedes, riding on a white Asse, with a dwarfe behind her leading a warlike steed, that bore the Armes of a knight, and his speare in the dwarfes hand. Shee, falling before the Queene of Faeries, complayned that her father and mother, an ancient King and Queene, had bene by an huge dragon many years shut up in a brasen Castle, who thence suffred them not to yssew; and therefore besought the Faery Queene to assygne her some one of her knights to take on him that exployt. Presently that clownish person, upstarting, desired that adventure: whereat the Queene much wondering, and the Lady much gainesaying, yet he ear-

1 Of the twelve books planned Spenser completed only six and part of the seventh.

nestly importuned his desire. In the end the Lady told him, that unlesse that armour which she brought, would serve him (that is, the armour of a Christian man specified by Saint Paul, vi. Ephes.) that he could not succeed in that enterprise; which being forthwith put upon him, with dewe furnitures thereunto, he seemed the goodliest man in al that company, and was well liked of the Lady. And eftesonnes taking on him knighthood, and mounting on that straunge Courser, he went forth with her on that adventure: where beginneth the first booke, viz.

A gentle knight was pricking on the playne. &c.

The second day ther came in a Palmer, bearing an Infant with bloody hands, whose Parents he complained to have bene slayn by an Enchaunteresse called Acrasia; and therfore craved of the Faery Queene, to appoint him some knight to performe that adventure; which being assigned to Sir Guyon, he presently went forth with that same Palmer: which is the beginning of the second booke, and the whole subject thereof. The third day there came in a Groome, who complained before the Faery Queene, that a vile Enchaunter, called Busirane, had in hand a most faire Lady, called Amoretta, whom he kept in most grievous torment, because she would not yield him the pleasure of her body. Whereupon Sir Scudamour, the lover of that Lady, presently tooke on him that adventure. But being vnable to performe it by reason of the hard Enchauntments, after long sorrow, in the end met with Britomartis, who succoured him, and reskewed his loue.

But by occasion hereof many other adventures are intermedled; but rather as Accidents then intendments: As the love of Britomart, the overthrow of Marinell, the misery of Florimell, the vertuousnes of Belphœbe, the lasciviousnes of Hellenora, and many the like.

Thus much, Sir, I have briefly overronne to direct your understanding to the wel-head of the History; that from thence gathering the whole intention of the conceit, ye may as in a handfull gripe al the discourse, which otherwise may happily seeme tedious and confused. So, humbly craving the continuance of your honorable favour towards me, and th' eternall establishment of your happines, I humbly take leave.

23. Ianuary 1589,

Yours most humbly affectionate,

ED. SPENSER.

## THE FIRST BOOK OF THE FAERIE QUEENE

### CONTAYNING THE LEGEND OF THE KNIGHT OF THE RED CROSSE, OR OF HOLINESSE

I

Lo! I, the man whose Muse whylome [1] did maske,
As time her taught, in lowly Shephards weeds,[2]
Am now enforst, a farre unfitter taske,
For trumpets sterne to chaunge mine Oaten reeds,
And sing of Knights and Ladies gentle deeds;
Whose praises having slept in silence long,
Me, all too meane, the sacred Muse areeds
To blazon broade emongst her learned throng:
Fierce warres and faithful loves shall moralize my song.

2

Helpe then, O holy virgin! chiefe of nyne,[4]
Thy weaker Novice to performe thy will;
Lay forth out of thine everlasting scryne [5]
The antique rolles, which there lye hidden still,
Of Faerie knights, and fayrest Tanaquill,[6]
Whom that most noble Briton Prince [7] long
Sought through the world, and suffered so much ill,
That I must rue his undeserved wrong:
O, helpe thou my weake wit, and sharpen my dull tong!

3

And thou, most dreaded impe [8] of highest Jove,
Faire Venus sonne, that with thy cruell dart
At that good knight so cunningly didst rove,
That glorious fire it kindled in his hart;
Lay now thy deadly Heben [9] bowe apart,
And with thy mother mylde come to mine ayde;

1 formerly.
2 An obvious reference to Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar*, published eleven years previously.
3 designates.
4 Clio, the muse of history. 5 desk.
6 Daughter of Oberon, king of the fairies; here, of course, Queen Elizabeth.
7 Arthur; here, possibly, the Earl of Leicester.
8 child; i.e., Cupid. 9 ebon; ebony.

Come, both; and with you bring triumphant Mart,[1]
In loves and gentle jollities arraid,
After his murdrous spoyles and bloudie rage allayd.

4

And with them eke, O Goddesse[2] heavenly bright!
Mirrour of grace and Majestie divine,
Great Ladie of the greatest Isle, whose light
Like Phœbus lampe throughout the world doth shine,
Shed thy faire beames into my feeble eyne,
And raise my thoughtes, too humble and too vile,
To thinke of that true glorious type of thine,
The argument of mine afflicted[3] stile:
The which to heare vouchsafe, O dearest dread,[4] a-while!

## CANTO I

The Patrone of true Holinesse
Foule Errour doth defeate:
Hypocrisie, him to entrappe,
Doth to his home entreate.

1

A gentle Knight was pricking[5] on the plaine,
Ycladd in mightie armes and silver shielde,
Wherein old dints of deepe woundes did remaine,
The cruell markes of many a bloody fielde;
Yet armes till that time did he never wield.
His angry steede did chide his foming bitt,
As much disdayning to the curbe to yield:
Full jolly[6] knight he seemd, and faire did sitt,
As one for knightly giusts[7] and fierce encounters fitt.

2

And on his brest a bloodie Crosse he bore,
The deare remembrance of his dying Lord,
For whose sweete sake that glorious badge he wore,
And dead, as living, ever him ador'd:
Upon his shield the like was also scor'd,
For soveraine hope[8] which in his helpe he had.
Right faithfull true he was in deede and word,
But of his cheere[1] did seeme too solemne sad;
Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.[2]

3

Upon a great adventure he was bond,
That greatest Gloriana[3] to him gave,
(That greatest Glorious Queene of Faery lond)
To winne him worshippe, and her grace to have,
Which of all earthly thinges he most did crave:
And ever as he rode his hart did earne[4]
To prove his puissance in battell brave
Upon his foe, and his new force to learne,
Upon his foe, a Dragon horrible and stearne.

4

A lovely Ladie rode him faire beside,
Upon a lowly Asse more white then snow,
Yet she much whiter; but the same did hide
Under a vele, that wimpled[5] was full low;
And over all a blacke stole shee did throw:
As one that inly mournd, so was she sad,
And heavie sate upon her palfrey slow;
Seemed in heart some hidden care she had,
And by her, in a line, a milkewhite lambe she lad.

5

So pure and innocent, as that same lambe,
She was in life and every vertuous lore;
And by descent from Royall lynage came
Of ancient Kinges and Queenes, that had of yore
Their scepters stretcht from East to Westerne shore,
And all the world in their subjection held;
Till that infernall feend with foule uprore
Forewasted[6] all their land, and them expeld;
Whom to avenge she had this Knight from far compeld.[7]

6

Behind her farre away a Dwarfe did lag,
That lasie seemd, in being ever last,
Or wearied with bearing of her bag
Of needments at his backe. Thus as they past,
The day with cloudes was suddeine overcast,
And angry Jove an hideous storme of raine

1 Mars. 2 Queen Elizabeth. 3 humble.
4 object worshiped. 5 riding, using the spur.
6 handsome. 7 jousts.
8 "to indicate the great hope that he had."

1 countenance. 2 The past participle, dreaded.
3 Queen Elizabeth. 4 yearn. 5 folded.
6 The prefix *fore* — is intensive. 7 summoned.

Did poure into his Lemans [1] lap [2] so fast,
That everie wight to shrowd [3] it did constrain;
And this faire couple eke to shroud themselves were fain.

7

Enforst to seeke some covert nigh at hand,
A shadie grove not farr away they spide,
That promist ayde the tempest to withstand;
Whose loftie trees, yclad with sommers pride,
Did spred so broad, that heavens light did hide,
Not perceable with power of any starr:
And all within were pathes and alleies wide,
With footing worne, and leading inward farr.
Faire harbour that them seems, so in they entred ar.

8

And foorth they passe, with pleasure forward led,
Joying to heare the birdes sweete harmony,
Which, therein shrouded from the tempest dred,
Seemd in their song to scorne the cruell sky.
Much can they praise the trees so straight and hy,
The sayling Pine; the Cedar proud and tall;
The vine-propp Elme; the Poplar never dry;
The builder Oake, sole king of forrests all;
The Aspine good for staves; the Cypresse funerall;

9

The Laurell, meed of mightie Conquerours
And Poets sage; the Firre that weepeth still:
The Willow, worne of forlorne Paramours;
The Eugh, obedient to the benders will;
The Birch for shaftes; the Sallow [4] for the mill;
The Mirrhe sweete-bleeding in the bitter wound;
The warlike Beech; the Ash for nothing ill;
The fruitfull Olive; and the Platane [5] round;
The carver Holme; [6] the Maple seeldom inward sound.

10

Led with delight, they thus beguile the way,
Untill the blustring storme is overblowne;
When, weening [7] to returne whence they did stray,
They cannot finde that path, which first was showne,
But wander too and fro in waies unknowne,
Furthest from end then, when they neeres weene,
That makes them doubt [1] their wits be none their owne:
So many pathes, so many turnings seene,
That which of them to take in diverse doubt they been.

11

At last resolving forward still to fare,
Till that some end they finde, or in or out,
That path they take that beaten seemd most bare,
And like to lead the labyrinth about; [2]
Which when by tract they hunted had throughout,
At length it brought them to a hollowe cave
Amid the thickest woods. The Champion stout
Eftsoones [3] dismounted from his courser brave,
And to the Dwarfe a while his needlesse spere he gave.

12

"Be well aware," quoth then that Ladie milde,
"Least suddaine mischiefe ye too rash provoke:
The danger hid, the place unknowne and wilde,
Breedes dreadfull doubts. Oft fire is without smoke,
And perill without show: therefore your stroke,
Sir Knight, with-hold, till further tryall made."
"Ah Ladie," (sayd he) "shame were to revoke
The forward footing for an hidden shade:
Vertue gives her selfe light through darknesse for to wade."

13

"Yea but" (quoth she) "the perill of this place
I better wot then you: though nowe too late
To wish you backe returne with foule disgrace,
Yet wisedome warnes, whilest foot is in the gate,[4]
To stay the steppe, ere forced to retrate.

1 beloved's. 2 the earth. 3 take cover.
4 broad-leaved willow. 5 plane-tree.
6 oak. 7 supposing.

1 fear. 2 out of. 3 immediately.
4 path.

is is the wandring wood, this *Errours* den,
monster vile, whom God and man does hate:
erefore I read[1] "beware." "Fly, fly!" (quoth then
e fearefull Dwarfe) "this is no place for living men."

14

But, full of fire and greedy hardiment,
ie youthfull Knight could not for ought be staide;
it forth unto the darksom hole he went,
id looked in: his glistring armoor made
ittle glooming light, much like a shade;
which he saw the ugly monster plaine,
alfe like a serpent horribly displaide,
it th'other halfe did womans shape retaine,
ost lothsom, filthie, foule, and full of vile disdaine.

15

And, as she lay upon the durtie ground,
er huge long taile her den all overspred,
et was in knots and many boughtes[2] upwound,
ointed with mortall sting. Of her there bred
thousand yong ones, which she dayly fed,
icking upon her poisnous dugs; each one
sundrie shapes, yet all ill-favored:[3]
one as that uncouth light upon them shone,
to her mouth they crept, and suddain all were gone.

16

Their dam upstart out of her den effraide,
nd rushed forth, hurling her hideous taile
bout her cursed head; whose folds displaid
ere stretcht now forth at length without entraile.[4]
e lookt about, and seeing one in mayle,
rmed to point, sought backe to turne againe;
or light she hated as the deadly bale,[5]
y wont[6] in desert darknes to remaine,
here plain none might her see, nor she see any plaine.

17

Which when the valiant Elfe[7] perceiv'd, he lept
s Lyon fierce upon the flying pray,
nd with his trenchand blade her boldly kept
rom turning backe, and forced her to stay:

1 advise. 2 coils. 3 of ugly face.
4 coil. 5 destruction. 6 always accustomed.
7 The Redcross Knight was the son of an elf.

Therewith enrag'd she loudly gan to bray,
And turning fierce her speckled taile advaunst,
Threatning her angrie sting, him to dismay;
Who, nought aghast, his mightie hand enhaunst:[1]
The stroke down from her head unto her shoulder glaunst.

18

Much daunted with that dint her sence was dazd;
Yet kindling rage her selfe she gathered round,
And all attonce her beastly bodie raizd
With doubled forces high above the ground:
Tho, wrapping up her wrethed sterne arownd,
Lept fierce upon his shield, and her huge traine
All suddenly about his body wound,
That hand or foot to stirr he strove in vaine.
God helpe the man so wrapt in Errours endlesse traine!

19

His Lady, sad to see his sore constraint,
Cride out, "Now, now, Sir knight, shew what ye bee:
Add faith unto your force, and be not faint;
Strangle her, els she sure will strangle thee."
That when he heard, in great perplexitie,
His gall did grate[2] for griefe[3] and high disdaine;
And, knitting all his force, got one hand free,
Wherewith he grypt her gorge with so great paine,
That soone to loose her wicked bands did her constraine.

20

Therewith she spewd out of her filthie maw[4]
A floud of poyson horrible and blacke,
Full of great lumps of flesh and gobbets[5] raw,
Which stunck so vildly, that it forst him slacke
His grasping hold, and from her turne him backe.
Her vomit full of bookes and papers[6] was,
With loathly frogs and toades, which eyes did lacke,

1 raised. 2 stir. 3 pain. 4 stomach.
5 pieces.
6 The attacks against Queen Elizabeth and the Church of England.

And creeping sought way in the weedy gras:
Her filthie parbreake[1] all the place defiled has.

21

As when old father Nilus gins to swell
With timely pride above the Aegyptian vale
His fattie waves doe fertile slime outwell,
And overflow each plaine and lowly dale:
But, when his later spring gins to avale,[2]
Huge heapes of mudd he leaves, wherin there breed
Ten thousand kindes of creatures, partly male
And partly femall, of his fruitful seed;
Such ugly monstrous shapes elswher may no man reed.[3]

22

The same so sore annoyed has the knight,
That, welnigh choked with the deadly stinke,
His forces faile, ne can no lenger fight
Whose corage when the feend perceivd to shrinke,
She poured forth out of her hellish sinke
Her fruitfull cursed spawne of serpents small,
Deformed monsters, fowle, and blacke as inke,
Which swarming all about his legs did crall,
And him encombred sore, but could not hurt at all.

23

As gentle shepheard in sweete eventide,
When ruddy Phebus gins to welke[4] in west,
High on an hill, his flocke to vewen wide,
Markes which doe byte their hasty supper best;
A cloud of cumbrous gnattes doe him molest,
All striving to infixe their feeble stinges,
That from their noyance he no where can rest;
But with his clownish hands their tender wings
He brusheth oft, and oft doth mar their murmurings.

24

Thus ill bestedd,[5] and fearefull more of shame
Then of the certeine perill he stood in
Halfe furious unto his foe he came,
Resolvd in minde all suddenly to win,
Or soone to lose, before he once would lin;[6]

1 vomit. 2 moderate. 3 see. 4 wane.
5 placed. 6 stop.

And stroke at her with more then mar force,
That from her body, full of filthie sin,
He raft[1] her hatefull heade without morse:
A streame of cole-black blood forth gush from her corse.

25

Her scattered brood, soone as their Pare deare
They saw so rudely falling to the ground,
Groning full deadly, all with troublous fea
Gathred themselves about her body round,
Weening their wonted entrance to have fou
At her wide mouth; but being there wit stood,
They flocked all about her bleeding woun
And sucked up their dying mothers bloud,
Making her death their life, and eke her hu their good.

26

That detestable sight him much amazde
To see th' unkindly[2] Impes, of heav accurst,
Devoure their dam; on whom while so he gaz
Having all satisfide their bloudy thurst,
Their bellies swolne he saw with fulnes burst,
And bowels gushing forth: well worthy enc
Of such as drunke her life the which the nurst!
Now needeth him no lenger labour spend,
His foes have slaine themselves, with who he should contend.

27

His Lady, seeing all that chaunst fro farre,
Approcht in hast to greet his victorie;
And saide, "Faire knight, borne under happi starre,
Who see your vanquisht foes before you ly
Well worthie be you of that Armory,
Wherein ye have great glory wonne th day,
And proov'd your strength on a stron enimie,
Your first adventure: many such I pray,
And henceforth ever wish that like succe it may!"

28

Then mounted he upon his Steede again
And with the Lady backward sought wend.

1 took away. 2 unnatural.

at path he kept which beaten was most
plaine,
ever would to any byway bend,
t still did follow one unto the end,
e which at last out of the wood them
brought.
forward on his way (with God to frend)
passed forth, and new adventure sought:
ng way he traveiled before he heard of
ought.

29

At length they chaunst to meet upon the
way
aged Sire, in long blacke weedes yclad,
s feete all bare, his beard all hoarie
gray,
d by his belt his booke he hanging had:
ber he seemde, and very sagely sad,
d to the ground his eyes were lowly bent,
nple in shew, and voide of malice bad;
d all the way he prayed as he went,
d often knockt his brest, as one that did
repent.

30

He faire the knight saluted, louting[1] low,
no faire him quited, as that courteous
was;
d after asked him, if he did know
straunge adventures, which abroad did
pas,
h! my dear sonne," (quoth he) "how
should, alas!
ly[2] old man, that lives in hidden cell,
lding[3] his beades all day for his trespas,
dings of warre and worldly trouble tell?
th holy father sits not[4] with such thinges
to mell.[5]

31

'But if of daunger, which hereby doth
dwell,
d homebredd evil ye desire to heare,
a straunge man I can you tidings tell,
at wasteth all this countrie, farre and
neare."
f such," (saide he,) "I chiefly doe in-
quere,
d shall thee well rewarde to shew the
place,
which that wicked wight his dayes doth
weare;
r to all knighthood it is foule disgrace,
at such a cursed creature lives so long a
space."

bending. 2 simple. 3 telling.
is not fitting. 5 meddle.

32

"Far hence" (quoth he) "in wastfull wil-
dernesse
His dwelling is, by which no living wight
May ever passe, but thorough great dis-
tresse."
"Now," (saide the Ladie,) "draweth toward
night,
And well I wote, that of your later fight
Ye all forwearied be; for what so strong,
But, wanting rest, will also want of might?
The Sunne, that measures heaven all day
long,
At night doth baite[1] his steedes the Ocean
waves emong.

33

"Then with the Sunne take, Sir, your
timely rest,
And with new day new worke at once
begin:
Untroubled night, they say, gives counsell
best."
"Right well, Sir knight, ye have advised
bin,"
Quoth then that aged man: "the way to win
Is wisely to advise; now day is spent:
Therefore with me ye may take up your
In
For this same night." The knight was well
content;
So with that godly father to his home they
went.

34

A litle lowly Hermitage it was,
Downe in a dale, hard by a forests side,
Far from resort of people that did pas
In traveill to and froe: a litle wyde[2]
There was an holy chappell edifyde,[3]
Wherein the Hermite dewly wont to say
His holy thinges each morne and eventyde:
Thereby a christall streame did gently
play,
Which from a sacred fountaine welled forth
alway.

35

Arrived there, the litle house they fill,
Ne looke for entertainement where none was;
Rest is their feast, and all thinges at their
will:
The noblest mind the best contentment
has.
With faire discourse the evening so they pas;
For that olde man of pleasing wordes had
store,

1 refresh. 2 apart. 3 built.

And well could file his tongue as smooth as glas:
He told of Saintes and Popes,[1] and evermore
He strowd an *Ave-Mary* after and before.

36

The drouping night thus creepeth on them fast;
And the sad [2] humor [3] loading their eyeliddes,
As messenger of Morpheus on them cast
Sweet slombring deaw, the which to sleep them biddes.
Unto their lodgings then his guestes he riddes: [4]
Where when all drownd in deadly sleepe he findes,
He to his studie goes; and there amiddes
His magick bookes, and artes of sundrie kindes,
He seekes out mighty charmes to trouble sleepy minds.

37

Then choosing out few words most horrible,
(Let none them read) thereof did verses frame;
With which, and other spelles like terrible,
He bad awake blacke Plutoes griesly Dame; [5]
And cursed heven; and spake reprochful shame
Of highest God, the Lord of life and light:
A bold bad man, that dar'd to call by name
Great Gorgon,[6] prince of darknes and dead night;
At which Cocytus [7] quakes, and Styx [7] is put to flight.

38

And forth he cald out of deepe darknes dredd
Legions of Sprights, the which, like litle flyes
Fluttering about his ever-damned hedd,
Awaite whereto their service he applyes,
To aide his friendes, or fray [8] his enimies.
Of those he chose out two, the falsest twoo,
And fittest for to forge true-seeming lyes:
The one of them he gave a message too,
The other by him selfe staide, other worke to doo.

1 The old man, Archimago, who typifies hypocrisy, is also a Catholic.
2 heavy. 3 dampness. 4 dismisses.
5 Proserpine.
6 Demogorgon, a demon magician of the underworld, whose name few dared to mention.
7 Rivers in Hades. 8 frighten.

39

He, making speedy way through sperse ayre,
And through the world of waters wide a deepe,
To Morpheus house doth hastily repaire.
Amid the bowels of the earth full steepe,
And low, where dawning day doth never peepe,
His dwelling is; there Tethys [2] his wet bed
Doth ever wash, and Cynthia [3] still doth steepe
In silver deaw his ever-drouping hed,
Whiles sad Night over him her mantle blacke doth spred

40

Whose double gates he findeth lockt fast,
The one faire fram'd of burnisht Yvory,
The other all with silver overcast;
And wakeful dogges before them farre dely,
Watching to banish Care their enimy,
Who oft is wont to trouble gentle Sleepe.
By them the Sprite doth passe in quietly,
And unto Morpheus comes, whom drowned deepe
In drowsie fit he findes: of nothing he tak keepe.[4]

41

And more to lulle him in his slumber soft
A trickling streame from high rock tumblin downe,
And ever-drizling raine upon the loft,[5]
Mixt with a murmuring winde, much like the sowne
Of swarming Bees, did cast him in swowne.
No other noyse, nor peoples troublous crye
As still are wont t'annoy the walled towne
Might there be heard; but carelesse Quiet lyes
Wrapt in eternall silence farre from enimye

42

The Messenger approching to him spake;
But his waste wordes retournd to him in vaine:
So sound he slept, that nought mought him awake.
Then rudely he him thrust, and pusht with paine,
Whereat he gan to stretch; but he againe

1 dispersed. 2 The ocean. 3 The moon.
4 heed. 5 upper floor.

hooke him so hard, that forced him to speake.

s one then in a dreame, whose dryer[1] braine
s tost with troubled sights and fancies weake,
Ie mumbled soft, but would not all his silence breake.

43

The Sprite then gan more boldly him to wake,
nd threatned unto him the dreaded name
f Hecate:[2] whereat he gan to quake,
nd, lifting up his lompish[3] head, with blame
alfe angrie asked him, for what he came.
Hether" (quoth he,) "me Archimago sent,
Ie that the stubborne Sprites can wisely tame,
Ie bids thee to him send for his intent
A fit false dreame, that can delude the sleepers sent.[4]"

44

The God obayde; and, calling forth straight way
A diverse[5] Dreame out of his prison darke,
Delivered it to him, and downe did lay
His heavie head, devoide of careful carke;[6]
Whose sences all were straight benumbd and starke.
He, backe returning by the Yvorie dore,
Remounted up as light as chearefull Larke;
And on his litle winges the dreame he bore
In hast unto his Lord, where he him left afore.

45

Who all this while, with charmes and hidden artes,
Had made a Lady of that other Spright,
And fram'd of liquid ayre her tender partes,
So lively and so like in all mens sight,
That weaker sence it could have ravisht quight:
The maker selfe, for all his wondrous witt,
Was nigh beguiled with so goodly sight.
Her all in white he clad, and over it
Cast a black stole, most like to seeme for Una fit.

46

Now, when that ydle dreame was to him brought,
Unto that Elfin knight he bad him fly,
Where he slept soundly void of evil thought,
And with false shewes abuse his fantasy,
In sort as[1] he him schooled privily:
And that new creature, borne without her dew,[2]
Full of the makers guyle, with usage sly
He taught to imitate that Lady trew,
Whose semblance she did carrie under feigned hew.

47

Thus well instructed, to their worke they hast,
And comming where the knight in slomber lay,
The one upon his hardy head him plast,
And made him dreame of loves and lustfull play,
That nigh his manly hart did melt away,
Bathed in wanton blis and wicked ioy:
Then seemed him his Lady by him lay,
And to him playnd, how that false winged boy
Her chast hart had subdewd, to learne Dame pleasures toy.

48

And she her selfe of beautie soveraigne Queene,
Faire Venus seemde unto his bed to bring
Her, whom he waking evermore did weene
To be the chastest flowre, that ay did spring
On earthly braunch, the daughter of a king,
Now a loose Leman to vile service bound:
And eke the Graces seemed all to sing,
*Hymen iô Hymen*, dauncing all around,
Whilst freshest Flora her with Yuie girlond crownd.

49

In this great passion of unwonted lust,
Or wonted feare of doing ought amis,
He started up, as seeming to mistrust
Some secret ill, or hidden foe of his:
Lo there before his face his Lady is,
Under blake stole hyding her bayted hooke,
And as halfe blushing offred him to kis,
With gentle blandishment and lovely looke,
Most like that virgin true, which for her knight him took.

50

All cleane dismayd to see so uncouth sight,
And halfe enraged at her shamelesse guise,
He thought have slaine her in his fierce despight:[3]

1 A damp brain was supposed to be more active.
2 Underworld goddess of magic. 3 heavy.
4 sense. 5 misleading. 6 worry.

1 in the way that.
2 due, i.e., unnaturally. 3 anger.

But hasty heat tempring with sufferance wise,
He stayde his hand, and gan himselfe advise
To prove his sense, and tempt her faigned truth.
Wringing her hands in wemens pitteous wise,
Tho[1] can[2] she weepe, to stirre up gentle ruth,[3]
Both for her noble bloud, and for her tender youth.

51

And said, Ah Sir, my liege Lord and my love,
Shall I accuse the hidden cruell fate,
And mightie causes wrought in heaven above,
Or the blind God, that doth me thus amate,[4]
For hoped love to winne me certaine hate?
Yet thus perforce he bids me do, or die.
Die is my dew: yet rew my wretched state
You, whom my hard avenging destinie
Hath made iudge of my life or death indifferently.

52

Your owne deare sake forst me at first to leave
My Fathers kingdome, There she stopt with teares;
Her swollen hart her speach seemd to bereave,
And then againe begun, My weaker yeares
Captiv'd to fortune and frayle worldly feares,
Fly to your faith for succour and sure ayde:
Let me not dye in languor and long teares.
Why Dame (quoth he) what hath ye thus dismayd?
What frayes ye, that were wont to comfort me affrayd?

53

Love of your selfe, she said, and deare constraint[5]
Lets me not sleepe, but wast the wearie night
In secret anguish and unpittied plaint,
Whiles you in carelesse sleepe are drowned quight.
Her doubtfull words made that redouted knight
Suspect her truth: yet since no'untruth he knew,
Her fawning love with foule disdainefull spight
He would not shend,[6] but said, Deare dame I rew,
That for my sake unknowne such griefe unt
you grew.

54

Assure your selfe, it fell not all to ground
For all so deare as life is to my hart,
I deeme your love, and hold me to yo
bound;
Ne let vaine feares procure your needless
smart,
Where cause is none, but to your rest depart
Not all content, yet seemd she to appease[1]
Her mournefull plaintes, beguiled of he
art,
And fed with words, that could not chuse bu
please,
So slyding softly forth, she turnd as to he
ease.

55

Long after lay he musing at her mood,
Much grieu'd to thinke that gentle Dame s
light,
For whose defence he was to shed his blood.
At last dull wearinesse of former fight
Having yrockt a sleepe his irkesome spright,
That troublous dreame gan freshly tosse his
braine,
With bowres, and beds, and Ladies deare
delight:
But when he saw his labour all was vaine,
With that misformed spright he backe returnd againe.

## CANTO II

The guilefull great Enchanter parts
The Redcrosse Knight from Truth:
Into whose stead faire falshood steps,
And workes him woefull ruth.

1

By this the Northerne wagoner[2] had set
His sevenfold teme[3] behind the stedfast starre[4]
That was in Ocean waves yet never wet,
But firme is fixt, and sendeth light from farre
To al that in the wide deepe wandring arre;
And chearefull Chaunticlere with his note shrill
Had warned once, that Phoebus fiery carre
In hast was climbing up the Easterne hill,
Full envious that night so long his roome did fill:

1 then. 2 did. 3 pity.
4 discourage. 5 necessity. 6 reproach.

1 cease.
2 The northern constellation of Boötes, which contains the bright star Arcturus.
3 The seven stars of the Dipper or Charles's Wain in Ursa Major.
4 Polaris, the North Star.

2

When those accursed messengers of hell,
That feigning dreame, and that faire-forged Spright,
Came to their wicked maister, and gan tel
Their bootelesse paines, and ill succeeding night:
Who, in all rage to see his skilfull might
Deluded so, gan threaten hellish paine,
And sad Proserpines wrath, them to affright:
But, when he saw his threatning was but vaine,
He cast about, and searcht his baleful bokes againe.

3

Eftsoones he tooke that miscreated faire,
And that false other Spright, on whom he spred
A seeming body of the subtile aire,
Like a young Squire, in loves and lusty-hed
His wanton dayes that ever loosely led,
Without regard of armes and dreaded fight:
Those two he tooke, and in a secret bed,
Covered with darknesse and misdeeming[1] night,
Them both together laid, to ioy in vaine delight.

4

Forthwith he runnes with feigned faithfull hast
Unto his guest, who after troublous sights
And dreames, gan now to take more sound repast,
Whom suddenly he wakes with fearefull frights,
As one aghast with feends or damned sprights,
And to him cals, Rise rise unhappy Swaine,
That here wex old in sleepe, whiles wicked wights
Have knit themselves in Venus shamefull chaine;
Come see, where your false Lady doth her honour staine.

5

All in amaze he suddenly up start
With sword in hand, and with the old man went;
Who soone him brought into a secret part,
Where that false couple were full closely ment[2]
In wanton lust and lewd embracement:
Which when he saw, he burnt with gealous fire,
The eye of reason was with rage yblent,[3]
And would have slaine them in his furious ire,
But hardly was restreined of that aged sire.

6

Returning to his bed in torment great,
And bitter anguish of his guiltie sight,
He could not rest, but did his stout heart eat,
And wast his inward gall with deepe despight,
Yrkesome of life, and too long lingring night.
At last faire Hesperus in highest skie
Had spent his lampe, and brought forth dawning light
Then up he rose, and clad him hastily;
The Dwarfe him brought his steed: so both away do fly.

7

Now when the rosy fingred Morning faire,
Weary of aged Tithones[1] saffron bed,
Had spred her purple robe through deawy aire,
And the high hils Titan[2] discovered,
The royall virgin shooke off drousy-hed;[3]
And, rising forth out of her baser bowre,
Lookt for her knight, who far away was fled,
And for her dwarfe, that wont to wait each howre:
Then gan she wail and weepe to see that woeful stowre.[4]

8

And after him she rode with so much speede
As her slowe beast could make; but all in vaine,
For him so far had borne his light-foot steede,
Pricked with wrath and fiery fierce disdaine,
That him to follow was but fruitlesse paine:
Yet she her weary limbes would never rest;
But every hil and dale, each wood and plaine,
Did search, sore grieved in her gentle brest,
He so ungently left her, whome she loved best.

9

But subtill Archimago, when his guests
He saw divided into double parts,
And Una wandring in woods and forrests,

1 misleading. 2 mingled. 3 blinded.

1 Tithonus, beloved of Morning (Aurora), who gave him immortality, forgetting eternal youth.
2 the sun.
3 The suffix -hed = -ness or -hood
4 affliction.

Th' end of his drift, he praisd his divelish arts
That had such might over true meaning harts;
Yet rests not so, but other meanes doth make,
How he may worke unto her further smarts;
For her he hated as the hissing snake,
And in her many troubles did most pleasure take.

10

He then devisde himselfe how to disguise;
For by his mighty science he could take
As many formes and shapes in seeming wise,
As ever Proteus [1] to himselfe could make:
Sometime a fowle, sometime a fish in lake,
Now like a foxe, now like a dragon fell;
That of himselfe he ofte for feare would quake,
And oft would flie away. O! who can tell
The hidden powre of herbes, and might of Magick spel?

11

But now seemde best the person to put on
Of that good knight, his late beguiled guest:
In mighty armes he was yclad anon,
And silver shield; upon his coward brest
A bloody crosse, and on his craven crest
A bounch of heares discolourd diversly.
Full jolly knight he seemde, and wel addrest;
And when he sate upon his courser free,
Saint George [2] himselfe ye would have deemed him to be.

12

But he, the knight whose semblaunt he did beare,
The true Saint George, was wandred far away,
Still flying from his thoughts and gealous feare:
Will was his guide, and griefe led him astray.
At last him chaunst to meete upon the way
A faithlesse Sarazin,[3] all armde to point,
In whose great shield was writ with letters gay
*Sans foy;* full large of limbe and every joint
He was, and cared not for God or man a point.[4]

13

Hee had a faire companion [5] of his way,
A goodly Lady clad in scarlot red,
Purfled [6] with gold and pearle of rich assay;
And like a Persian mitre on her hed
Shee wore, with crowns and owches [1] garnished,
The which her lavish lovers to her gave.
Her wanton palfrey all was overspred
With tinsell trappings, woven like a wave,
Whose bridle rung with golden bels and bosses [2] brave.

14

With faire disport, and courting dalliaunce,
She intertainde her lover all the way;
But, when she saw the knight his speare advaunce,
She soone left off her mirth and wanton play,
And bad her knight addresse him to the fray,
His foe was nigh at hand. He, prickte with pride
And hope to winne his Ladies hearte that day,
Forth spurred fast: adowne his coursers side
The red bloud trickling staind the way, as he did ride.

15

The knight of the Redcrosse, when him he spide
Spurring so hote with rage dispiteous,
Gan fairely couch his speare, and towards ride.
Soone meete they both, both fell and furious,
That, daunted with theyr forces hideous,
Their steeds doe stagger, and amazed stand;
And eke themselves, too rudely rigorous,
Astonied with the stroke of their owne hand,
Doe backe rebutte,[3] and ech to other yealdeth land.

16

As when two rams, stird with ambitious pride,
Fight for the rule of the rich fleeced flocke,
Their horned fronts so fierce on either side
Doe meete, that, with the terror of the shocke,
Astonied, both stand sencelesse as a blocke,
Forgetfull of the hanging victory:
So stood these twaine, unmoved as a rocke,
Both staring fierce, and holding idely
The broken reliques of their former cruelty.

17

The Sarazin, sore daunted with the buffe,
Snatcheth his sword, and fiercely to him flies;

1 The sea-god who could change his shape at will.
2 Patron saint of England.
3 i.e., a heathen. 4 whit.
5 Duessa or Fidessa, representing Falsehood.
6 embroidered along the edge.

1 jewels. 2 ornamental protuberances. 3 recoil.

Who well it wards, and quyteth [1] cuff with cuff:
Each others equall puissaunce envies,
And through their iron sides with cruell spies
Does seeke to perce; [2] repining courage yields
To foote to foe: the flashing fier flies,
As from a forge, out of their burning shields;
And streams of purple bloud new die the verdant fields.

18

"Curse on that Cross," (quoth then the Sarazin,)
That keepes thy body from the bitter fitt! [3]
Dead long ygoe, I wote, thou haddest bin,
Had not that charme from thee forwarned itt:
But yet I warne thee now assured sitt,
And hide thy head." [4] Therewith upon his crest
With rigor so outrageous he smitt,
That a large share it hewd out of the rest,
And glauncing downe his shield from blame [5] him fairly blest. [6]

19

Who, thereat wondrous wroth, the sleeping spark
Of native vertue gan eftsoones revive;
And at his haughty helmet making mark,
So hugely stroke, that it the steele did rive,
And cleft his head. He, tumbling downe alive,
With bloudy mouth his mother earth did kis,
Greeting his grave: his grudging [7] ghost did strive
With the fraile flesh; at last it flitted is,
Whither the soules doe fly of men that live amis.

20

The Lady, when she saw her champion fall
Like the old ruines of a broken towre,
Staid not to waile his woefull funerall, [8]
But from him fled away with all her powre;
Who after her as hastily gan scowre, [9]
Bidding the dwarfe with him to bring away
The Sarazins shield, signe of the conqueroure.
Her soone he overtooke, and bad to stay;
For present cause was none of dread her to dismay.

1 pays. 2 i.e., each "looks for an opening."
3 death blow. 4 i.e., protect it. 5 harm.
6 preserved. 7 murmuring, complaining.
8 death. 9 hurry.

21

Shee turning backe, with ruefull [1] countenaunce,
Cride, "Mercy, mercy, Sir, vouchsafe to show
On silly Dame, subject to hard mischaunce,
And to your mighty wil!" Her humblesse low,
In so ritch weedes, and seeming glorious show,
Did much emmove his stout heroïcke heart;
And said, "Deare dame, your suddein overthrow
Much rueth me; but now put feare apart,
And tel both who ye be, and who that tooke your part."

22

Melting in teares, then gan shee thus lament.
"The wretched woman, whom unhappy howre
Hath now made thrall to your commandement,
Before that angry heavens list [2] to lowre,
And fortune false betraide me to thy powre,
Was (O! what now availeth that I was?)
Borne the sole daughter of an Emperour,
He that the wide West under his rule has,
And high hath set his throne where Tiberis doth pas.

23

"He, in the first flowre of my freshest age,
Betrothed me unto the onely haire
Of a most mighty king, most rich and sage:
Was never Prince so faithfull and so faire,
Was never Prince so meeke and debonaire;
But ere my hoped day of spousall shone,
My dearest Lord fell from high honours staire
Into the hands of hys accursed fone, [3]
And cruelly was slaine; that shall I ever mone.

24

"His blessed body, spoild of lively breath,
Was afterward, I know not how, convaid,
And fro me hid: of whose most innocent death
When tidings came to mee, unhappy maid,
O, how great sorrow my sad soule assaid! [4]
Then forth I went his woefull corse to find,
And many yeares throughout the world I straid,
A virgin widow, whose deepe wounded mind
With love long time did languish, as the stricken hind.

1 sad. 2 pleased. 3 foes. 4 attacked.

25

"At last it chaunced this proud Sarazin
To meete me wandring; who perforce me led
With him away, but yet could never win
The fort that ladies hold in soveraigne dread.
There lies he now with foule dishonour dead,
Who, whiles he livde, was called proud Sans foy,
The eldest of three brethren; all three bred
Of one bad sire, whose youngest is Sans joy;
And twixt them both was born the bloudy bold Sans loy.

26

"In this sad plight, friendlesse, unfortunate,
Now miserable I, Fidessa, dwell,
Craving of you, in pitty of my state,
To doe none ill, if please ye not doe well."
He in great passion al this while did dwell,
More busying his quicke eies her face to view,
Then his dull eares to heare what shee did tell;
And said, "faire lady, hart of flint would rew
The undeserved woes and sorrowes, which ye shew.

27

"Henceforth in safe assuraunce may ye rest,
Having both found a new friend you to aid,
And lost an old foe that did you molest;
Better new friend then an old foe is said."
With chaunge of chear the seeming simple maid
Let fal her eien, as shamefast, to the earth,
And yeelding soft, in that she nought gainsaid,
So forth they rode, he feining seemely merth,
And shee coy lookes: so dainty,[1] they say, maketh derth.[2]

28

Long time they thus together traveiled;
Til, weary of their way, they came at last
Where grew two goodly trees, that faire did spred
Their armes abroad, with gray mosse overcast;
And their greene leaves, trembling with every blast,
Made a calme shadowe far in compasse round:
The fearefull shepheard, often there aghast,
Under them never sat, ne wont there sound
His mery oaten pipe, but shund th' unluckie ground.

29

But this good knight, soone as he them can spie,
For the coole shade him thither hastly got:
For golden Phoebus, now ymounted hie,
From fiery wheeles of his faire chariot
Hurled his beame so scorching cruell hot,
That living creature mote it not abide;
And his new Lady it endured not.
There they alight, in hope themselves to hide
From the fierce heat, and rest their weary limbs a tide.[1]

30

Faire seemely pleasaunce each to other makes,
With goodly purposes, there as they sit;
And in his falsed fancy he her takes
To be the fairest wight that lived yit;
Which to expresse he bends his gentle wit:
And, thinking of those braunches greene to frame
A girlond for her dainty forehead fit,
He pluckt a bough; out of whose rifte there came
Smal drops of gory bloud, that trickled down the same.

31

Therewith a piteous yelling voice was heard,
Crying, "O! spare with guilty hands to teare
My tender sides in this rough rynd embard;
But fly, ah! fly far hence away, for feare
Least to you hap that happened to me heare,
And to this wretched Lady, my deare love:
O, too deare love, love bought with death too deare!"
Astond he stood, and up his heare did hove;
And with that suddein horror could no member move.

32

At last whenas the dreadfull passion
Was overpast, and manhood well awake,
Yet musing at the straunge occasion,
And doubting much his sence, he thus bespake:
"What voice of damned Ghost from Limbo lake,

1 anything pleasant or desirable. 2 desire.

1 time; cf. Christmas*tide*. 2 confined. 3 rise. 4 the edge of hell.

r guilefull spright wandring in empty aire,
oth which fraile men doe oftentimes mistake,
nds to my doubtful eares these speaches rare,
nd ruefull plaints, me bidding guiltlesse blood to spare?"

33

Then, groning deep; "Nor damned Ghost," (quoth he,)
Nor guileful sprite to thee these words doth speake;
ut once a man, Fradubio,[1] now a tree;
retched man, wretched tree! whose nature weake
cruell witch, her cursed will to wreake,
ath thus transformd, and plast in open plaines,
here Boreas doth blow full bitter bleake,
nd scorching Sunne does dry my secret vaines;
or though a tree I seme, yet cold and heat me paines."

34

"Say on, Fradubio, then, or man or tree,"
uoth then the Knight; "by whose mischievous arts
rt thou misshaped thus, as now I see?
e oft finds med'cine who his griefe imparts,
ut double griefs afflict concealing harts,
s raging flames who striveth to suppresse."
The author then," (said he) "of all my smarts,
one Duessa, a false sorceresse,
hat many errant knights hath broght to wretchednesse.

35

"In prime of youthly yeares, when corage hott
he fire of love, and joy of chevalree,
irst kindled in my brest, it was my lott
o love this gentle Lady, whome ye see
ow not a Lady, but a seeming tree;
ith whome, as once I rode accompanyde,
le chaunced of a knight encountred bee,
hat had a like faire Lady by his syde;
yke a faire Lady, but did fowle Duessa hyde.

36

"Whose forged beauty he did take in hand[2]
ll other Dames to have exceeded farre:
I in defence of mine did likewise stand,
Mine, that did then shine as the Morning starre.
So both to batteill fierce arraunged arre,
In which his harder fortune was to fall
Under my speare: such is the dye of warre.
His Lady, left as a prise martiall,
Did yield her comely person to be at my call.

37

"So doubly lov'd of ladies, unlike faire,
Th' one seeming such, the other such indeede,
One day in doubt I cast for to compare
Whether [1] in beauties glorie did exceede.
A Rosy girlond was the victors meede.
Both seemde to win, and both seemde won to bee,
So hard the discord was to be agreede.
Frælissa was as faire as faire mote bee,
And ever false Duessa seemde as faire as shee.

38

"The wicked witch, now seeing all this while
The doubtfull ballaunce equally to sway,
What not by right she cast to win by guile:
And by her hellish science raisd streight way
A foggy mist that overcast the day,
And a dull blast, that breathing on her face
Dimmed her former beauties shining ray,
And with foule ugly forme did her disgrace:
Then was she fayre alone, when none was faire in place.

39

"Then cride she out, 'Fye, fye! deformed wight,
Whose borrowed beautie now appeareth plaine
To have before bewitched all mens sight:
O! leave her soone, or let her soone be slaine.'
Her loathly visage viewing with disdaine,
Eftsoones I thought her such as she me told,
And would have kild her; but with faigned paine
The false witch did my wrathfull hand withhold:
So left her, where she now is turnd to treen mould.[2]

40

"Thensforth I tooke Duessa for my Dame,
And in the witch unweeting joyd long time,
Ne ever wist but that she was the same;
Till on a day (that day is everie Prime,[3]

1 Doubt. 2 assert.

1 which of two. 2 shape of a tree.
3 springtime.

When Witches wont do penance for their crime,)
I chaunst to see her in her proper hew,
Bathing her selfe in origane [1] and thyme:
A filthy foule old woman I did vew,
That ever to have toucht her I did deadly rew.

41

Her neather partes misshapen, monstruous,
Were hidd in water, that I could not see,
But they did seeme more foule and hideous,
Then womans shape man would believe to bee.
"Thensforth from her most beastly companie
I gan refraine, in minde to slipp away,
Soone as appeard safe opportunitie:
For danger great, if not assurd decay,
I saw before mine eyes, if I were knowne to stray.

42

"The divelish hag by chaunges of my cheare
Perceiv'd my thought; and, drownd in sleepie night,
With wicked herbes and oyntments did besmeare
My body all, through charmes and magicke might,
That all my senses were bereaved quight:
Then brought she me into this desert waste,
And by my wretched lovers side me pight; [2]
Where now, enclosd in wooden wals full faste,
Banisht from living wights, our wearie daies we waste."

43

"But how long time," said then the Elfin knight,
"Are you in this misformed hous to dwell?"
"We may not chaunge," (quoth he,) "this evill plight,
Till we be bathed in a living [3] well:
That is the terme prescribed by the spell."
"O! how," sayd he, "mote I that well out find,
That may restore you to your wonted well?"
"Time and suffised [4] fates to former kynd [5]
Shall us restore; none else from hence may us unbynd."

1 sweet marjoram. 2 placed.
3 running. 4 satisfied. 5 state.

44

The false Duessa, now Fidessa hight,
Heard how in vaine Fradubio did lament,
And knew well all was true. But the goo knight,
Full of sad feare and ghastly dreriment,
When all this speech the living tree ha spent,
The bleeding bough did thrust into th ground,
That from the blood he might be innocent,
And with fresh clay did close the woode wound:
Then, turning to his Lady, dead with fear her fownd.

45

Her seeming dead he fownd with feigne feare,
As all unweeting of that well she knew;
And paynd himselfe with busie care to rear
Her out of carelesse swowne. Her eyelid blew,
And dimmed sight, with pale and deadly hew
At last she up gan lift: with trembling chear
Her up he tooke, (too simple and too trew)
And oft her kist. At length, all passe feare, [1]
He set her on her steede, and forward fort did beare.

## CANTO III

Forsaken Truth long seekes her love,
And makes the Lyon mylde;
Marres blind Devotions mart, [2] and fals
In hand of leachour vylde.

1

Nought is there under heav'ns wide ho lownesse,
That moves more deare compassion of mind
Then beautie brought t'unworthie wretched nesse
Through envies snares, or fortunes freake unkind.
I, whether lately through her brightne blynd,
Or through alleageance, and fast fealty,
Which I do owe unto all womankynd,
Feele my hart perst with so great agony,
When such I see, that all for pitty I could dy

2

And now it is empassioned so deepe,
For fairest Unaes sake, of whom I sing,
That my frayle eies these lines with teares d steepe,

1 all fear past. 2 trade.

To thinke how she through guyleful handeling,
Though true as touch,[1] though daughter of a king,
Though faire as ever living wight was fayre,
Though not in word nor deede ill meriting,
Is from her knight divorced in despayre,
And her dew loves deryv'd[2] to that vile witches shayre.

3

Yet she, most faithfull Ladie, all this while
Forsaken, wofull, solitarie mayd,
Far from all peoples preace,[3] as in exile,
In wildernesse and wastfull deserts strayd,
To seeke her knight; who, subtily betrayd
Through that late vision which th' Enchaunter wrought,
Had her abandond. She, of nought affrayd,
Through woods and wastnes wide him daily sought;
Yet wished tydinges none of him unto her brought.

4

One day, nigh wearie of the yrkesome way,
From her unhastie beast she did alight;
And on the grasse her dainty limbs did lay
In secrete shadow, far from all mens sight:
From her fayre head her fillet she undight,
And layd her stole aside. Her angels face,
As the great eye of heaven, shyned bright,
And made a sunshine in the shady place;
Did never mortall eye behold such heavenly grace.

5

It fortuned, out of the thickest wood
A ramping Lyon rushed suddeinly,
Hunting full greedy after salvage[4] blood.
Soone as the royall virgin he did spy,
With gaping mouth at her ran greedily,
To have attonce devourd her tender corse;
But to the pray when as he drew more ny,
His bloody rage aswaged with remorse,
And, with the sight amazd, forgat his furious forse.

6

In stead thereof he kist her wearie feet,
And lickt her lilly hands with fawning tong,
As he her wronged innocence did weet.[5]
O, how can beautie maister the most strong,
And simple truth subdue avenging wrong!
Whose yielded pryde and proud submission,
Still dreading death, when she had marked long,
Her hart gan melt in great compassion;
And drizling teares did shed for pure affection.

7

"The Lyon, Lord of everie beast in field,"
Quoth she, "his princely puissance doth abate,
And mightie proud to humble weake does yield,
Forgetfull of the hungry rage, which late
Him prickt, in pittie of my sad estate:
But he, my Lyon, and my noble Lord,
How does he find in cruell hart to hate
Her, that him lov'd, and ever most adord
As the God of my life? why hath he me abhord?"

8

Redounding teares did choke th' end of her plaint,
Which softly ecchoed from the neighbour wood;
And, sad to see her sorrowfull constraint,
The kingly beast upon her gazing stood:
With pittie calmd downe fell his angry mood.
At last, in close hart shutting up her payne,
Arose the virgin, borne of heavenly brood,
And to her snowy Palfrey got agayne,
To seeke her strayed Champion if she might attayne.

9

The Lyon would not leave her desolate,
But with her went along, as a strong gard
Of her chast person, and a faythfull mate
Of her sad troubles and misfortunes hard:
Still, when she slept, he kept both watch and ward;
And, when she wakt, he wayted diligent,
With humble service to her will prepard:
From her fayre eyes he tooke commandement,
And ever by her lookes conceived her intent.

10

Long she thus traveiled through deserts wyde,
By which she thought her wandring knight shold pas,
Yet never shew of living wight espyde;
Till that at length she found the troden gras,
In which the tract of peoples footing was,
Under the steepe foot of a mountaine hore:[1]

1 touchstone. 2 transferred. 3 press, large crowd. 4 savage. 5 know.

1 gray.

The same she followes, till at last she has
A damzel spyde, slow footing her before,
That on her shoulders sad [1] a pot of water bore.

11

To whom approching she to her gan call,
To weet if dwelling place were nigh at hand;
But the rude wench her answerd noght at all:
She could not heare, nor speake, not understand;
Till, seeing by her side the Lyon stand,
With suddeine feare her pitcher downe she threw,
And fled away: for never in that land
Face of fayre Lady she before did vew,
And that dredd Lyons looke her cast in deadly hew.

12

Full fast she fled, ne ever lookt behynd,
As if her life upon the wager lay;
And home she came, whereas [2] her mother blynd
Sate in eternall night: nought could she say;
But, suddeine catching hold, did her dismay
With quaking hands, and other signes of feare:
Who, full of ghastly fright and cold affray,
Gan shut the dore. By this arrived there
Dame Una, weary Dame, and entrance did requere:

13

Which when none yielded, her unruly Page
With his rude clawes the wicket open rent,
And let her in; where, of his cruell rage
Nigh dead with feare, and faint astonishment,
Shee found them both in darksome corner pent;
Where that old woman day and night did pray
Upon her beads, devoutly penitent:
Nine hundred *Pater nosters* every day,
And thrise nine hundred *Aves* she was wont to say.

14

And to augment her painefull penaunce more,
Thrise every weeke in ashes shee did sitt,
And next her wrinkled skin rough sackecloth wore,
And thrise three times did fast from any bitt;
But now, for feare her beads she did forgett:

1 weighed down. 2 where.

Whose needlesse dread for to remove away,
Faire Una framed words and count'naunce fitt;
Which hardly doen, at length she gan them pray,
That in their cotage small that night she rest her may.

15

The day is spent; and commeth drowsie night,
When every creature shrowded is in sleepe.
Sad Una downe her laies in weary plight,
And at her feete the Lyon watch doth keepe:
In stead of rest she does lament and weepe,
For the late losse of her deare loved knight,
And sighes, and grones, and evermore does steepe
Her tender brest in bitter teares all night;
All night she thinks too long, and often lookes for light.

16

Now when Aldeboran [1] was mounted hye
Above the shinie Cassiopeias chaire,[2]
And all in deadly sleepe did drowned lye
One knocked at the dore, and in would fare:
He knocked fast, and often curst, and sware,
That ready entraunce was not at his call;
For on his backe a heavy load he bare
Of nightly stelths, and pillage severall,[3]
Which he had got abroad by purchas criminall.

17

He was, to weete,[4] a stout and sturdy thiefe,[5]
Wont to robbe churches of their ornaments,
And poore mens boxes of their due reliefe,
Which given was to them for good intents:
The holy Saints of their rich vestiments
He did disrobe, when all men careless slept,
And spoild the Priests of their habiliments;
Whiles none the holy things in safety kept,
Then he by conning sleights in at the window crept.

18

And all that he by right or wrong could find,
Unto this house he brought, and did bestow

1 Brightest star in Taurus.
2 The stars in the northern constellation of Cassiopeia resemble a chair.
3 various. 4 to wit.
5 Kirkrapine, i.e., Church-Plunder.

pon the daughter of this woman blind,
bessa,[1] daughter of Corceca [2] slow,
ith whom he whoredome used, that few did know,
nd fed her fatt with feast of offerings,
nd plenty, which in all the land did grow:
e spared he to give her gold and rings;
nd now he to her brought part of his stolen things.

19

Thus, long the dore with rage and threats he bett,[3]
et of those fearfull women none durst rize.
he Lyon frayed [4] them, him in to lett.
e would no lenger stay him to advize,
ut open breakes the dore in furious wize,
nd entring is, when that disdainfull beast,
ncountring fierce, him suddein doth surprize;
nd, seizing cruell clawes on trembling brest,
nder his Lordly foot him proudly hath suppress.[5]

20

Him booteth not resist, nor succour call,
is bleeding hart is in the vengers hand;
ho streight him rent in thousand peeces small,
nd quite dismembred hath: the thirsty land
ronke up his life; his corse left on the strand.
is fearefull freends weare out the wofull night,
e dare to weepe, nor seeme to understand
he heavie hap which on them is alight;
ffraid least to themselves the like mishappen might.

21

Now when broad day the world discovered has,
p Una rose, up rose the lyon eke;
nd on their former journey forward pas,
n waies unknowne, her wandring knight to seeke,
ith paines far passing that long wandring Greeke,[6]
hat for his love refused deitye.
uch were the labours of this Lady meeke,
Still seeking him, that from her still did flye;
Then furthest from her hope, when most she weened nye.

22

Soone as she parted thence, the fearfull twayne,
That blind old woman, and her daughter dear,
Came forth; and, finding Kirkrapine there slayne,
For anguish great they gan to rend their heare,
And beat their brests, and naked flesh to teare:
And when they both had wept and wayld their fill,
Then forth they ran, like two amazed deare,
Halfe mad through malice and revenging will,
To follow her that was the causer of their ill.

23

Whome overtaking, they gan loudly bray,
With hollow houling, and lamenting cry;
Shamefully at her rayling all the way,
And her accusing of dishonesty,
That was the flowre of faith and chastity:
And still, amidst her rayling, she did pray
That plagues, and mischiefes, and long misery,
Might fall on her, and follow all the way,
And that in endlesse error she might ever stray.

24

But, when she saw her prayers nought prevaile,
Shee backe retourned with some labour lost;
And in the way, as shee did weepe and waile,
A knight her mett in mighty armes embost,[1]
Yet knight was not for all his bragging bost,
But subtill Archimag, that Una sought
By traynes [2] into new troubles to have toste;
Of that old woman tidings he besought,
If that of such a Lady shee could tellen ought.

25

Therewith she gan her passion to renew,
And cry, and curse, and raile, and rend her heare.
Saying, that harlott she too lately knew,
That causd her shed so many a bitter teare;
And so forth told the story of her feare.
Much seemed he to mone her haplesse chaunce,

1 symbolizing superstition.
2 typifying blind devotion. 3 beat.
4 "They were afraid of letting him in because of the on." The Lion represents Strength of Mind.
5 overcome. 6 Odysseus.

1 encased. 2 treacheries.

And after for that Lady did inquere;
Which being taught, he forward gan advaunce
His fair enchaunted steed, and eke his charmed launce.

26

Ere long he came where Una traveild slow,
And that wilde champion wayting her besyde;
Whome seeing such, for dread hee durst not show
Him selfe too nigh at hand, but turned wyde
Unto an hil; from whence when she him spyde,
By his like seeming shield her knight by name
She weend it was, and towards him gan ride:
Approaching nigh she wist it was the same;
And with faire fearefull humblesse towards him shee came:

27

And weeping said, "Ah, my long lacked Lord,
Where have ye bene thus long out of my sight?
Much feared I to have been quite abhord,
Or ought[1] have done, that ye displeasen might,
That should as death unto my deare[2] heart light:
For since mine eie your joyous sight did mis,
My chearefull day is turnd to chearelesse night,
And eke my night of death the shadow is;
But welcome now, my light, and shining lampe of blis!"

28

He thereto meeting said, "My dearest Dame,
Far be it from your thought, and fro my wil,
To thinke that knighthood I so much should shame,
As you to leave that have me loved stil,
And chose in Faery court, of meere goodwil,
Where noblest knights were to be found on earth.
The earth shall sooner leave her kindly skil
To bring forth fruit, and make eternal derth,
Then I leave you, my liefe,[3] yborn of hevenly berth.

1 aught. 2 downcast. 3 beloved.

29

"And sooth to say, why I lefte you so long,
Was for to seeke adventure in straunge place
Where, Archimago said, a felon strong
To many knights did daily worke disgrace;
But knight he now shall never more deface:
Good cause of mine excuse,[1] that mote[2] yet please
Well to accept, and evermore embrace
My faithfull service, that by land and seas
Have vowd you to defend. Now then, you plaint appease."

30

His lovely words her seemd due recompence
Of all her passed paines: one loving howre
For many yeares of sorrow can dispence;
A dram of sweete is worth a pound of sowre.
Shee has forgott how many a woeful stowre
For him she late endurd; she speakes no more
Of past: true is, that true love hath no powr
To looken backe; his eies be fixt before.
Before her stands her knight, for whom she toyld so sore.

31

Much like, as when the beaten marinere,
That long hath wandred in the Ocean wide
Ofte soust in swelling Tethys saltish teare;
And long time having tand his tawney hide
With blustring breath of Heaven, that none can bide,
And scorching flames of fierce Orions hound;[4]
Soone as the port from far he has espide,
His chearfull whistle merily doth sound,
And Nereus crownes with cups;[5] his mate him pledg around.

32

Such joy made Una, when her knight she found,
And eke th' enchaunter joyous seemde nolesse
Then the glad marchant, that does vew from ground
His ship far come from watrie wildernesse:
He hurles out vowes, and Neptune oft dot blesse.
So forth they past; and all the way the spent
Discoursing of her dreadful late distresse,

1 "good reason for excusing me."
2 may. 3 danger.
4 Sirius, the dog-star; Orion was a mighty hunter.
5 "drinks to Nereus, the sea-god."

n which he askt her, what the Lyon ment;
Who told her all that fell,[1] in journey as she went.

33

They had not ridden far, when they might see
One pricking towards them with hastie heat,
Full strongly armd, and on a courser free
That through his fiersnesse fomed all with sweat,
And the sharpe yron did for anger eat,
When his hot ryder spurd his chaufted[2] side:
His looke was sterne, and seemed still to threat
Cruell revenge, which he in hart did hyde;
And on his shield *Sansloy* in bloody lines was dyde.

34

When nigh he drew unto this gentle payre,
And saw the Red-crosse which the knight did beare,
He burnt in fire; and gan eftsoones prepare
Himselfe to batteill with his couched speare.
Loth was that other, and did faint through feare,
To taste th' untryed dint of deadly steele:
But yet his Lady did so well him cheare,
That hope of new good hap he gan to feele;
So bent[3] his speare, and spurd his horse with yron heele.

35

But that proud Paynim forward came so ferce
And full of wrath, that, with his sharphead speare,
Through vainly[4] crossed shield he quite did perce;
And, had his staggering steed not shronke for feare,
Through shield and body eke he should him beare:
Yet, so great was the puissance of his push,
That from his sadle quite he did him beare.
He, tombling rudely downe, to ground did rush,
And from his gored wound a well of bloud did gush.

36

Dismounting lightly from his loftie steed,
He to him lept, in minde to reave his life,
And proudly said: "Lo! there the worthie meed
Of him that slew Sansfoy with bloody knife.
Henceforth his ghost, freed from repining strife,
In peace may passen over Lethe[1] lake;
When mourning altars, purgd with enimies life,
The black infernall Furies doen aslake:[2]
Life from Sansfoy thou tookst, Sansloy shall from thee take."

37

Therewith in haste his helmet gan unlace,
Till Una cride, "O! hold that heavie hand,
Deare Sir, what ever that thou be in place:[3]
Enough is, that thy foe doth vanquisht stand
Now at thy mercy: Mercy not withstand;
For he is one the truest knight alive,
Though conquered now he lye on lowly land;
And, whilest him fortune favourd, fayre did thrive
In bloudy field; therefore, of life him not deprive."

38

Her piteous wordes might not abate his rage,
But, rudely rending up his helmet, would
Have slayne him streight; but when he sees his age,
And hoarie head of Archimago old,
His hasty hand he doth amased hold,
And halfe ashamed wondred at the sight:
For the old man well knew he, though untold,
In charmes and magick to have wondrous might,
Ne ever wont in field, ne in round lists,[4] to fight:

39

And said, "Why Archimago, lucklesse syre,
What doe I see? what hard mishap is this,
That hath thee hether brought to taste mine yre?
Or thine the fault, or mine the error is,
In stead of foe to wound my friend amis?"
He answered nought, but in a traunce still lay,
And on those guilefull dazed eyes of his
The cloude of death did sit. Which doen away,[5]
He left him lying so, ne would no lenger stay:

1 "She told all that befell her." 2 chafed.
3 braced. 4 i.e., the cross did not help.

1 The river of forgetfulness in Hades.
2 assuage. 3 rank.
4 i.e., in tournaments, in circular arenas.
5 done away, i.e., removed.

40

But to the virgin comes; who all this while
Amased stands, her selfe so mockt to see
By him, who has the guerdon of his guile,
For so misfeigning her true knight to bee:
Yet is she now in more perplexitie,
Left in the hand of that same Paynim bold,
From whom her booteth not at all to flie:
Who, by her cleanly garment catching hold,
Her from her Palfrey pluckt, her visage to behold.

41

But her fiers servant, full of kingly aw
And high disdaine, whenas his soveraine Dame
So rudely handled by her foe he saw,
With gaping jawes full greedy at him came,
And, ramping on his shield, did weene the same
Have reft away with his sharp rending clawes:
But he[1] was stout, and lust did now inflame
His corage more, that from his griping pawes
He hath his shield redeemd, and forth his swerd he drawes.

42

O! then, too weake and feeble was the forse
Of salvage beast his puissance to withstand;
For he was strong, and of so mightie corse,
As ever wielded speare in warlike hand,
And feates of armes did wisely understand.
Eft soones he perced through his chaufed chest
With thrilling[2] point of deadly yron brand,
And launcht[3] his Lordly hart: with death opprest
He ror'd aloud, whiles life forsooke his stub-borne brest.

43

Who now is left to keepe the forlorne maid
From raging spoile of lawlesse victors will?
Her faithfull gard remov'd, her hope dismaid,
Her selfe a yielded pray to save or spill:[4]
He now, Lord of the field, his pride to fill,
With foule reproches and disdaineful spight
Her vildly[5] entertaines; and, will or nill,
Beares her away upon his courser light:
Her prayers nought prevaile, his rage is more of might.

44

And all the way, with great lamenting paine,
And piteous plaintes, she filleth his dull eares,
That stony hart could riven have in twaine;
And all the way she wetts with flowing teares;
But he, enrag'd with rancor, nothing heares.
Her servile beast yet would not leave her so,
But followes her far off, ne ought he feares
To be partaker of her wandring woe;
More mild in beastly kind then that her beastly foe.

## CANTO IV

To sinfull hous of Pryde Duessa
Guydes the faithfull knight;
Where, brothers death to wreak, Sansjoy
Doth chaleng him to fight.

1

Young knight whatever, that dost armes professe,
And through long labours huntest after fame,
Beware of fraud, beware of ficklenesse,
In choice, and chaunge of thy deare-loved Dame;
Least thou of her believe too lightly blame,
And rash misweening doe thy hart remove:
For unto knight there is no greater shame
Than lightnesse and inconstancie in love:
That doth this Redcrosse knights ensample plainly prove.

2

Who, after that he had faire Una lorne,[1]
Through light misdeeming of her loialtie;
And false Duessa in her sted had borne,
Called Fidess', and so supposd to be,
Long with her traveild; till at last they see
A goodly building bravely garnished;
The house of mightie Prince it seemd to be,
And towards it a broad high way that led,
All bare through peoples feet which thether traveiled.

3

Great troupes of people traveild thetherward
Both day and night, of each degree and place;
But few returned, having scaped hard,
With balefull beggery, or foule disgrace;
Which ever after in most wretched case,
Like loathsome lazars, by the hedges lay.
Thether Duessa badd him bend his pace,

1 lost; here, forsaken.

1 Sansloy. 2 piercing. 3 pierced. 4 destroy. 5 vilely.

For she is wearie of the toilsom way,
And also nigh consumed is the lingring day.

4

A stately Pallace built of squared bricke,
Which cunningly was without morter laid,
Whose wals were high, but nothing strong nor thick,
And golden foile all over them displaid,
That purest skye with brightnesse they dismaid:
High lifted up were many loftie towres,
And goodly galleries far over laid,
Full of faire windowes and delightful bowres:
And on the top a Diall told the timely howres.

5

It was a goodly heape for to behould,
And spake the praises of the workmans witt;
But full great pittie, that so faire a mould
Did on so weake foundation ever sitt:
For on a sandie hill, that still did flitt[1]
And fall away, it mounted was full hie,
That every breath of heaven shaked itt:
And all the hinder partes, that few could spie,
Were ruinous and old, but painted cunningly.

6

Arrived there, they passed in forth right;
For still to all the gates stood open wide:
Yet charge of them was to a Porter hight,[2]
Cald Malvenú, who entrance none denide:
Thence to the hall, which was on every side
With rich array and costly arras dight.
Infinite sortes of people did abide
There waiting long, to win the wished sight
Of her, that was the Lady of that Pallace bright.

7

By them they passe, all gazing on them round,
And to the Presence mount; whose glorious vew
Their frayle amazed senses did confound:
In living Princes court none ever knew
Such endlesse richesse, and so sumpteous shew;
Ne Persia selfe, the nourse[3] of pompous pride,
Like ever saw. And there a noble crew
Of Lords and Ladies stood on every side,
Which with their presence fayre the place much beautifide.

1 shift. 2 here, given. 3 nurse.

8

High above all a cloth of State was spred,
And a rich throne, as bright as sunny day;
On which there sate, most brave embellished
With royall robes and gorgeous array,
A mayden Queene that shone as Titans ray,
In glistring gold and perelesse pretious stone;
Yet her bright blazing beautie did assay
To dim the brightnesse of her glorious throne,
As envying her selfe, that too exceeding shone:

9

Exceeding shone, like Phœbus fayrest childe,[1]
That did presume his fathers fyrie wayne,
And flaming mouthes of steedes, unwonted wilde,
Through highest heaven with weaker hand to rayne,
Proud of such glory and advancement vayne,
While flashing beames do daze his feeble eyen,
He leaves the welkin way most beaten playne,[2]
And, rapt with whirling wheeles, inflames the skyen
With fire not made to burne, but fayrely for to shyne.

10

So proud she shyned in her princely state,
Looking to heaven, for earth she did disdayne,
And sitting high, for lowly she did hate:
Lo! underneath her scornefull feete was layne
A dreadfull Dragon with an hideous trayne;
And in her hand she held a mirrhour bright,
Wherein her face she often vewed fayne,[3]
And in her selfe-lov'd semblance took delight;
For she was wondrous faire, as any living wight.

11

Of griesly Pluto she the daughter was,
And sad Proserpina, the Queene of hell;
Yet did she thinke her pearelesse worth to pas
That parentage, with pride so did she swell;
And thundring Jove, that high in heaven doth dwell
And wield the world, she claymed for her syre,
Or if that any else did Jove excell;

1 Phaethon, who tried to drive his father's sun-horses across the heavens.
2 i.e., beaten path. 3 gladly.

For to the highest she did still aspyre,
Or, if ought higher were than that, did it desyre.

12

And proud Lucifera [1] men did her call,
That made her selfe a Queene, and crownd to be;
Yet rightfull kingdome she had none at all,
Ne heritage of native soveraintie;
But did usurpe with wrong and tyrannie
Upon the scepter which she now did hold:
Ne ruld her Realme with lawes, but pollicie,
And strong advizement of six wisards [2] old,
That, with their counsels bad, her kingdome did uphold.

13

Soone as the Elfin knight in presence came,
And false Duessa, seeming Lady fayre,
A gentle Husher, Vanitie by name,
Made rowme, and passage for them did prepaire:
So goodly brought them to the lowest stayre
Of her high throne; where they, on humble knee
Making obeysaunce, did the cause declare,
Why they were come her roiall state to see,
To prove the wide report of her great Majestee.

14

With loftie eyes, halfe loth to looke so lowe,
She thancked them in her disdainefull wise;
Ne other grace vouchsafed them to showe
Of Princesse worthy; scarse them bad arise.
Her Lordes and Ladies all this while devise
Themselves to setten forth to straungers sight:
Some frounce [3] their curled heare in courtly guise;
Some prancke [4] their ruffes; and others trimly dight
Their gay attyre; each others greater pride does spight.

15

Goodly they all that knight doe entertayne,
Right glad with him to have increast their crew;
But to Duess' each one himselfe did payne
All kindnesse and faire courtesie to shew,

1 symbolizing pride. 2 wizards, wise men.
3 frizzle. 4 dress up.

For in that court whylome [1] her well they knew:
Yet the stout Faery mongst the middest crowd
Thought all their glorie vaine in knightly vew,
And that great Princesse too exceeding prowd,
That to strange knight no better countenance allowd.

16

Suddein upriseth from her stately place
The roiall Dame, and for her coche doth call:
All hurtlen [2] forth; and she, with princely pace,
As faire Aurora in her purple pall
Out of the East the dawning day doth call.
So forth she comes; her brightnes brode doth blaze.
The heapes of people, thronging in the hall,
Doe ride each other upon her to gaze:
Her glorious glitterand light doth all mens eies amaze.

17

So forth she comes, and to her coche does clyme,
Adorned all with gold and girlonds gay,
That seemd as fresh as Flora in her prime;
And strove to match, in roiall rich array,
Great Junoes golden chayre; the which, they say,
The gods stand gazing on, when she does ride
To Joves high hous through heavens braspaved way,
Drawne of fayre Pecocks, that excell in pride,
And full of Argus [3] eyes their tayles dispredden wide.

18

But this was drawne of six unequall beasts,
On which her six sage Counsellours did ryde,
Taught to obay their bestiall beheasts,
With like conditions to their kindes applyde:
Of which the first, that all the rest did guyde,
Was sluggish Idlenesse, the nourse of sin;
Upon a slouthfull Asse he chose to ryde,
Arayd in habit blacke, and amis [4] thin,
Like to an holy Monck, the service to begin.

1 formerly. 2 hurry.
3 After Argus's death Hera put his many eyes into the peacock's tail.
4 amice, a priest's white neck-piece.

19

And in his hand his Portesse [1] still he bare,
That much was worne, but therein little redd;
For of devotion he had little care,
Still drownd in sleepe, and most of his daies dedd:
Scarse could he once uphold his heavie hedd,
To looken whether it were night or day.
May seeme the wayne [2] was very evill ledd,
When such an one had guiding of the way,
That knew not whether right he went, or else astray.

20

From worldly cares himselfe he did esloyne,[3]
And greatly shunned manly exercise;
From everie worke he chalenged essoyne,[4]
For contemplation sake: yet otherwise
His life he led in lawlesse riotise,
By which he grew to grievous malady;
For in his lustlesse limbs, through evill guise,
A shaking fever raignd continually.
Such one was Idlenesse, first of this company.

21

And by his side rode loathsome Gluttony,
Deformed creature, on a filthie swyne.
His belly was upblowne with luxury,
And eke with fatnesse swollen were his eyne;
And like a Crane his necke was long and fyne
With which he swallowed up excessive feast,
For want whereof poore people oft did pyne:
And all the way, most like a brutish beast,
He spued up his gorge, that all did him deteast.

22

In greene vine leaves he was right fitly clad,
For other clothes he could not weare for heate;
And on his head an yvie girland had,
From under which fast trickled downe the sweat.
Still as he rode he somewhat still did eat,
And in his hand did beare a bouzing [5] can,
Of which he supt so oft, that on his seat
His dronken corse he scarse upholden can:
In shape and life more like a monster then a man.

23

Unfit he was for any worldly thing,
And eke unhable once to stirre or go;
Not meet to be of counsell to a king,
Whose mind in meat and drinke was drowned so,
That from his frend he seeldome knew his fo.
Full of diseases was his carcas blew,
And a dry dropsie through his flesh did flow,
Which by misdiet daily greater grew.
Such one was Gluttony, the second of that crew.

24

And next to him rode lustfull Lechery,
Upon a bearded Goat, whose rugged haire,
And whally [1] eyes (the signe of gelosy,)
Was like the person selfe, whom he did beare:
Who rough, and blacke, and filthy did appeare,
Unseemely man to please faire Ladies eye;
Yet he of Ladies oft was loved deare,
When fairer faces were bid standen by:
O who does know the bent of womens fantasy?

25

In a greene gowne he clothed was full faire,
Which underneath did hide his filthinesse,
And in his hand a burning hart he bare,
Full of vaine follies, and new fanglenesse:
For he was false, and fraught with ficklenesse,
And learned had to love with secret lookes,
And well could daunce, and sing with ruefulnesse,
And fortunes tell, and read in loving bookes,
And thousand other wayes, to bait his fleshly hookes.

26

Inconstant man, that loved all he saw,
And lusted after all, that he did love,
Ne would his looser life be tide to law,
But joyd weake wemens hearts to tempt and prove
If from their loyall loves he might then move;
Which lewdnesse fild him with reprochfull paine
Of that fowle evill, which all men reprove,
That rots the marrow, and consumes the braine:
Such one was Lecherie, the third of all this traine.

27

And greedy Avarice by him did ride,
Upon a Camell loaden all with gold;

1 prayer book. 2 wain, chariot. 3 withdraw.
4 excuse. 5 boozing, drinking.

1 greenish.

Two iron coffers hong on either side,
With precious metall full as they might hold;
And in his lap an heap of coine he told; [1]
For of his wicked pelfe his God he made,
And unto hell him selfe for money sold:
Accursed usury was all his trade,
And right and wrong ylike in equall ballaunce waide.

28

His life was nigh unto deaths dore yplaste;
And thred-bare cote, and cobled shoes, hee ware;
Ne scarse good morsell all his life did taste,
But both from backe and belly still did spare,
To fill his bags, and richesse to compare: [2]
Yet childe ne kinsman living had he none
To leave them to; but thorough daily care
To get, and nightly feare to lose his owne,
He led a wretched life, unto himselfe unknowne.

29

Most wretched wight, whom nothing might suffise;
Whose greedy lust did lacke in greatest store;
Whose need had end, but no end covetise; [3]
Whose welth was want, whose plenty made him pore;
Who had enough, yett wished ever more;
A vile disease: and eke in foote and hand
A grievous gout tormented him full sore,
That well he could not touch, nor goe, nor stand.
Such one was Avarice, the fourth of this faire band.

30

And next to him malicious Envy rode
Upon a ravenous wolfe, and still did chaw
Between his cankred teeth a venemous tode,
That all the poison ran about his chaw,[4]
But inwardly he chawed his owne maw [5]
At neighbours welth, that made him ever sad,
For death it was, when any good he saw;
And wept, that cause of weeping none he had;
But when he heard of harme he wexed [6] wondrous glad.

31

All in a kirtle of discolourd say [7]
He clothed was, ypaynted full of eies;
And in his bosome secretly there lay
An hatefull Snake, the which his taile uptyes
In many folds, and mortall sting implyes.[8]

Still as he rode he gnasht his teeth to see
Those heapes of gold with griple [1] Covetyse
And grudged at the great felicitee
Of proud Lucifera, and his owne companee.

32

He hated all good workes and vertuous deeds,
And him no lesse, that any like did use;
And who with gratious bread the hungr feeds,
His almes for want of faith he doth accuse.
So every good to bad he doth abuse;
And eke the verse of famous Poets witt
He does backebite, and spightfull poison spues
From leprous mouth on all that ever writt.
Such one vile Envy was, that fifte in row dic sitt.

33

And him beside rides fierce revenging Wrath,[2]
Upon a Lion, loth for to be led;
And in his hand a burning brond he hath,
The which he brandisheth about his hed:
His eies did hurle forth sparcles fiery red,
And stared sterne on all that him beheld;
As ashes pale of hew, and seeming ded;
And on his dagger still his hand he held,
Trembling through hasty rage when chole in him sweld.

34

His ruffin [3] raiment all was staind with blood
Which he had spilt, and all to rags yrent,
Through unadvized rashnes woxen [4] wood; [5]
For of his hands he had no governement,
Ne car'd for blood in his avengement:
But, when the furious fitt was overpast,
His cruel facts [6] he often would repent;
Yet, wilfull man, he never would forecast
How many mischieves should ensue his heedlesse hast.

35

Full many mischiefes follow cruell Wrath.
Abhorred bloodshed, and tumultuous strife,
Unmanly murder, and unthrifty scath,[7]
Bitter despight, with rancours rusty knife,
And fretting griefe, the enemy of life:
All these, and many evils moe haunt ire,

1 counted. 2 acquire. 3 avarice. 4 jaw.
5 stomach. 6 waxed, grew. 7 fine serge.
8 wraps up.

1 grasping, greedy.
2 The six counsellors and Lucifera or Pride are, of course, the seven deadly sins.
3 ruffian. 4 grown. 5 mad.
6 acts. 7 harm.

he swelling Splene, and Frenzy raging rife,
he shaking Palsey, and Saint Fraunces fire.[1]
ich one was Wrath, the last of this ungodly
tire.[2]

36

And, after all, upon the wagon beame,
ode Sathan with a smarting whip in hand,
Vith which he forward lasht the laesy teme,
o oft as Slowth still in the mire did stand.
uge routs of people did about them
band,
nowting for joy; and still before their way
foggy mist had covered all the land;
nd, underneath their feet, all scattered lay
ead sculls and bones of men whose life had
gone astray.

37

So forth they marchen in this goodly
sort,
o take the solace of the open aire,
nd in fresh flowring fields themselves to
sport:
mongst the rest rode that false Lady faire,
he foule Duessa, next unto the chaire
f proud Lucifer', as one of the traine:
ut that good knight would not so nigh
repaire,
im selfe estraunging from their joyaunce
vaine,
hose fellowship seemd far unfitt for warlike
swaine.

38

So, having solaced themselves a space
Vith pleasaunce of the breathing fields
yfed,
hey backe retourned to the princely Place;
Vhereas an errant knight in armes ycled,
nd heathnish shield, wherein with letters
red,
Vas writt *Sansjoy*, they new arrived find:
nflam'd with fury and fiers hardy hed,
e seemd in hart to harbour thoughts un-
kind,
nd nourish bloody vengeaunce in his bitter
mind.

39

Who, when the shamed shield of slaine
Sansfoy
e spide with that same Faery champions
page,
ewraying him that did of late destroy
His eldest brother; burning all with rage,
He to him lept, and that same envious gage[1]
Of victors glory from him snacht away:
But th' Elfin knight, which ought[2] that war-
like wage,
Disdaind to loose the meed he wonne in
fray;
And, him rencountring fierce, reskewd the
noble pray.

40

Therewith they gan to hurtlen greedily,
Redoubted battaile ready to darrayne,[3]
And clash their shields, and shake their
swerds on hy,
That with their sturre they troubled all the
traine;
Till that great Queene, upon eternall paine
Of high displeasure that ensewen might,
Commaunded them their fury to refraine;
And, if that either to that shield had right,
In equall lists they should the morrow next
it fight.

41

"Ah, dearest Dame," quoth then the
Paynim bold,
"Pardon the error of enraged wight,
Whome great griefe made forgett the raines
to hold
Of reasons rule, to see this recreaunt knight,
No knight, but treachour full of false de-
spight
And shameful treason, who through guile
hath slayn
The prowest knight that ever field did
fight,
Even stout Sansfoy, (O who can then re-
frayn?)
Whose shield he beares renverst,[4] the more
to heap disdayn.

42

"And, to augment the glorie of his guile,
His dearest love, the faire Fidessa, loe!
Is there possessed of the traytour vile;
Who reapes the harvest sowen by his foe,
Sowen in bloodie field, and bought with
woe!
That brothers hand shall dearely well re-
quight,
So be, O Queene! you equall favour showe."
Him litle answerd th' angry Elfin knight;
He never meant with words, but swords, to
plead his right:

1 Saint Anthony's fire, or erysipelas, which Saint Anthony was supposed to cure.
2 band.

1 wage, challenge. 2 owned.
3 to arrange (especially of troops for battle).
4 reversed.

43

But threw his gauntlet, as a sacred pledge
His cause in combat the next day to try:
So been they parted both, with harts on edge
To be aveng'd each on his enimy.
That night they pas in joy and jollity,
Feasting and courting both in bowre and hall;
For Steward was excessive Gluttony,
That of his plenty poured forth to all:
Which doen, the Chamberlain, Slowth, did to rest them call.

44

Now whenas darkesome night had all displayd
Her coleblacke curtein over brightest skye;
The warlike youthes, on dayntie couches layd,
Did chace away sweet sleepe from sluggish eye,
To muse on meanes of hoped victory.
But whenas Morpheus had with leaden mace
Arrested all that courtly company,
Uprose Duessa from her resting place,
And to the Paynims lodging comes with silent pace.

45

Whom broad awake she findes, in troublous fitt,
Fore-casting how his foe he might annoy;
And him amoves with speaches seeming fitt:
"Ah deare Sansjoy, next dearest to Sansfoy,
Cause of my new griefe, cause of my new joy;
Joyous to see his ymage in mine eye,
And greevd to thinke how foe did him destroy,
That was the flowre of grace and chevalrye;
Lo! his Fidessa, to thy secret faith I flye."

46

With gentle wordes he can her fayrely greet,
And bad say on the secrete of her hart:
Then, sighing soft; "I learne that litle sweet
Oft tempred is," (quoth she,) "with muchell smart:
For since my brest was launcht with lovely dart
Of deare Sansfoy, I never joyed howre,
But in eternall woes my weaker hart
Have wasted, loving him with all my powre,
And for his sake have felt full many an heavie stowre.

47

"At last, when perils all I weened past,
And hop'd to reape the crop of all my care,
Into new woes unweeting I was cast
By this false faytor,[1] who unworthie ware
His worthie shield, whom he with guileful snare
Entrapped slew, and brought to shameful grave:
Me, silly maid, away with him he bare,
And ever since hath kept in darksom cave,
For that I would not yeeld that to Sansfoy gave.

48

"But since faire Sunne hath sperst that lowring clowd,
And to my loathed life now shewes some light,
Under your beames I will me safely shrowd
From dreaded storme of his disdainful spight:
To you th' inheritance belonges by right
Of brothers prayse, to you eke longes his love.
Let not his love, let not his restlesse spright,
Be unreveng'd, that calles to you above
From wandring Stygian shores, where it doth endlesse move."

49

Thereto said he, "Faire Dame, be nought dismaid
For sorrowes past; their griefe is with them gone:
Ne yet of present perill be affraid,
For needlesse feare did never vantage none;
And helplesse hap it booteth not to mone.
Dead is Sansfoy, his vitall paines are past,
Though greeved ghost for vengeance deep do grone:
He lives that shall him pay his dewties last
And guiltie Elfin blood shall sacrifice in hast."

50

"O! but I feare the fickle freakes," (quoth shee)
"Of fortune false, and oddes of armes in field."
"Why, dame," (quoth he) "what oddes can ever bee,
Where both doe fight alike, to win or yield?"
"Yea, but," (quoth she) "he beares a charmed shield,
And eke enchaunted armes, that none can perce;

[1] impostor.

e none can wound the man that does them wield."
Charmd or enchaunted," answerd he then ferce,
I no whitt reck, ne you the like need to reherce.

51

"But faire Fidessa, sithens[1] fortunes guile,
r enimies powre, hath now captived you,
eturne from whence ye came, and rest a while,
'ill morrow next that I the Elfe subdew,
nd with Sansfoyes dead dowry you endew."
Ah me! that is a double death," (she said)
With proud foes sight my sorrow to renew,
here ever yet I be, my secret aide
hall follow you." So, passing forth, she him obaid.

## CANTO V

The faithfull knight in equall field
Subdewes his faithlesse foe;
Whom false Duessa saves, and for
His cure to hell does goe.

1

The noble hart that harbours vertuous thought,
nd is with childe of glorious great intent,
an never rest, untill it forth have brought
h' eternall brood of glorie excellent:
uch restlesse passion did all night torment
he flaming corage of that Faery knight,
evizing how that doughtie turnament
ith greatest honour he atchieven might:
till did he wake, and still did watch for dawning light.

2

At last, the golden Orientall gate
f greatest heaven gan to open fayre;
nd Phoebus, fresh as brydegrome to his mate,
ame dauncing forth, shaking his deawie hayre,
nd hurld his glistring beams through gloomy ayre.
hich when the wakeful Elfe perceiv'd, streight way,
e started up, and did him selfe prepayre
n sunbright armes, and battailous array;
or with that Pagan proud he combatt will that day.

3

And forth he comes into the commune hall;
Where earely waite him many a gazing eye,
To weet what end to straunger knights may fall.
There many Minstrales maken melody,
To drive away the dull melancholy;
And many Bardes, that to the trembling chord
Can tune their timely voices cunningly;
And many Chroniclers, that can record
Old loves, and warres for Ladies doen by many a Lord.

4

Soone after comes the cruell Sarazin,
In woven maile all armed warily;
And sternly lookes at him, who not a pin
Does care for looke of living creatures eye.
They bring them wines of Greece and Araby,
And daintie spices fetch from furthest Ynd,[1]
To kindle heat of corage privily;
And in the wine a solemne oth they bynd
T' observe the sacred lawes of armes that are assynd.

5

At last forth comes that far renowmed Queene:
With royall pomp and princely majestie
She is ybrought unto a paled[2] greene,
And placed under stately canapee,
The warlike feates of both those knights to see.
On th' other side in all mens open vew
Duessa placed is, and on a tree
Sansfoy his shield is hangd with bloody hew;
Both those the lawrell girlonds to the victor dew.

6

A shrilling trompett sownded from on hye,
And unto battaill bad them selves addresse:
Their shining shieldes about their wrestes they tye,
And burning blades about their heades doe blesse,[3]
The instruments of wrath and heavinesse.
With greedy force each other doth assayle,
And strike so fiercely, that they do impresse
Deepe dinted furrowes in the battred mayle:
The yron walles to ward their blowes are weak and fraile.

1 since.

1 India. 2 enclosed by palings. 3 swing.

7

The Sarazin was stout and wondrous strong,
And heaped blowes like yron hammers great;
For after blood and vengeance he did long:
The knight was fiers, and full of youthly heat,
And doubled strokes, like dreaded thunders threat;
For all for praise and honour he did fight.
Both stricken stryke, and beaten both doe beat,
That from their shields forth flyeth firie light,
And hewen helmets deepe shew marks of eithers might.

8

So th' one for wrong, the other strives for right,
As when a Gryfon, seized of his pray,
A Dragon fiers encountreth in his flight,
Through widest ayre making his ydle way,
That would his rightfull ravine [1] rend away:
With hideous horror both together smight,
And souce [2] so sore that they the heavens affray;
The wise Southsayer, seeing so sad sight,
Th' amazed vulgar telles of warres and mortall fight.

9

So th' one for wrong, the other strives for right,
And each to deadly shame would drive his foe:
The cruell steele so greedily doth bight
In tender flesh, that streames of blood down flow;
With which the armes, that earst [3] so bright did show,
Into a pure vermillion now are dyde.
Great ruth in all the gazers harts did grow,
Seeing the gored woundes to gape so wyde,
That victory they dare not wish to either side.

10

At last the Paynim chaunst to cast his eye,
His suddein eye flaming with wrathfull fyre,
Upon his brothers shield, which hong thereby:
Therewith redoubled was his raging yre,
And said; "Ah! wretched sonne of wofull syre,
Doest thou sit wayling by blacke Stygian lake,
Whylest here thy shield is hangd for victors hyre?
And, sluggish german,[1] doest thy forces slak
To after-send his foe, that him may over take?

11

"Goe, caytive Elfe, him quickly overtake
And soone redeeme from his long-wandring woe:
Goe, guiltie ghost, to him my message make
That I his shield have quit [2] from dying foe."
Therewith upon his crest he stroke him so,
That twise he reeled, readie twise to fall:
End of the doubtfull battaile deemed tho
The lookers on; and lowd to him gan call
The false Duessa, 'Thine the shield, and I and all!"

12

Soone as the Faerie heard his Ladie speake,
Out of his swowning dreame he gan awake;
And quickning faith, that earst was woxen weake,
The creeping deadly cold away did shake:
Tho mov'd with wrath, and shame, and Ladies sake,
Of all attonce he cast [3] avengd to be,
And with so exceeding furie at him strake,
That forced him to stoupe upon his knee:
Had he not stouped so, he should have clover bee.

13

And to him said; "Goe now, proud Miscreant,
Thyselfe thy message do to german deare;
Alone he, wandring, thee too long doth want:
Goe say, his foe thy shield with his doth beare."
Therewith his heavie hand he high gan reare
Him to have slaine; when lo! a darkesome clowd
Upon him fell: he no where doth appeare,
But vanisht is. The Elfe him calls alowd,
But answer none receives; the darknes him does shrowd.

14

In haste Duessa from her place arose,
And to him running said; "O! prowest knight,
That ever Ladie to her love did chose,
Let now abate the terrour of your might,
And quench the flame of furious despight,
And bloodie vengeance: lo! th' infernal powres,

1 prey. 2 attack suddenly. 3 formerly.

1 relative; here, brother. 2 retrieved.
3 planned how.

overing your foe with cloud of deadly night,
lave borne him hence to Plutoes balefull bowres:
he conquest yours; I yours; the shield, and glory yours."

15

Not all so satisfide, with greedy eye
e sought all round about, his thristy [1] blade
o bathe in blood of faithlesse enimy;
Who all that while lay hid in secret shade.
e standes amazed how he thence should fade:
t last the trumpets Triumph sound on hie;
nd running Heralds humble homage made,
reeting him goodly with new victorie,
nd to him brought the shield, the cause of enmitie.

16

Wherewith he goeth to that soveraine Queene;
nd falling her before on lowly knee,
o her makes present of his service seene:
Which she accepts with thankes and goodly gree,[2]
reatly advaunc ing [3] his gay chevalree:
o marcheth home, and by her takes the knight,
Vhom all the people followe with great glee,
houting, and clapping all their hands on hight,
hat all the ayre it fills, and flyes to heaven bright.

17

Home is he brought, and layd in sumptous bed,
Vhere many skilfull leaches him abide
o salve his hurts, that yet still freshly bled.
n wine and oyle they wash his woundes wide,
nd softly gan embalme on everie side:
nd all the while most heavenly melody
bout the bed sweet musicke did divide,[4]
im to beguile of griefe and agony;
nd all the while Duessa wept full bitterly.

18

As when a wearie traveiler, that strayes
y muddy shore of broad seven-mouthed Nile,
nweeting of the perillous wandring wayes,
oth meete a cruell craftie Crocodile,
Which, in false griefe hyding his harmefull guile,
oth weepe full sore, and sheddeth tender teares;
The foolish man, that pities all this while
His mournefull plight, is swallowed up unwares,
Forgetfull of his owne that mindes an others cares.

19

So wept Duessa untill eventyde,
That shyning lampes in Joves high house were light;
Then forth she rose, ne lenger would abide,
But comes unto the place where th' Hethen knight,
In slombring swownd, nigh voyd of vitall spright,
Lay cover'd with inchaunted cloud all day:
Whom when she found, as she him left in plight,
To wayle his wofull case she would not stay,
But to the Easterne coast of heaven makes speedy way:

20

Where griesly Night, with visage deadly sad,
That Phœbus chearefull face durst never vew,
And in a foule blacke pitchy mantle clad,
She findes forth comming from her darksome mew,[1]
Where she all day did hide her hated hew.
Before the dore her yron charet stood,
Already harnessed for journey new,
And cole blacke steedes yborne of hellish brood,
That on their rusty bits did champ as they were wood.

21

Who when she saw Duessa, sunny bright,
Adornd with gold and jewels shining cleare,
She greatly grew amazed at the sight,
And th' unacquainted light began to feare,
For never did such brightnes there appeare;
And would have backe retyred to her cave,
Untill the witches speach she gan to heare,
Saying; "Yet, O thou dreaded Dame! I crave
Abyde, till I have told the message which I have."

22

She stayd; and foorth Duessa gan proceede:
"O! thou most auncient Grandmother [2] of all.

1 thirsty. 2 pleasure. 3 praising. 4 play.

1 hiding-place. 2 Night.

More old then Jove, whom thou at first didst breede,
Or that great house of Gods cælestiall,
Which wast begot in Dæmogorgons hall,[1]
And sawst the secrets of the world unmade.
Why suffredst thou thy Nephewes deare to fall,
With Elfin sword most shamefully betrade?
Lo! where the stout Sansjoy doth sleepe in deadly shade.

23

"And him before, I saw with bitter eyes
The bold Sansfoy shrinck underneath his speare:
And now the pray of fowles in field he lyes,
Nor wayld of friends, nor layd on groning beare,
That whylome was to me too dearely deare.
O! what of gods then boots it to be borne,
If old Aveugles[2] sonnes so evill heare?
Or who shall not great Nightes children scorne,
When two of three her Nephewes are so fowle forlorne?

24

"Up, then! up, dreary Dame, of darknes Queene!
Go, gather up the reliques of thy race;
Or else goe them avenge, and let be seene
That dreaded Night in brightest day hath place,
And can the children of fayre light deface."
Her feeling speaches some compassion mov'd
In hart, and chaunge in that great mothers face:
Yet pitty in her hart was never prov'd
Till then, for evermore she hated, never lov'd:

25

And said, "Deare daughter, rightly may I rew
The fall of famous children borne of mee,
And good successes which their foes ensew:
But who can turne the stream of destinee,
Or breake the chayne of strong necessitee,
Which fast is tyde to Joves eternall seat?
The sonnes of Day he favoureth, I see,
And by my ruines thinkes to make them great:
To make one great by others losse is bad excheat.[3]

1 i.e., in darkness. Demogorgon was the master demon in Hades.
2 Aveugle (the Blind Man) is the father of the three paynims.
3 confiscation; here, business.

26

"Yet shall they not escape so freely all,
For some shall pay the price of others guilt
And he the man that made Sansfoy to fall,
Shall with his owne blood price[1] that he hath spilt.
But what art thou, that telst of Nephews kilt?"
"I, that do seeme not I, Duessa ame,"
Quoth she, "how ever now, in garments gi
And gorgeous gold arayd, I to thee came,
Duessa I, the daughter of Deceipt and Shame."

27

Then, bowing downe her aged backe, she kist
The wicked witch, saying, "In that fayre face
The false resemblaunce of Deceipt, I wist,
Did closely lurke; yet so true-seeming grace
It carried, that I scarse in darksome place
Could it discerne, though I the mother bee
Of falshood, and roote of Duessaes race.
O welcome, child! whom I have longd to see
And now have seene unwares. Lo! now I goe with thee."

28

Then to her yron wagon she betakes,
And with her beares the fowle welfavourd witch.
Through mirkesome aire her ready way she makes:
Her twyfold Teme, of which two blacke as pitch,
And two were browne, yet each to each unlich,[2]
Did softly swim away, ne ever stamp
Unlesse she chaunst their stubborne mouths to twitch;
Then, foming tarre, their bridles they would champ,
And trampling the fine element would fiercely ramp.

29

So well they sped, that they be come at length
Unto the place whereas the Paynim lay,
Devoid of outward sence and native strength,
Coverd with charmed cloud from vew of day
And sight of men, since his late luckelesse fray.
His cruell wounds, with cruddy[3] bloud congeald,

1 repay. 2 unlike. 3 curdy.

hey binden up so wisely as they may,
nd handle softly, till they can be heald:
o lay him in her charett, close in night conceald.

30

And, all the while she stood upon the ground,
he wakefull dogs did never cease to bay,
s giving warning of th' unwonted sound,
ith which her yron wheeles did them affray,
nd her darke griesly looke them much dismay:
he messenger of death, the ghastly owle,
ith drery shriekes did also her bewray;
nd hungry wolves continually did howle
t her abhorred face, so filthy and so fowle.

31

Thence turning backe in silence softe they stole,
nd brought the heavy corse with easy pace
o yawning gulfe of deepe Avernus hole.
y that same hole an entraunce, darke and bace,
ith smoake and sulphur hiding all the place,
escends to hell: there creature never past,
hat backe retourned without heavenly grace;
ut dreadfull Furies, which their chaines have brast,
nd damned sprights sent forth to make ill men aghast.

32

By that same way the direfull dames doe drive
heir mournefull charett, fild with rusty blood,
nd downe to Plutoes house are come bilive:
hich passing through, on every side them stood
he trembling ghosts with sad amazed mood,
hattring their iron teeth, and staring wide
ith stony eies; and all the hellish brood
f feends infernall flockt on every side,
o gaze on erthly wight that with the Night durst ride.

33

They pas the bitter waves of Acheron,[1]
here many soules sit wailing woefully,
nd come to fiery flood of Phlegeton,[1]

1 Rivers in Hades.

Whereas the damned ghosts in torments fry,
And with sharp shrilling shriekes doe bootlesse cry,
Cursing high Jove, the which them thither sent.
The house of endlesse paine is built thereby,
In which ten thousand sorts of punishment
The cursed creatures doe eternally torment.

34

Before the threshold dreadfull Cerberus
His three deformed heads did lay along,
Curled with thousand adders venemous,
And lilled forth his bloody flaming tong:
At them he gan to reare his bristles strong,
And felly [1] gnarre,[2] untill Dayes enemy
Did him appease; then downe his taile he hong,
And suffered them to passen quietly;
For she in hell and heaven had power equally.

35

There was Ixion turned on a wheele,
For daring tempt the Queene of heaven to sin;
And Sisyphus an huge round stone did reele
Against an hill, ne might from labour lin;[3]
There thristy Tantalus hong by the chin;
And Tityus fed a vultur on his maw;
Typhœus joynts were stretched on a gin;
Theseus condemned to endlesse slouth by law;
And fifty sisters[4] water in leke vessels draw.

36

They all, beholding worldly wights in place,
Leave off their worke, unmindfull of their smart,
To gaze on them; who forth by them doe pace,
Till they be come unto the furthest part;
Where was a Cave ywrought by wondrous art.
Deepe, darke, uneasy, dolefull, comfortlesse.
In which sad Æsculapius[5] far apart
Emprisond was in chaines remedilesse;
For that Hippolytus rent corse he did redresse.

37

Hippolytus a jolly huntsman was,
That wont in charett chace the foming bore:

1 fiercely. 2 snarl. 3 cease.
4 The Danaides. 5 God of medicine.

He all his Peeres in beauty did surpas,
But Ladies love as losse of time forbore:
His wanton stepdame loved him the more;
But, when she saw her offred sweets refusd,
Her love she turnd to hate, and him before
His father fierce of treason false accusd,
And with her gealous termes his open eares abusd:

38

Who, all in rage, his Sea-god syre besought
Some cursed vengeaunce on his sonne to cast.
From surging gulf two Monsters streight were brought,
With dread whereof his chacing steedes aghast
Both charett swifte and huntsman overcast:
His goodly corps, on ragged cliffs yrent,
Was quite dismembred, and his members chast
Scattered on every mountaine as he went,
That of Hippolytus was lefte no moniment.

39

His cruell step-dame, seeing what was donne,
Her wicked daies with wretched knife did end,
In death avowing th' innocence of her sonne.
Which hearing, his rash syre began to rend
His heare, and hasty tong that did offend:
Tho, gathering up the reliques of his smart,
By Dianes meanes, who was Hippolyts frend,
Them brought to Æsculape, that by his art
Did heale them all againe, and joyned every part.

40

Such wondrous science in mans witt to rain
When Jove avizd, that could the dead revive,
And fates expired could renew again,
Of endlesse life he might him not deprive,
But unto hell did thrust him downe alive,
With flashing thunderbolt ywounded sore:
Where, long remaining, he did alwaies strive
Himselfe with salves to health for to restore,
And slake the heavenly fire that raged evermore.

41

There auncient Night arriving did alight
From her nigh weary wayne, and in her armes
To Aesculapius brought the wounded knight:
Whome having softly disaraid of armes,
Tho gan to him discover all his harmes,
Beseeching him with prayer and with praise
If either salves, or oyles, or herbes, or charmes,
A fordonne wight from dore of death mote raise,
He would at her request prolong her nephews daies.

42

"Ah Dame," (quoth he) "thou temptest me in vaine,
To dare the thing, which daily yet I rew,
And the old cause of my continued paine
With like attempt to like end to renew.
Is not enough, that, thrust from heaven dew,
Here endlesse penaunce for one fault I pay,
But that redoubled crime with vengeaunce new
Thou biddest me to eeke? [1] Can Night defray
The wrath of thundring Jove, that rules both night and day?"

43

"Not so," (quoth she) "but, sith that heavens king
From hope of heaven hath thee excluded quight,
Why fearest thou, that canst not hope for thing;
And fearest not that more thee hurten might,
Now in the powre of everlasting Night?
Goe to then, O thou far renowmed sonne
Of great Apollo! shew thy famous might
In medicine, that els hath to thee wonne
Great pains, and greater praise, both never to be donne."

44

Her words prevaild: And then the learned leach
His cunning hand gan to his wounds to lay,
And all things els the which his art did teach:
Which having seene, from thence arose away
The mother of dredd darknesse, and let stay
Aveugles sonne there in the leaches cure;
And, backe retourning, took her wonted way
To ronne her timely race, whilst Phoebus pure
In westerne waves his weary wagon did recure.

45

The false Duessa, leaving noyous Night,
Returnd to stately pallace of Dame Pryde:

1 increase.

Where when she came, she found the Faery knight
Departed thence; albee his woundes wyde
Not throughly heald unready were to ryde.
Good cause he had to hasten thence away;
For on a day his wary Dwarfe had spyde
Where in a dungeon deepe huge nombers lay
Of caytive wretched thralls, that wayled night and day.

46

A ruefull sight as could be seene with eie,
Of whom he learned had in secret wise
The hidden cause of their captivitie;
How mortgaging their lives to Covetise,
Through wastfull Pride and wanton Riotise,
They were by law of that proud Tyrannesse,
Provokt with Wrath and Envyes false surmise,
Condemned to that Dongeon mercilesse,
Where they should live in wo, and dye in wretchednesse.

47

There was that great proud king of Babylon,[1]
That would compell all nations to adore,
And him as onely God to call upon;
Till, through celestial doome thrown out of dore,
Into an Oxe he was transformd of yore.
There also was king Crœsus, that enhaunst
His hart too high through his great richesse store;
And proud Antiochus,[2] the which advaunst
His cursed hand gainst God, and on his altares daunst.

48

And them long time before, great Nimrod was,
That first the world with sword and fire warrayd;
And after him old Ninus [3] far did pas
In princely pomp, of all the world obayd.
There also was that mightie Monarch [4] layd
Low under all, yet above all in pride,
That name of native syre did fowle upbrayd,
And would as Ammons [5] sonne be magnifide,
Till, scornd of God and man, a shamefull death he dide.

1 Nebuchadnezzar.
2 King of Syria, second century B.C., twice conqueror of Jerusalem.
3 Reputed founder of Nineveh.
4 Alexander the Great. 5 Jupiter Ammon.

49

All these together in one heape were throwne,
Like carkases of beastes in butchers stall.
And in another corner wide were strowne
The Antique ruins of the Romanes fall;
Great Romulus, the Grandsyre of them all;
Proud Tarquin, and too lordly Lentulus;
Stout Scipio, and stubborne Hanniball;
Ambitious Sylla, and sterne Marius;
High Caesar, great Pompey, and fiers Antonius.

50

Amongst these mightie men were wemen mixt,
Proud wemen, vaine, forgetfull of their yoke:
The bold Semiramis,[1] whose sides transfixt
With sonnes own blade her fowle reproches spoke:
Fayre Sthenobœa,[2] that her selfe did choke
With wilfull chord for wanting of her will;
High minded Cleopatra, that with stroke
Of Aspes sting her selfe did stoutly kill;
And thousands moe the like that did that dongeon fill.

51

Besides the endlesse routes of wretched thralles,
Which thither were assembled day by day
From all the world, after their wofull falles,
Through wicked pride and wasted welthes decay.
But most of all, which in that dongeon lay,
Fell from high Princes courtes, or Ladies bowres,
Where they in ydle pomp, or wanton play,
Consumed had their goods and thriftlesse howres,
And lastly thrown themselves into these heavy stowres.[3]

52

Whose case whenas the careful Dwarfe had tould,
And made ensample of their mournful sight
Unto his Maister, he no lenger would
There dwell in perill of like painefull plight,
But earely rose; and, ere that dawning light
Discovered had the world to heaven wyde,
He by a privy Posterne tooke his flight,
That of no envious eyes he mote be spyde;
For, doubtlesse, death ensewd if any him descryde.

1 Early queen of Assyria.
2 Wife of Prœtus. 3 sorrows.

53

Scarse could he footing find in that fowle way,
For many corses, like a great Lay-stall,[1]
Of murdred men, which therein strowed lay
Without remorse or decent funerall;
Which al through that great Princesse pride did fall,
And came to shamefull end. And them besyde,
Forth ryding underneath the castell wall,
A Donghill of dead carcases he spyde;
The dreadfull spectacle of that sad house of Pryde.

## CANTO VI

From lawlesse lust by wondrous grace
Fayre Una is releast:
Whom salvage[2] nation does adore,
And learnes her wise beheast.

1

As when a ship, that flyes fayre under sayle,
An hidden rocke escaped hath unwares,
That lay in waite her wrack for to bewaile,
The Marriner yet halfe amazed stares
At perill past, and yet in doubt ne dares
To joy at his foolhappie oversight:
So doubly is distrest twixt joy and cares
The dreadlesse corage of this Elfin knight,
Having escapt so sad ensamples in his sight.

2

Yet sad he was, that his too hastie speed
The fayre Duess' had forst him leave behind;
And yet more sad, that Una, his deare dreed,[3]
Her truth had staynd with treason so unkind:
Yet cryme in her could never creature find;
But for his love, and for her own selfe sake,
She wandred had from one to other Ynd,
Him for to seeke, ne ever would forsake.
Till her unwares the fiers Sansloy did overtake:

3

Who after Archimagoes fowle defeat,
Led her away into a forrest wilde,
And turning wrathfull fire to lustfull heat,
With beastly sin thought her to have defiled,
And made the vassall of his pleasures vilde.
Yet first he cast by treatie, and by traynes,
Her to perswade, that stubborne fort to yilde:
For greater conquest of hard love he gaynes,
That workes it to his will, then he that it constraines.

1 refuse pile. 2 savage.
3 i.e., object worshiped.

4

With fawning wordes he courted her a while,
And looking lovely, and oft sighing sore,
Her constant hart did tempt with diverse guile:
But wordes, and lookes, and sighes she did abhore,
As rocke of Diamond stedfast evermore.
Yet for to feed his fyrie lustfull eye,
He snatcht the vele, that hong her face before;
Then gan her beautie shine, as brightest skye,
And burnt his beastly hart t'efforce her chastitye.

5

So when he saw his flatt'ring arts to fayle,
And subtile engines bet from batteree,
With greedy force he gan the fort assayle,
Whereof he weend possessed soone to bee,
And win rich spoile of ransackt chastetee.
Ah heavens, that do this hideous act behold,
And heavenly virgin thus outraged see,
How can ye vengeance just so long withhold,
And hurle not flashing flames upon that Paynim bold?

6

The pitteous mayden, carefull, comfortlesse,
Does throw out thrilling shriekes, and shrieking cryes,
The last vaine helpe of wemens great distresse,
And with loud plaintes importuneth the skyes,
That molten starres doe drop like weeping eyes;
And Phœbus, flying so most shamefull sight,
His blushing face in foggy cloud implyes,
And hydes for shame. What witt of mortal wight
Can now devise to quitt a thrall from such a plight?

7

Eternall providence, exceeding thought,
Where none appeares can make her selfe a way.
A wondrous way it for this Lady wrought,
From Lyons clawes to pluck the gryped pray.
Her shrill outcryes and shrieks so loud did bray,
That all the woodes and forestes did resownd:
A troupe of Faunes and Satyres far away

Within the wood were dauncing in a rownd,
Whiles old Sylvanus slept in shady arber sownd:

8

Who, when they heard that pitteous strained voice,
In haste forsooke their rurall meriment,
And ran towardes the far rebownded noyce,
To weet what wight so loudly did lament.
Unto the place they come incontinent: [1]
Whom when the raging Sarazin espyde,
A rude, mishapen, monstrous rablement,
Whose like he never saw, he durst not byde,
But got his ready steed, and fast away gan ryde.

9

The wyld woodgods, arrived in the place,
There find the virgin, doolfull, desolate,
With ruffled rayments, and fayre blubbred face,
As her outrageous foe had left her late;
And trembling yet through feare of former hate.
All stand amazed at so uncouth sight,
And gin to pittie her unhappie state:
All stand astonied at her beautie bright,
In their rude eyes unworthie of so wofull plight.

10

She, more amazd, in double dread doth dwell;
And every tender part for feare does shake.
As when a greedy Wolfe, through honger fell,
A seely Lamb far from the flock does take,
Of whom he meanes his bloody feast to make,
A Lyon spyes fast running towards him,
The innocent pray in hast he does forsake;
Which, quitt from death, yet quakes in every lim
With chaunge of feare, to see the Lyon looke so grim.

11

Such fearefull fitt assaid her trembling hart,
Ne word to speake, ne joynt to move, she had;
The salvage nation feele her secret smart,
And read her sorrow in her count'nance sad;
Their frowning forheades, with rough hornes yclad,
And rustick horror, all asyde doe lay:
And, gently grenning, shew a semblance glad
To comfort her; and, feare to put away,
Their backward bent knees teach her humbly to obay.

1 without delaying.

12

The doubtfull Damzell dare not yet committ
Her single person to their barbarous truth;
But still twixt feare and hope amazd does sitt,
Late learnd what harme to hasty trust ensu'th.
They, in compassion of her tender youth,
And wonder of her beautie soverayne,
Are wonne with pitty and unwonted ruth;
And, all prostrate upon the lowly playne,
Doe kisse her feete, and fawne on her with count'nance fayne.

13

Their harts she ghesseth by their humble guise,
And yieldes her to extremitie of time:
So from the ground she fearelesse doth arise,
And walketh forth without suspect of crime.
They, all as glad as birdes of joyous Pryme,[1]
Thence lead her forth, about her dauncing round,
Shouting, and singing all a shepheards ryme;
And with greene braunches strowing all the ground,
Do worship her as Queene with olive girlond cround.

14

And all the way their merry pipes they sound,
That all the woods with doubled Eccho ring;
And with their horned feet doe weare the ground,
Leaping like wanton kids in pleasant Spring.
So towards old Sylvanus they her bring;
Who, with the noyse awaked, commeth out
To weet the cause, his weake steps governing [2]
And aged limbs on cypresse stadle [3] stout;
And with an yvie twyne his waste is girt about.

15

Far off he wonders what them makes so glad,
Or Bacchus merry fruit they did invent,[4]

1 springtime.
2 This participle is transposed from its normal place before *his*.
3 staff. 4 discover, find.

Or Cybeles franticke rites have made them mad:
They, drawing nigh, unto their God present
That flowre of fayth and beautie excellent.
The God himselfe, vewing that mirrhour rare,
Stood long amazd, and burnt in his intent:
His owne fayre Dryope [1] now he thinkes not faire,
And Pholoe [2] fowle, when her to this he doth compaire.

16

The woodborne people fall before her flat,
And worship her as Goddesse of the wood;
And old Sylvanus selfe bethinkes not what
To thinke of wight so fayre, but gazing stood
In doubt to deeme her borne of earthly brood:
Sometimes dame Venus selfe he seemes to see;
But Venus never had so sober mood:
Sometimes Diana he her takes to be,
But misseth bow and shaftes, and buskins to her knee.

17

By vew of her he ginneth to revive
His ancient love, and dearest Cyparisse; [3]
And calles to mind his pourtraiture alive,
How fayre he was, and yet not fayre to this;
And how he slew with glaunccing dart amisse
A gentle Hynd, the which the lovely boy
Did love as life, above all worldly blisse;
For griefe whereof the lad n'ould after joy,
But pynd away in anguish and selfe-wild annoy.

18

The wooddy nymphes, faire Hamadryades,
Her to behold do thither runne apace;
And all the troupe of light-foot Naiades
Flocke all about to see her lovely face;
But, when they vewed have her heavenly grace,
They envy her in their malitious mind,
And fly away for feare of fowle disgrace.
But all the Satyres scorne their woody kind,
And henceforth nothing faire but her on earth they find.

19

Glad of such lucke, the luckelesse lucky mayd
Did her content to please their feeble eyes,
And long time with that salvage people stayd,
To gather breath in many miseryes.
During which time her gentle wit she plyes
To teach them truth, which worshipt her in vaine,
And made her th' Image of Idolatryes;
But when their bootlesse zeale she did restrayne
From her own worship, they her Asse would worship fayn.

20

It fortuned, a noble warlike knight
By just occasion to that forrest came
To seeke his kindred, and the lignage right
From whence he tooke his weldeserved name:
He had in armes abroad wonne muchell fame,
And fild far landes with glorie of his might;
Plaine, faithfull, true, and enimy of shame,
And ever lov'd to fight for Ladies right;
But in vaine glorious frayes he litle did delight.

21

A Satyres sonne, yborne in forrest wyld,
By straunge adventure as it did betyde,
And there begotten of a Lady myld,
Fayre Thyamis, the daughter of Labryde;
That was in sacred bandes of wedlocke tyde
To Therion, a loose unruly swayne,
Who had more joy to raunge the forrest wyde,
And chase the salvage beast with busie payne,
Then serve his Ladies love, and waste in pleasures vayne.

22

The forlorne mayd did with loves longing burne,
And could not lacke her lovers company,
But to the wood she goes, to serve her turne,
And seeke her spouse, that from her still does fly,
And followes other game and venery:
A Satyre chaunst her wandring for to find,
And kindling coles of lust in brutish eye,
The loyall links of wedlocke did unbind,
And made her person thrall unto his beastly kind.

23

So long in secret cabin there he held
Her captive to his sensuall desire,

1 His wife. 2 A nymph.
3 Sylvanus loved this youth, who was turned into a cypress at his death.

Till that with timely fruit her belly sweld,
And bore a boy unto that salvage sire:
Then home he suffred her for to retire,
For ransome leaving him the late borne childe;
Whom till to ryper yeares he gan aspire,
He noursled up in life and manners wilde,
Emongst wild beasts and woods, from lawes of men exilde.

24

For all he taught the tender ymp was but
To banish cowardize and bastard feare:
His trembling hand he would him force to put
Upon the Lyon and the rugged Beare;
And from the she Beares teats her whelps to teare;
And eke wyld roring Buls he would him make
To tame, and ryde their backes, not made to beare;
And the Robuckes in flight to overtake,
That everie beast for feare of him did fly, and quake.

25

Thereby so fearlesse and so fell he grew,
That his own syre, and maister of his guise,[1]
Did often tremble at his horrid vew;
And oft, for dread of hurt, would him advise
The angry beastes not rashly to despise,
Nor too much to provoke; for he would learne
The Lyon stoup to him in lowly wise,
(A lesson hard) and make the Libbard[2] sterne
Leave roaring, when in rage he for revenge did earne.

26

And for to make his powre approved more,
Wyld beastes in yron yokes he would compell;
The spotted Panther, and the tusked Bore,
The Pardale[3] swift, and the Tigre cruell,
The Antelope, and Wolfe both fiers and fell;
And them constraine in equall teme to draw.
Such joy he had their stubborne harts to quell,
And sturdie courage tame with dreadfull aw,
That his beheast they feared as a tyrans law.

27

His loving mother came upon a day
Unto the woodes, to see her little sonne;
And chaunst unwares to meet him in the way,
After his sportes and cruell pastime donne;
When after him a Lyonesse did runne,
That roaring all with rage did lowd requere
Her children deare, whom he away had wonne:
The Lyon whelpes she saw how he did beare,
And lull in rugged armes withouten childish feare.

28

The fearefull Dame all quaked at the sight,
And turning backe gan fast to fly away;
Untill, with love revokt from vaine affright,
She hardly yet perswaded was to stay,
And then to him these womanish words gan say:
"Ah Satyrane, my dearling and my joy,
For love of me leave off this dreadfull play;
To dally thus with death is no fit toy:
Go, find some other play-fellowes, mine own sweet boy."

29

In these and like delightes of bloody game
He trayned was, till ryper years he raught;[1]
And there abode, whylst any beast of name
Walkt in that forrest, whom he had not taught
To feare his force: and then his courage haught[2]
Desyrd of forreine foemen to be knowne,
And far abroad for straunge adventures sought;
In which his might was never overthrowne;
But through al Faery lond his famous worth was blown.

30

Yet evermore it was his maner faire,
After long labours and adventures spent,
Unto those native woods for to repaire,
To see his syre and ofspring auncient.
And now he thither came for like intent;
Where he unwares the fairest Una found,
Straunge Lady in so straunge habiliment,
Teaching the Satyres, which her sat around,
Trew sacred lore, which from her sweet lips did redound.

31

He wondred at her wisedome hevenly rare,
Whose like in womens witt he never knew;
And, when her curteous deeds he did compare,

1 manner. 2 leopard. 3 panther.

1 reached. 2 great.

Gan her admire, and her sad sorrowes rew,
Blaming of Fortune, which such troubles threw,
And joyd to make proofe of her cruelty
On gentle Dame, so hurtlesse[1] and so trew:
Thenceforth he kept her goodly company,
And learnd her discipline of faith and verity.

32

But she, all vowd unto the Redcrosse Knight,
His wandring perill closely did lament,
Ne in this new acquaintaunce could delight;
But her deare heart with anguish did torment,
And all her witt in secret counsels spent,
How to escape. At last in privy wise
To Satyrane she shewed her intent;
Who, glad to gain such favour, gan devise,
How with that pensive Maid he best might thence arise.

33

So on a day, when Satyres all were gone
To do their service to Sylvanus old,
The gentle virgin, left behinde alone,
He led away with corage stout and bold.
Too late it was to Satyres to be told,
Or ever hope recover her againe:
In vaine he seekes that having cannot hold.
So fast he carried her with carefull paine,
That they the woods are past, and come now to the plaine.

34

The better part now of the lingring day
They traveild had, whenas they far espide
A weary wight forwandring by the way;
And towards him they gan in haste to ride,
To weete of newes that did abroad betide,
Or tidings of her knight of the Redcrosse;
But he them spying gan to turne aside
For feare, as seemd, or for some feigned losse:
More greedy they of newes fast towards him do crosse.

35

A silly[2] man, in simple weeds forworne,
And soild with dust of the long dried way;
His sandales were with toilsome travell torne,
And face all tand with scorching sunny ray,
As he had traveild many a sommers day
Through boyling sands of Arabie and Ynde,
And in his hand a Jacobs staffe,[3] to stay
His weary limbs upon; and eke behind
His scrip did hang, in which his needments he did bind.

36

The knight, approching nigh, of him inquerd
Tidings of warre, and of adventures new;
But warres, nor new adventures, none he herd.
Then Una gan to aske, if ought he knew,
Or heard abroad of that her champion trew,
That in his armour bare a croslet red?
"Ay me! Deare dame," (quoth he) "well may I rew
To tell the sad sight which mine eies have red;
These eies did see that knight both living and eke ded."

37

That cruell word her tender hart so thrild,
That suddein cold did ronne through every vaine,
And stony horrour all her sences fild
With dying fitt, that downe she fell for paine.
The knight her lightly reared up againe,
And comforted with curteous kind reliefe:
Then, wonne from death, she bad him tellen plaine
The further processe of her hidden griefe:
The lesser pangs can beare who hath endur'd the chief.

38

Then gan the Pilgrim thus: "I chaunst this day,
This fatall day that shall I ever rew,
To see two knights, in travell on my way,
(A sory sight) arraung'd in batteill new,
Both breathing vengeaunce, both of wrathfull hew.
My feareful flesh did tremble at their strife,
To see their blades so greedily imbrew,
That, dronke with blood, yet thristed after life:
What more? the Redcrosse knight was slain with Paynim knife."

39

"Ah! dearest Lord," (quoth she) "how might that bee,
And he the stoutest knight that ever wonne?"
"Ah! dearest dame," (quoth hee) "how might I see

1 harmless, innocent. 2 seely, i.e., simple.
3 pilgrim's staff, so called after Saint James or Jacobus.

The thing that might not be, and yet was donne?"
"Where is," (said Satyrane) "that Paynims sonne,
That him of life, and us of joy, hath refte?"
'Not far away," (quoth he) "he hence doth wonne,[1]
Foreby a fountaine, where I late him lefte
Washing his bloody wounds, that through the steele were cleft."

40

Therewith the knight thence marched forth in hast,
Whiles Una, with huge heavinesse opprest,
Could not for sorrow follow him so fast;
And soone he came, as he the place had ghest,
Whereas that Pagan proud him selfe did rest
In secret shadow by a fountaine side:
Even he it was, that earst would have supprest
Faire Una; whom when Satyrane espide,
With foule reprochfull words he boldly him defide.

41

And said; "Arise, thou cursed Miscreaunt,
That hast with knightlesse guile, and trecherous train,
Faire knighthood fowly shamed, and doest vaunt
That good knight of the Redcrosse to have slain:
Arise, and with like treason now maintain
Thy guilty wrong, or els thee guilty yield."
The Sarazin, this hearing, rose amain,
And, catching up in hast his three-square shield
And shining helmet, soone him buckled to the field.

42

And, drawing nigh him, said; "Ah! misborn Elfe,
In evill houre thy foes thee hither sent
Anothers wrongs to wreak upon thy selfe:
Yet ill thou blamest me for having blent
My name with guile and traiterous intent:
That Redcrosse knight, perdie,[2] I never slew;
But had he beene where earst his armes were lent,
Th' enchaunter vaine his errour should not rew:
But thou his errour shalt, I hope, now proven trew."

1 live. 2 in truth.

43

Therewith they gan, both furious and fell,
To thunder blowes, and fiersly to assaile
Each other, bent his enimy to quell,
That with their force they perst both plate and maile,
And made wide furrowes in their fleshes fraile,
That it would pitty any living eie.
Large floods of blood adowne their sides did raile;
But floods of blood could not them satisfie:
Both hongred after death; both chose to win, or die.

44

So long they fight, and full revenge pursue,
That, fainting, each themselves to breathen lett,
And, ofte refreshed, battell oft renue.
As when two Bores, with rancling malice mett,
Their gory sides fresh bleeding fiercely frett;
Til breathlesse both themselves aside retire,
Where foming wrath their cruell tuskes they whett,
And trample th' earth, the whiles they may respire,
Then backe to fight againe, new breathed and entire.

45

So fiersly, when these knights had breathed once,
They gan to fight retourne, increasing more
Their puissant force, and cruell rage attonce.
With heaped strokes more hugely then before;
That with their drery wounds, and bloody gore,
They both, deformed, scarsely could bee known.
By this, sad Una fraught with anguish sore,
Led with their noise which through the aire was thrown,
Arriv'd wher they in erth their fruitles blood had sown.

46

Whom all so soone as that proud Sarazin
Espide, he gan revive the memory
Of his leud lusts, and late attempted sin,
And lefte the doubtfull battell hastily,
To catch her, newly offred to his eie;
But Satyrane, with strokes him turning, staid,
And sternely bad him other businesse plie,
Then hunt the steps of pure unspotted Maid:
Wherewith he al enrag'd these bitter speaches said.

47

"O foolish faeries sonne! what fury mad
Hath thee incenst to hast thy dolefull fate?
Were it not better I that Lady had
Then that thou hadst repented it too late?
Most sencelesse man he, that himselfe doth hate,
To love another: Lo! then, for thine ayd,
Here take thy lovers token on thy pate."
So they to fight; the whiles the royall Mayd
Fledd farre away, of that proud Paynim sore afrayd.

48

But that false Pilgrim, which that leasing[1] told,
Being in deed old Archimage, did stay
In secret shadow all this to behold;
And much rejoyced in their bloody fray:
But, when he saw the Damsell passe away,
He left his stond, and her pursewd apace,
In hope to bring her to her last decay.
But for to tell her lamentable cace,
And eke this battels end, will need another place.

## CANTO VII

The Redcrosse knight is captive made
By Gyaunt proud opprest:
Prince Arthure meets with Una greatly with those newes distrest.

1

What man so wise, what earthly witt so ware,
As to discry the crafty cunning traine,
By which deceipt doth maske in visour[2] faire,
And cast her coulours, died deepe in graine,[3]
To seeme like truth, whose shape she well can faine,
And fitting gestures to her purpose frame,
The guiltlesse man with guile to entertaine?
Great maistresse of her art was that false Dame,
The false Duessa, cloked with Fidessaes name.

2

Who when, returning from the drery Night,
She fownd not in that perilous hous of Pryde,
Where she had left the noble Redcrosse knight,
Her hoped pray, she would no lenger byde,
But forth she went to seeke him far and wide.
Ere long she fownd, whereas he wearie sate
To reste him selfe foreby a fountaine syde,
Disarmed all of yron-coted Plate;
And by his side his steed the grassy forage ate.

3

Hee feedes upon the cooling shade, and bayes[1]
His sweatie forehead in the breathing wynd,
Which through the trembling leaves full gently playes,
Wherein the chearefull birds of sundry kynd
Doe chaunt sweet musick to delight his mynd.
The witch approching gan him fayrely greet,
And with reproch of carelesnes unkynd
Upbrayd, for leaving her in place unmeet,
With fowle words tempring faire, soure gall with hony sweet.

4

Unkindnesse past, they gan of solace treat,
And bathe in pleasaunce of the joyous shade,
Which shielded them against the boyling heat,
And with greene boughes decking a gloomy glade,
About the fountaine like a girlond made;
Whose bubbling wave did ever freshly well,
Ne ever would through fervent sommer fade:
The sacred Nymph, which therein wont to dwell,
Was out of Dianes favor, as it then befell.

5

The cause was this: one day, when Phœbe[2] fayre
With all her band was following the chace,
This nymph, quite tyr'd with heat of scorching ayre,
Satt downe to rest in middest of the race:
The goddesse wroth gan fowly her disgrace,
And badd the waters, which from her did flow,
Be such as she her selfe was then in place.
Thenceforth her waters wexed dull and slow,
And all that drinke thereof do faint and feeble grow.

6

Hereof this gentle knight unweeting was;
And lying downe upon the sandie graile,[3]
Dronke of the streame, as cleare as christall glas:

1 falsehood. 2 disguise. 3 fast color.

1 bathes.
2 Diana, goddess of the chase, sister of Phœbus Apollo
3 gravel.

ftsoones his manly forces gan to fayle.
nd mightie strong was turnd to feeble frayle.
is chaunged powres at first them selves not felt;
ill crudled cold his corage gan assayle,
nd cheareful blood in fayntnes chill did melt,
Which like a fever fit through all his bodie swelt.[1]

7

Yet goodly court he made still to his Dame,
ourd out in loosnesse on the grassy grownd,
oth carelesse of his health, and of his fame;
ill at the last he heard a dreadfull sownd,
Which through the wood loud bellowing did rebownd,
hat all the earth for terror seemd to shake,
nd trees did tremble. Th' Elfe, therewith astownd,
pstarted lightly from his looser make,[2]
nd his unready weapons gan in hand to take.

8

But ere he could his armour on him dight,
r gett his shield, his monstrous enimy
ith sturdie steps came stalking in his sight,
n hideous Geaunt,[3] horrible and hye,
hat with his tallnesse seemd to threat the skye;
he ground eke groned under him for dreed:
is living like saw never living eye,
e durst behold: his stature did exceed
he hight of three the tallest sonnes of mortall seed.

9

The greatest Earth his uncouth mother was,
nd blustring Æolus his boasted sire,
ho with his breath, which through the world doth pas,
er hollow womb did secretly inspire,
nd fild her hidden caves with stormie yre,
hat she conceiv'd; and trebling the dew time,
n which the wombes of women do expire,
rought forth this monstrous masse of earthly slime,
uft up with emptie wind, and fild with sinfull crime.

1 swelled, burned. 3 companion.
2 Orgoglio, or Pride.

10

So growen great, through arrogant delight
Of th' high descent whereof he was yborne,
And through presumption of his matchlesse might,
All other powres and knighthood he did scorne.
Such now he marcheth to this man forlorne,
And left to losse;[1] his stalking steps are stayde
Upon a snaggy Oke, which he had torne
Out of his mothers bowelles, and it made
His mortall mace, wherewith his foemen he dismayde.

11

That, when the knight he spyde, he gan advaunce
With huge force and insupportable mayne,[2]
And towardes him with dreadfull fury praunce;
Who haplesse, and eke hopelesse, all in vaine
Did to him pace sad battaile to darrayne,
Disarmd, disgraste, and inwardly dismayde;
And eke so faint in every joynt and vayne,
Through that fraile fountain which him feeble made,
That scarsely could he weeld his bootlesse single blade.

12

The Geaunt strooke so maynly mercilesse,
That could have overthrowne a stony towre;
And, were not hevenly grace that did him blesse,
He had beene pouldred [3] all as thin as flowre:
But he was wary of that deadly stowre,
And lightly lept from underneath the blow:
Yet so exceeding was the villeins powre,
That with the winde it did him overthrow,
And all his sences stound that still he lay full low.

13

As when that divelish yron Engin, wrought
In deepest Hell, and framd by Furies skill,
With windy Nitre and quick Sulphur fraught,
And ramd with bollet rownd, ordaind to kill,
Conceiveth fyre, the heavens it doth fill
With thundring noyse, and all the ayre doth choke,
That none can breath, nor see, nor heare at will,

1 destruction. 2 strength.
3 powdered, beaten.

Through smouldry cloud of duskish stincking smoke;
That th' only breath him daunts, who hath escapt the stroke.

14

So daunted [1] when the Geaunt saw the knight,
His heavie hand he heaved up on hye,
And him to dust thought to have battred quight,
Untill Duessa loud to him gan crye,
"O great Orgoglio! greatest under skye,
O! hold thy mortall [2] hand for Ladies sake;
Hold for my sake, and doe him not to dye,
But vanquisht thine eternall bondslave make,
And me, thy worthy meed, unto thy Leman take."

15

He hearkned, and did stay from further harmes,
To gayne so goodly guerdon as she spake: [3]
So willingly she came into his armes,
Who her as willingly to grace did take,
And was possessed of his newfound make.
Then up he tooke the slombred [4] sencelesse corse,
And, ere he could out of his swowne awake,
Him to his castle brought with hastie forse,
And in a Dongeon deepe him threw without remorse.

16

From that day forth Duessa was his deare,
And highly honourd in his haughtie eye:
He gave her gold and purple pall to weare,
And triple crowne set on her head full hye,
And her endowd with royall majestye.
Then, for to make her dreaded more of men,
And peoples hartes with awfull terror tye,
A monstrous beast ybredd in filthy fen
He chose, which he had kept long time in darksom den.

17

Such one it was, as that renowmed Snake
Which great Alcides [5] in Stremona slew,
Long fostred in the filth of Lerna lake:
Whose many heades, out budding ever new,
Did breed him endlesse labor to subdew.
But this same Monster much more ugly was,

1 modifies *knight*. 2 deadly.
3 "as good a reward as she said it was."
4 unconscious. 5 Hercules.

For seven great heads out of his body grew
An yron brest, and back of scaly bras,
And all embrewd in blood his eyes did shin
as glas.

18

His tayle was stretched out in wondrou
length,
That to the hous of hevenly gods
raught: [1]
And with extorted powre, and borrow'
strength,
The everburning lamps from thence
braught,
And prowdly threw to ground, as things o
naught:
And underneath his filthy feet did tread
The sacred thinges, and holy heastes [2] fore
taught. [3]
Upon this dreadfull Beast with sevenfol
head
He sett the false Duessa, for more aw an
dread.

19

The wofull Dwarfe, which saw his maister
fall
Whiles he had keeping of his grasing steed,
And valiant knight become a caytiv
thrall,
When all was past, tooke up his forlorne
weed; [5]
His mightie Armour, missing most at need;
His silver shield, now idle, maisterlesse;
His poynant speare that many made
bleed,
The rueful moniments of heavinesse;
And with them all departes to tell his grea
distresse.

20

He had not travaild long, when on th
way
He wofull Lady, wofull Una, met,
Fast flying from that Paynims greedy pray,
Whilest Satyrane him from pursuit di
let: [7]
Who when her eyes she on the Dwarf ha
set,
And saw the signes that deadly tydinge
spake,
She fell to ground for sorrowfull regret,
And lively [8] breath her sad brest did forsake
Yet might her pitteous hart be seene to pan
and quake.

1 reached. 2 behests.
3 taught before or previously. 4 abandoned.
5 attire. 6 plunder. 7 hinder.
8 life-supporting.

21

The messenger of so unhappie newes
Would faine have dyde: dead was his hart within,
Yet outwardly some little comfort shewes.
At last, recovering hart, he does begin
To rubb her temples, and to chaufe her chin,
And everie tender part does tosse and turne:
So hardly he the flitted life does win
Into her native prison to retourne;
Then gins her grieved ghost thus to lament and mourne:

22

"Ye dreary instruments of dolefull sight,
That doe this deadly spectacle behold,
Why doe ye lenger feed on loathed light,
Or liking find to gaze on earthly mould,
With cruell fates the carefull threds unfould,
Sithe which my life and love together tyde?
Now let the stony dart of sencelesse cold
Perce to my hart, and pas through everie side,
And let eternall night so sad sight fro me hyde.

23

"O lightsome day! the lampe of highest Jove,
First made by him mens wandring wayes to guyde,
When darknesse he in deepest dongeon drove,
Henceforth thy hated face for ever hyde,
And shut up heavens windowes shyning wyde;
For earthly sight can nought but sorrow breed,
And late repentance which shall long abyde:
Fine eyes no more on vanitie shall feed,
But seeled up with death shall have their deadly meed."

24

Then downe againe she fell unto the ground,
But he her quickly reared up againe:
Thrise did she sinke adowne in deadly swownd,
And thrise he her reviv'd with busie paine.
At last when life recover'd had the raine,
And over-wrestled his strong enimy,
With foltring tong, and trembling everie vaine,

"Tell on," (quoth she) "the wofull Tragedy,
The which these reliques sad present unto mine eye.

25

"Tempestuous fortune hath spent all her spight,
And thrilling sorrow throwne his utmost dart:
Thy sad tong cannot tell more heavy plight
Then that I feele, and harbour in mine hart:
Who hath endur'd the whole can beare ech part.
If death it be, it is not the first wound
That launched hath my brest with bleeding smart.
Begin, and end the bitter balefull stound;[1]
If lesse then that I feare, more favour I have found."

26

Then gan the Dwarfe the whole discourse declare;
The subtile traines of Archimago old;
The wanton loves of false Fidessa fayre,
Bought with the blood of vanquisht Paynim bold;
The wretched payre transformd to treën mould;
The house of Pryde, and perilles round about;
The combat which he with Sansjoy did hould;
The lucklesse conflict with the Gyaunt stout,
Wherein captiv'd, of life or death he stood in doubt.

27

She heard with patience all unto the end,
And strove to maister sorrowfull assay,[2]
Which greater grew the more she did contend,
And almost rent her tender hart in tway,
And love fresh coles unto her fire did lay;
For greater love, the greater is the losse.
Was never Lady loved dearer day[3]
Then she did love the knight of the Red-crosse,
For whose deare sake so many troubles her did tosse.

28

At last when fervent sorrow slaked was,
She up arose, resolving him to find

1 moment. 2 attack of sorrow.
3 "No lady ever loved daylight dearer."

Alive or dead; and forward forth doth pas,
All as the Dwarfe the way to her assynd;
And evermore, in constant carefull mind,
She fedd her wound with fresh renewed bale.
Long tost with stormes, and bet with bitter wind,
High over hills, and lowe adowne the dale,
She wandred many a wood, and measurd many a vale.

29

At last she chaunced by good hap to meet
A goodly knight, faire marching by the way,
Together with his Squyre, arayed meet:
His glitterand armour shined far away,
Like glauncing light of Phœbus brightest ray;
From top to toe no place appeared bare,
That deadly dint of steele endanger may.
Athwart his brest a bauldrick[1] brave he ware,
That shind, like twinkling stars, with stones most pretious rare.

30

And in the midst thereof one pretious stone
Of wondrous worth, and eke of wondrous mights,
Shapt like a Ladies head, exceeding shone,
Like Hesperus emongst the lesser lights,
And strove for to amaze the weaker sights:
Thereby his mortall blade full comely hong
In yvory sheath, ycarv'd with curious slights,[2]
Whose hilts were burnisht gold, and handle strong
Of mother perle; and buckled with a golden tong.

31

His haughtie Helmet, horrid[3] all with gold,
Both glorious brightnesse and great terrour bredd:
For all the crest a Dragon did enfold
With greedie pawes, and over all did spredd
His golden winges: his dreadfull hideous hedd,
Close couched on the bever,[4] seemd to throw
From flaming mouth bright sparckles fiery redd,
That suddeine horrour to faint hartes did show;
And scaly tayle was stretcht adowne his back full low.

32

Upon the top of all his loftie crest,
A bounch of heares discolourd diversly,
With sprincled pearle and gold full richly drest,
Did shake, and seemd to daunce for jollity,
Like to an almond tree ymounted hye
On top of greene Selinis[1] all alone,
With blossoms brave bedecked daintily;
Whose tender locks do tremble every one
At everie little breath that under heaven is blowne.

33

His warlike shield all closely cover'd was,
Ne might of mortall eye be ever seene;
Not made of steele, nor of enduring bras,
Such earthly mettals soon consumed beene:
But all of Diamond perfect pure and cleene
It framed was, one massy entire mould,
Hewen out of Adamant rocke with engine keene,
That point of speare it never percen could,
Ne dint of direfull sword divide the substance would.

34

The same to wight he never wont[2] disclose
But whenas monsters huge he would dismay,
Or daunt unequall armies of his foes,
Or when the flying heavens he would affray:
For so exceeding shone his glistring ray,
That Phœbus golden face it did attaint,
As when a cloud his beames doth over-lay;
And silver Cynthia[3] wexed pale and faynt,
As when her face is staynd with magicke art constraint.

35

No magicke arts hereof had any might,
Nor bloody wordes of bold Enchaunters call'd,
But all that was not such as seemd in sight
Before that shield did fade, and suddein fall;
And when him list[4] the raskall routes appall,
Men into stones therewith he could transmew,
And stones to dust, and dust to nought at all;
And, when him list the prouder lookes subdew,
He would them gazing blind,[5] or turne to other hew.

36

Ne let it seeme that credence this exceedes
For he that made the same was knowne righ well
To have done much more admirable deedes

1 belt. 2 designs. 3 bristling.
4 the lower, movable part of a helmet.

1 In Sicily. 2 was wont to. 3 the moon.
4 pleased. 5 "blind them as they gazed."

Merlin [1] was, which whylome did excell
l living wightes in might of magicke spell:
oth shield and sword, and armour all he wrought
r this young Prince, when first to armes he fell; [2]
ut, when he dyde, the Faery Queene it brought
o Faerie lond, where yet it may be seene, if sought:

37

A gentle youth, his dearely loved Squire,
is speare of heben wood behind him bare,
hose harmeful head, thrise heated in the fire,
ad riven many a brest with pikehead square:
goodly person, and could menage faire
is stubborne steed with curbed canon [3] bitt,
ho under him did trample as the aire,
nd chauft that any on his backe should sitt:
ne yron rowels into frothy fome he bitt.

38

Whenas this knight nigh to the Lady drew,
ith lovely court he gan her entertaine;
ut, when he heard her answers loth, he knew
me secret sorrow did her heart distraine; [4]
hich to allay, and calme her storming paine,
ire feeling words he wisely gan display,
nd for her humor fitting purpose [5] faine,
o tempt the cause it selfe for to bewray,
herewith enmovd, these bleeding words she gan to say.

39

"What worlds delight, or joy of living speach,
n hart, so plungd in sea of sorrowes deep,
nd heaped with so huge misfortunes, reach?
he carefull cold beginneth for to creep,
nd in my heart his yron arrow steep,
one as I thinke upon my bitter bale.
ich helplesse harmes yts better hidden keep,
nen rip up griefe where it may not availe:
y last left comfort is my woes to weepe and waile."

[1] The great magician in the stories of the Round Table.
[2] took. [3] smooth. [4] tear. [5] conversation.

40

"Ah Lady deare," quoth then the gentle knight,
"Well may I ween your griefe is wondrous great;
For wondrous great griefe groneth in my spright,
Whiles thus I heare you of your sorrowes treat.
But, woefull Lady, let me you intrete,
For to unfold the anguish of your hart:
Mishaps are maistred by advice discrete,
And counsell mitigates the greatest smart:
Found never help who never would his hurts impart."

41

"O, but," (quoth she) "great griefe will not be tould,
And can more easily be thought then said."
"Right so," (quoth he) "but he that never would
Could never: will to might gives greatest aid."
"But griefe," (quoth she) "does greater grow displaid,
If then it find not helpe, and breeds despaire."
"Despaire breeds not," (quoth he) "where faith is staid."
"No faith so fast," (quoth she) "but flesh does paire." [1]
"Flesh may empaire," (quoth he) "but reason can repaire."

42

His goodly reason, and well-guided speach,
So deepe did settle in her gracious thought,
That her perswaded to disclose the breach
Which love and fortune in her heart had wrought;
And said; "Faire Sir, I hope good hap hath brought
You to inquere the secrets of my griefe,
Or that your wisedome will direct my thought,
Or that your prowesse can me yield reliefe:
Then, heare the story sad, which I shall tell you briefe.

43

"The forlorne Maiden, whom your eies have seene
The laughing stocke of fortunes mockeries,
Am th' onely daughter of a King and Queene,
Whose parents deare, whiles equal destinies
Did ronne about, and their felicities
The favourable heavens did not envy,

[1] impair.

Did spred their rule through all the territories,
Which Phison [1] and Euphrates floweth by,
And Gehons golden waves doe wash continually:

44

"Till that their cruell cursed enemy,
An huge great Dragon, horrible in sight,
Bred in the loathly lakes of Tartary,[2]
With murdrous ravine, and devouring might,
Their kingdome spoild, and countrey wasted quight:
Themselves, for feare into his jawes to fall,
He forst to castle strong to take their flight;
Where, fast embard in mighty brasen wall,
He has them now fowr years besiegd to make them thrall.

45

"Full many knights, adventurous and stout,
Have enterpriz'd that Monster to subdew.
From every coast that heaven walks about
Have thither come the noble Martial crew
That famous harde atchievements still pursew;
Yet never any could that girlond win,
But all still shronke, and still he greater grew:
All they, for want of faith, or guilt of sin,
The pitteous pray of his fiers cruelty have bin.

46

"At last, yled with far reported praise,
Which flying fame throughout the world had spred,
Of doughty knights, whom Faery land did raise,
That noble order hight of maidenhed,
Forthwith to court of Gloriane I sped,
Of Gloriane, great Queene of glory bright,
Whose kingdomes seat Cleopolis [3] is red; [4]
There to obtaine some such redoubted knight,
That Parents deare from tyrants powre deliver might.

47

"Yt was my chaunce (my chaunce was faire and good)
There for to find a fresh unproved knight;
Whose manly hands imbrewd in guilty bloc
Had never beene, ne ever by his might
Had throwne to ground the unregarde
right:
Yet of his prowesse proofe he since hat
made
(I witnes am) in many a cruell fight;
The groning ghosts of many one dismaide
Have felt the bitter dint of his avengin
blade.

48

"And ye, the forlorne reliques of his powr
His biting sword, and his devouring speare
Which have endured many a dreadfu
stowre,
Can speake his prowesse that did earst yo
beare,
And well could rule; now he hath left yo
heare
To be the record of his ruefull losse,
And of my dolefull disaventurous deare.[1]
O! heavie record of the good Redcrosse,
Where have yee left your lord that could s
well you tosse?

49

"Well hoped I, and faire beginnings had,
That he my captive languor should redeeme
Till, all unweeting, an Enchaunter bad
His sence abusd, and made him to mis
deeme
My loyalty, not such as it did seeme,
That rather death desire then such despight.
Be judge, ye heavens, that all things righ
esteeme,
How I him lov'd, and love with all my
might.
So thought I eke of him, and think I though
aright.

50

"Thenceforth me desolate he quite for
sooke,
To wander where wilde fortune would me
lead,
And other bywaies he himselfe betooke,
Where never foote of living wight did
tread,
That brought not backe the balefull body
dead:
In which him chaunced false Duessa meete,
Mine onely [3] foe, mine onely deadly dread;
Who with her witchcraft, and misseeming
sweete,
Inveigled him to follow her desires unmeete.

1 The three rivers mentioned are in Paradise.
2 Hades.
3 "The city of glory"; i.e., London. 4 called.

1 injury. 2 wrong. 3 particular.

51

"At last, by subtile sleights she him betraid
nto his foe, a Gyaunt huge and tall;
'ho him disarmed, dissolute, dismaid,
nwares surprised, and with mighty mall [1]
he monster mercilesse him made to fall,
'hose fall did never foe before behold:
nd now in darkesome dungeon, wretched thrall,
emedilesse for aie he doth him hold.
his is my cause of griefe, more great then may be told."

52

Ere she had ended all she gan to faint:
ut he her comforted, and faire bespake:
Certes, Madame, ye have great cause of plaint;
hat stoutest heart, I weene, could cause to quake:
ut be of cheare, and comfort to you take;
or till I have acquitt your captive knight,
ssure your selfe I will you not forsake."
is chearefull words reviv'd her chearelesse spright,
forth they went, the Dwarfe them guiding ever right.

## CANTO VIII

Faire virgin, to redeeme her deare,
Brings Arthure to the fight:
Who slayes the Gyaunt, wounds the beast,
And strips Duessa quight.

1

Ay me! how many perils doe enfold
he righteous man, to make him daily fall,
'ere not that heavenly grace doth him uphold,
nd stedfast truth acquite him out of all.
er love is firme, her care continuall,
o oft as he, through his own foolish pride
r weaknes, is to sinfull bands made thrall:
ls should this Redcrosse knight in bands have dyde,
or whose deliverance she this Prince doth thither guyd.

2

They sadly traveild thus, untill they came
igh to a castle builded strong and hye:
hen cryde the Dwarfe, "Lo! yonder is the same,
n which my Lord, my liege, doth lucklesse ly
hrall to that Gyaunts hatefull tyranny:
Therefore, deare Sir, your mightie powres assay."
The noble knight alighted by and by
From loftie steed, and badd the Ladie stay,
To see what end of fight should him befall that day.

3

So with his Squire, th' admirer of his might,
He marched forth towardes that castle wall,
Whose gates he fownd fast shutt, ne living wight
To warde the same, nor answere commers call.
Then tooke that Squire an horne of bugle [1] small,
Which hong adowne his side in twisted gold
And tasselles gay. Wyde wonders over all
Of that same hornes great virtues weren told,
Which had approved bene in uses manifold.

4

Was never wight that heard that shrilling sownd,
But trembling feare did feel in every vaine:
Three miles it might be easy heard arownd,
And Ecchoes three aunswer'd it selfe againe:
No false enchauntment, nor deceiptfull traine,
Might once abide the terror of that blast,
But presently was void and wholly vaine:
No gate so strong, no locke so firme and fast,
But with that percing noise flew open quite, or brast.

5

The same before the Geaunts gate he blew,
That all the castle quaked from the grownd,
And every dore of freewill open flew.
The Gyaunt selfe, dismaied with that sownd,
Where he with his Duessa dalliaunce fownd,
In hast came rushing forth from inner bowre,
With staring countenance sterne, as one astownd,
And staggering steps, to weet what suddein stowre
Had wrought that horror strange, and dar'd his dreaded powre.

6

And after him the proud Duessa came,
High mounted on her many headed beast,
And every head with fyrie tongue did flame,

[1] club.

[1] ox.

And every head was crowned on his creast,
And bloody mouthed with late cruell feast.
That when the knight beheld, his mightie shild
Upon his manly arme he soone addrest,
And at him fiersly flew, with corage fild,
And eger greedinesse through every member thrild.

7

Therewith the Gyant buckled him to fight,
Inflamd with scornefull wrath and high disdaine,
And lifting up his dreadfull club on hight,
All armd with ragged snubbes [1] and knottie graine,
Him thought at first encounter to have slaine.
But wise and wary was that noble Pere;
And, lightly leaping from so monstrous maine,
Did fayre avoide the violence him nere:
It booted nought to thinke such thunderbolts to beare.

8

Ne shame he thought to shonne so hideous might:
The ydle stroke, enforcing furious way,
Missing the marke of his misaymed sight,
Did fall to ground, and with his heavy sway
So deepely dinted in the driven clay,
That three yardes deepe a furrow up did throw.
The sad earth, wounded with so sore assay,
Did grone full grievous underneath the blow,
And trembling with strange feare did like an erthquake show.

9

As when almightie Jove, in wrathfull mood,
To wreake the guilt of mortall sins is bent,
Hurles forth his thundring dart with deadly food [2]
Enrold in flames, and smouldring dreriment,
Through riven cloudes and molten firmament;
The fiers threeforked engin, making way,
Both loftie towres and highest trees hath rent,
And all that might his angry passage stay;
And, shooting in the earth, castes up a mount of clay.

10

His boystrous [3] club, so buried in the grownd,
He could not rearen up againe so light,
But that the Knight him at advantag
fownd;
And, whiles he strove his combred clubbe t
quight
Out of the earth, with blade all burnin
bright
He smott off his left arme, which like
block
Did fall to ground, depriv'd of native might
Large streames of blood out of the truncke
stock
Forth gushed, like fresh water streame fron
riven rocke.

11

Dismayed with so desperate deadly wound
And eke impatient of unwonted payne,
He loudly brayd with beastly yelling sownd
That all the fieldes rebellowed againe.
As great a noyse, as when in Cymbria
plaine
An heard of Bulles, whom kindly [1] rage doth
sting,
Doe for the milky mothers want complaine,
And fill the fieldes with troublous bellowing
The neighbor woods arownd with hollow
murmur ring.

12

That when his deare Duessa heard, and
saw
The evil stownd that daungerd her estate,
Unto his aide she hastily did draw
Her dreadfull beast; who, swolne with blood
of late,
Came ramping forth with proud presumpte-
ous gate,
And threatned all his heades like flaming
brandes.
But him the Squire made quickly to retrate
Encountring fiers with single sword in hand
And twixt him and his Lord did like a bul-
warke stand.

13

The proud Duessa, full of wrathfull spight
And fiers disdaine to be affronted so,
Enforst her purple beast with all her might,
That stop out of the way to overthroe,
Scorning the let of so unequall foe:
But nathemore would that corageous swayne
To her yeeld passage gainst his Lord to
goe,
But with outrageous strokes did him re-
straine,
And with his body bard the way atwixt them
twaine.

1 knobs. 2 feud. 3 crude.

1 natural.

14

Then tooke the angrie witch her golden cup,
Which still she bore, replete with magick artes;
Death and despeyre did many thereof sup,
And secret poyson through their inner partes,
Th' eternall bale of heavie wounded harts;
Which, after charmes and some enchauntments said,
She lightly sprinkled on his weaker partes:
Therewith his sturdie corage soon was quayd,[1]
And all his sences were with suddein dread dismayd.

15

So downe he fell before the cruell beast,
Who on his neck his bloody clawes did seize,
That life nigh crusht out of his panting brest:
No powre he had to stirre, nor will to rize.
That when the carefull knight gan well avise,
He lightly left the foe with whom he fought,
And to the beast gan turne his enterprise;
For wondrous anguish in his hart it wrought,
To see his loved Squyre into such thraldom brought:

16

And, high advauncing his blood-thirstie blade,
Stroke one of those deformed heades so sore,
That of his puissaunce proud ensample made:
His monstrous scalpe downe to his teeth it tore,
And that misformed shape misshaped more.
A sea of blood gusht from the gaping wownd,
That her gay garments staynd with filthy gore,
And overflowed all the field arownd,
That over shoes in blood he waded on the grownd.

17

Thereat he rored for exceeding paine,
That to have heard great horror would have bred;
And scourging th' emptie ayre with his long trayne,
Through great impatience of his grieved hed,
His gorgeous ryder from her loftie sted
Would have cast downe, and trodd in durty myre,
Had not the Gyaunt soone her succoured;
Who, all enrag'd with smart and frantick yre,
Came hurtling in full fiers, and forst the knight retyre.

1 subdued.

18

The force, which wont in two to be disperst,
In one alone left hand he now unites,
Which is through rage more strong then both were erst;
With which his hideous club aloft he dites,[1]
And at his foe with furious rigor smites,
That strongest Oake might seeme to overthrow.
The stroke upon his shield so heavie lites,
That to the ground it doubleth him full low:
What mortall wight could ever beare so monstrous blow?

19

And in his fall his shield, that covered was,
Did loose his vele[2] by chaunce, and open flew;
The light whereof, that hevens light did pas,
Such blazing brightnesse through the ayer threw,
That eye mote not the same endure to vew.
Which when the Gyaunt spyde with staring eye,
He downe let fall his arme, and soft withdrew
His weapon huge, that heaved was on hye
For to have slain the man, that on the ground did lye.

20

And eke the fruitfull-headed[3] beast, amazd
At flashing beames of that sunshiny shield,
Became stark blind, and all his sences dazd,
That downe he tumbled on the durtie field,
And seemd himselfe as conquered to yield.
Whom when his maistresse proud perceiv'd to fall,
Whiles yet his feeble feet for faintnesse reeld,
Unto the Gyaunt lowdly she gan call;
"O! helpe, Orgoglio; helpe! or els we perish all."

21

At her so pitteous cry was much amoov'd
Her champion stout; and for to ayde his frend,
Againe his wonted angry weapon proov'd,
But all in vaine, for he has redd his end
In that bright shield, and all their forces spend
Them selves in vaine: for, since that glauncing sight,
He hath no powre to hurt, nor to defend.

1 lifts. 2 its cover.
3 bounteously supplied with heads.

As where th' Almighties lightning brond does light,
It dimmes the dazed eyen, and daunts the sences quight.

22

Whom when the Prince, to batteill new addrest
And threatning high his dreadfull stroke, did see,
His sparkling blade about his head he blest,
And smote off quite his right leg by the knee,
That downe he tombled; as an aged tree,
High growing on the top of rocky clift,
Whose hartstrings with keene steele nigh hewen be;
The mightie trunck, halfe rent with ragged rift,
Doth roll adowne the rocks, and fall with fearefull drift.

23

Or as a Castle, reared high and round,
By subtile engins and malitious slight
Is undermined from the lowest ground,
And her foundation forst, and feebled quight,
At last downe falles; and with her heaped hight
Her hastie ruine does more heavie make,
And yields it selfe unto the victours might.
Such was this Gyaunts fall, that seemd to shake
The stedfast globe of earth, as it for feare did quake.

24

The knight, then lightly leaping to the pray,
With mortall steele him smot againe so sore,
That headlesse his unweldy bodie lay,
All wallowd in his owne fowle bloody gore,
Which flowed from his wounds in wondrous store.
But, soone as breath out of his brest did pas,
That huge great body, which the Gyaunt bore,
Was vanisht quite; and of that monstrous mas
Was nothing left, but like an emptie blader was.

25

Whose grievous fall when false Duessa spyde,
Her golden cup she cast unto the ground,
And crowned mitre rudely threw asyde:
Such percing griefe her stubborne hart did wound,
That she could not endure that doleful stound
But leaving all behind her fled away:
The light-foot Squyre her quickly turned around,
And, by hard meanes enforcing her to stay,
So brought unto his Lord as his deserved pray.

26

The roiall Virgin which beheld from farre
In pensive plight and sad perplexitie,
The whole atchievement of this doubtful warre,
Came running fast to greet his victorie,
With sober gladnesse and myld modestie;
And with sweet joyous cheare him thus bespake:
"Fayre braunch of noblesse, flowre of chevalrie,
That with your worth the world amazed make,
How shall I quite the paynes ye suffer for my sake?

27

"And you, fresh budd of vertue springing fast,
Whom these sad eyes saw nigh unto deaths dore,
What hath poore Virgin for such perill past
Wherewith you to reward? Accept therefore
My simple selfe, and service evermore:
And he that high does sit, and all things see
With equall eye, their merites to restore,
Behold what ye this day have done for mee,
And what I cannot quite requite with usuree.

28

"But sith the heavens, and your faire handeling,
Have made you master of the field this day,
Your fortune maister eke with governing,
And, well begonne, end all so well, I pray!
Ne let that wicked woman scape away;
For she it is, that did my Lord bethrall,
My dearest Lord, and deepe in dongeon lay,
Where he his better dayes hath wasted all:
O heare, how piteous he to you for ayd does call!"

29

Forthwith he gave in charge unto his Squyre,
That scarlot whore to keepen carefully;

hyles he himselfe with greedie great desyre
to the Castle entred forcibly,
here living creature none he did espye,
hen gan he lowdly through the house to call,
ut no man car'd to answere to his crye:
here raignd a solemne silence over all;
or voice was heard, nor wight was seene in bowre or hall.

30

At last, with creeping crooked pace forth came
n old old man,[1] with beard as white as snow,
hat on a staffe his feeble steps did frame,
nd guyde his wearie gate both too and fro,
or his eye sight him fayled long ygo;
nd on his arme a bounch of keyes he bore,
he which unused rust did overgrow:
hose were the keyes of every inner dore;
ut he could not them use, but kept them still in store.

31

But very uncouth sight was to behold,
ow he did fashion his untoward pace;
or as he forward moovd his footing old,
backward still was turnd his wrincled face:
nlike to men, who ever, as they trace,
oth feet and face one way are wont to lead.
his was the auncient keeper of that place,
nd foster father of the Gyaunt dead;
is name Ignaro did his nature right aread.

32

His reverend heares and holy gravitee
he knight much honord, as beseemed well;
nd gently askt, where all the people bee,
hich in that stately building wont to dwell:
ho answerd him full soft, *he could not tell.*
gain he askt, where that same knight was layd,
hom great Orgoglio with his puissaunce fell
ad made his caytive thrall: againe he sayde,
*e could not tell;* ne ever other answere made.

33

Then asked he, which way he in might pas?
*e could not tell,* againe he answered.
hereat the courteous knight displeased was,
nd said; "Old syre, it seemes thou hast not red[2]
ow ill it sits with that same silver hed,
vaine to mocke, or mockt in vaine to bee:
ut if thou be, as thou art pourtrahed
With natures pen, in ages grave degree,
Aread in graver wise what I demaund of thee."

34

His answere likewise was, *he could not tell:*
Whose sencelesse speach, and doted ignorance,
Whenas the noble Prince had marked well,
He ghest his nature by his countenance,
And calmd his wrath with goodly temperance.
Then, to him stepping, from his arme did reach
Those keyes, and made himselfe free enterance.
Each dore he opened without any breach,
There was no barre to stop, nor foe him to empeach.

35

There all within full rich arayd he found,
With royall arras, and resplendent gold,
And did with store of every thing abound,
That greatest Princes presence might behold.
But all the floore (too filthy to be told)
With blood of guiltlesse babes, and innocents trew,
Which there were slaine as sheepe out of the fold,
Defiled was, that dreadfull was to vew;
And sacred ashes over it was strowed new.

36

And there beside of marble stone was built
An Altare, carv'd with cunning ymagery,
On which trew Christians blood was often spilt,
And holy Martyres often doen to dye
With cruell malice and strong tyranny:
Whose blessed sprites, from underneath the stone,
To God for vengeance cryde continually;
And with great griefe were often heard to grone,
That hardest heart would bleede to hear their piteous mone.

37

Through every rowme he sought, and everie bowr,
But no where could he find that wofull thrall:
At last he came unto an yron doore,
That fast was lockt, but key found not at all
Emongst that bounch to open it withall;

[1] Ignorance. [2] observed.

But in the same a little grate was pight,
Through which he sent his voyce, and lowd did call
With all his powre, to weet if living wight
Were housed therewithin, whom he enlargen might.

38

Therewith an hollow, dreary, murmuring voyce
These pitteous plaintes and dolours did resound:
"O! who is that, which bringes me happy choyce
Of death, that here lye dying every stound,
Yet live perforce in balefull darkenesse bound?
For now three Moones have changed thrice their hew,[1]
And have been thrice hid underneath the ground,
Since I the heavens chearefull face did vew.
O! welcome thou, that doest of death bring tydings trew."

39

Which when that Champion heard, with percing point
Of pitty deare his hart was thrilled sore;
And trembling horrour ran through every joynt,
For ruth of gentle knight so fowle forlore;
Which shaking off, he rent that yron dore
With furious force and indignation fell;
Where entred in, his foot could find no flore,
But all a deepe descent, as darke as hell,
That breathed ever forth a filthie banefull smell.

40

But nether darkenesse fowle, nor filthy bands,
Nor noyous smell, his purpose could withhold,
(Entire affection hateth nicer hands)
But that with constant zele and corage bold,
After long paines and labors manifold,
He found the meanes that Prisoner up to reare;
Whose feeble thighes, unable to uphold
His pined corse, him scarse to light could beare;
A ruefull spectacle of death and ghastly drere.

41

His sad dull eies, deepe sunck in hollow pits,
Could not endure th' unwonted sunne to view;
His bare thin cheekes for want of better bits
And empty sides deceived of their dew,
Could make a stony hart his hap to rew;
His rawbone armes, whose mighty brawned bowrs[2]
Were wont to rive[3] steele plates, and helmet hew,
Were clene consum'd; and all his vital powres
Decayd, and al his flesh shronk up like withered flowres.

1 form.

42

Whome when his Lady saw, to him she ran
With hasty joy: to see him made her glad,
And sad to view his visage pale and wan,
Who earst in flowres of freshest youth was clad.
Tho, when her well of teares she wasted had,
She said; "Ah dearest Lord! what evil starre
On you hath frownd, and pourd his influence bad,
That of your selfe ye thus berobbed arre,
And this misseeming hew your manly looks doth marre?

43

"But welcome now, my Lord in wele or woe
Whose presence I have lackt too long a day:
And fie on Fortune, mine avowed foe,
Whose wrathful wreakes[4] them selves doe now alay;
And for these wronges shall treble penaunce pay
Of treble good: good growes of evils priefe."
The chearelesse man, whom sorrow did dismay,
Had no delight to treaten of his griefe;
His long endured famine needed more reliefe.

44

"Faire Lady," then said that victorious knight,
The things, that grievous were to doe, or beare,
Them to renew, I wote, breeds no delight;
Best musicke breeds delight in loathing eare
But th' only good that growes of passed feare
Is to be wise, and ware of like agein.
This daies ensample hath this lesson deare
Deepe written in my heart with yron pen,
That blisse may not abide in state of mortall men.

2 muscles. 3 split.
4 punishments. 5 experience.

45

"Henceforth, Sir knight, take to you wonted strength,
And maister these mishaps with patient might.
Loe! where your foe lies strecht in monstrous length;
And loe! that wicked woman in your sight,
The roote of all your care and wretched plight,
Now in your powre, to let her live, or die."
"To doe her die," (quoth Una) "were despight,
And shame t' avenge so weake an enimy;
But spoile her of her scarlot robe, and let her fly."

46

So, as she bad, that witch they disaraid,
And robd of roiall robes, and purple pall,
And ornaments that richly were displaid;
Ne spared they to strip her naked all.
Then, when they had despoyld her tire and call,[1]
Such as she was their eies might her behold,
That her misshaped parts did them appall:
A loathly, wrinckled hag, ill favoured, old,
Whose secret filth good manners biddeth not be told.

47

Her craftie head was altogether bald,
And as in hate of honorable eld,
Was overgrówne with scurfe and filthy scald;
Her teeth out of her rotten gummes were feld,
And her sowre breath abhominably smeld;
Her dried dugs, like bladders lacking wind,
Long downe, and filthy matter from them weld;
Her wrizled skin as rough, as maple rind,
So scabby was, that would have loathd all womankind.

48

Her neather parts, the shame of all her kind,
My chaster Muse for shame doth blush to write;
But at her rompe she growing had behind
A foxes taile, with dong all fowly dight;
And eke her feete most monstrous were in sight;
For one of them was like an Eagles claw,
With griping talaunts armd to greedy fight,
The other like a Beares uneven paw:
More ugly shape yet never living creature saw.

49

Which when the knights beheld amazd they were,
And wondred at so fowle deformed wight.
"Such then," (said Una,) "as she seemeth here,
Such is the face of falshood: such the sight
Of fowle Duessa, when her borrowed light
Is laid away, and counterfesaunce knowne."
Thus when they had the witch disrobed quight,
And all her filthy feature open showne,
They let her goe at will, and wander waies unknowne.

50

Shee, flying fast from heavens hated face,
And from the world that her discovered wide,
Fled to the wastfull wildernesse apace,
From living eies her open shame to hide,
And lurkt in rocks and caves, long unespide.
But that faire crew of knights, and Una faire,
Did in that castle afterwards abide,
To rest them selves, and weary powres repaire;
Where store they fownd of al that dainty was and rare.

[1] cap.

## CANTO IX

His loves and lignage Arthure tells:
The knights knitt friendly bands:
Sir Trevisan flies from Despeyre,
Whom Redcros knight withstands.

1

O goodly golden chayne, wherewith yfere[1]
The vertues linked are in lovely wize;
And noble mindes of yore allyed were,
In brave poursuitt of chevalrous emprize,
That none did others safety despize,
Nor aid envy to him in need that stands;
But friendly each did others praise devize,
How to advaunce with favourable hands,
As this good Prince redeemd the Redcrosse knight from bands.

2

Who when their powres, empayrd through labor long,
With dew repast they had recured well,
And that weake captive wight now wexed strong,
Them list no lenger there at leasure dwell,

[1] together.

But forward fare as their adventures fell:
But, ere they parted, Una faire besought
That straunger knight his name and nation tell;
Least so great good, as he for her had wrought,
Should die unknown, and buried be in thankles thought.

3

"Faire virgin," (said the Prince,) "yee me require
A thing without the compas of my witt;
For both the lignage, and the certein Sire,
From which I sprong, from mee are hidden yitt
For all so soone as life did me admitt
Into this world, and shewed hevens light,
From mothers pap I taken was unfitt,
And streight deliver'd to a Fary knight,
To be upbrought in gentle thewes[1] and martiall might.

4

"Unto Old Timon he me brought bylive;[2]
Old Timon, who in youthly yeares hath beene
In warlike feates th' expertest man alive,
And is the wisest now on earth I weene:
His dwelling is low in a valley greene,
Under the foot of Rauran mossy hore,
From whence the river Dee, as silver cleene,
His tombling billowes rolls with gentle rore;
There all my daies he traind mee up in vertuous lore.

5

"Thither the great magicien Merlin came,
As was his use, ofttimes to visitt mee;
For he had charge my discipline to frame,
And Tutors nouriture to oversee.
Him oft and oft I askt in privity,
Of what loines and what lignage I did spring;
Whose aunswere bad he still assured bee,
That I was sonne and heire unto a king,
As time in her just term the truth to light should bring."

6

"Well worthy impe,"[3] said then the Lady gent,[4]
"And Pupill fitt for such a Tutors hand!
But what adventure, or what high intent,
Hath brought you hither into Faery land,
Aread, Prince Arthure, crowne of Martiall band?"

1 habits. 2 immediately.
3 offspring, child. 4 gentle

"Full hard it is," (quoth he) "to read aright
The course of heavenly cause, or understand
The secret meaning of th' eternall might,
That rules mens waies, and rules the thought of living wight.

7

"For whether he, through fatal deepe foresight,
Me hither sent for cause to me unghest;
Or that fresh bleeding wound, which day and night
Whilome doth rancle in my riven brest,
With forced fury following his behest,
Me hither brought by wayes yet never found,
You to have helpt I hold my selfe yet blest."
"Ah! courteous Knight," (quoth she) "what secret wound
Could ever find to grieve the gentlest hart on ground?"

8

"Dear Dame," (quoth he) "you sleeping sparkes awake,
Which, troubled once, into huge flames will grow;
Ne ever will their fervent fury slake,
Till living moysture into smoke do flow,
And wasted life doe lye in ashes low:
Yet sithens silence lesseneth not my fire,
But, told, it flames; and, hidden, it does glow,
I will revele what ye so much desire.
Ah. Love! lay down thy bow, the whiles I may respyre.

9

"It was in freshest flowre of youthly yeares,
When corage first does creepe in manly chest,
Then first the cole of kindly heat appeares
To kindle love in every living brest:
But me had warnd old Timons wise behest,
Those creeping flames by reason to subdew,
Before their rage grew to so great unrest,
As miserable lovers use to rew,
Which still wex old in woe, whiles wo stil wexeth new.

10

"That ydle name of love, and lovers life,
As losse of time, and vertues enimy,
I ever scornd, and joyd to stirre up strife,
In middest of their mournfull Tragedy;
Ay wont to laugh when them I heard to cry,
And blow the fire which them to ashes brent:
Their God himselfe, grievd at my libertie,

hott many a dart at me with fiers intent;
ut I them warded all with wary govern-
ment.

11

"But all in vaine: no fort can be so strong,
le fleshly brest can armed be so sownd,
ut will at last be wonne with battrie long,
r unawares at disavantage fownd.
othing is sure that growes on earthly
grownd;
nd who most trustes in arme of fleshly
might,
nd boastes in beauties chaine not to be
bownd,
oth soonest fall in disaventrous fight,
nd yeeldes his caytive neck to victours
most despight.

12

"Ensample make of him your haplesse
joy,
nd of my selfe now mated,[1] as ye see;
hose prouder vaunt that proud avenging
boy
id soone pluck downe, and curbd my lib-
ertee.
or on a day, prickt forth with jollitee
f looser life and heat of hardiment,
aunging the forest wide on courser free,
he fields, the floods, the heavens, with one
consent,
id seeme to laugh on me, and favour mine
intent.

13

"Forwearied with my sportes, I did alight
rom loftie steed, and downe to sleepe me
layd,
he verdant gras my couch did goodly dight,
nd pillow was my helmett fayre displayd;
hiles every sence the humour sweet em-
bayd,[2]
nd slombring soft my hart did steale away,
le seemed, by my side a royall Mayd
er daintie limbes full softly down did lay:
o fayre a creature yet saw never sunny day.

14

"Most goodly glee and lovely blandish-
ment
he to me made, and badd me love her deare;
or dearely sure her love was to me bent,
s, when just time expired, should appeare.
ut whether dreames delude, or true it were,
as never hart so ravisht with delight,
e living man like wordes did ever heare,
As she to me delivered all that night;
And at her parting said, She Queene of
Faeries hight.

15

"When I awoke, and found her place de-
voyd,
And nought but pressed gras where she had
lyen,
I sorrowed all so much as earst I joyd,
And washed all her place with watry
eyen.
From that day forth I lov'd that face divyne;
From that day forth I cast in carefull mynd,
To seek her out with labor and long tyne,[1]
And never vowd to rest till her I fynd:
Nyne monethes I seek in vain, yet ni'll that
vow unbynd."

16

Thus as he spake, his visage wexed pale,
And chaunge of hew great passion did be-
wray;
Yett still he strove to cloke his inward bale,
And hide the smoke that did his fire display,
Till gentle Una thus to him gan say:
"O happy Queene of Faeries! that hast fownd,
Mongst many, one that with his prowesse
may
Defend thine honour, and thy foes confownd.
True loves are often sown, but seldom grow
on grownd."

17

"Thine, O! then," said the gentle Redcrosse
knight,
"Next to that Ladies love, shalbe the place,
O fayrest virgin! full of heavenly light,
Whose wondrous faith, exceeding earthly
race,
Was firmest fixt in myne extremest case.
And you, my Lord, the Patrone of my
life,
Of that great Queene may well gaine worthie
grace,
For onely worthie you through prowes priefe,
Yf living man mote worthie be to be her
liefe."[2]

18

So diversly discoursing of their loves,
The golden Sunne his glistring head gan
shew,
And sad remembraunce now the Prince
amoves
With fresh desire his voyage to pursew;
Als Una earnd her traveill to renew.

[1] defeated. [2] pervaded.

[1] toil. [2] beloved.

Then those two knights, fast friendship for to bynd,
And love establish each to other trew,
Gave goodly gifts, the signes of gratefull mynd,
And eke, as pledges firme, right hands together joynd.

19

Prince Arthur gave a boxe of Diamond sure,
Embowd with gold and gorgeous ornament,
Wherein were closd few drops of liquor pure,
Of wondrous worth, and vertue excellent,
That any wownd could heale incontinent.
Which to requite, the Redcrosse knight him gave
A booke, wherein his Saveours testament
Was writt with golden letters rich and brave:
A worke of wondrous grace, and hable soules to save.

20

Thus beene they parted; Arthur on his way
To seeke his love, and th' other for to fight
With Unaes foe, that all her realme did pray.[1]
But she, now weighing the decayed plight
And shrunken synewes of her chosen knight,
Would not a while her forward course pursew,
Ne bring him forth in face of dreadfull fight,
Till he recovered had his former hew;
For him to be yet weake and wearie well she knew.

21

So as they traveild, lo! they gan espy
An armed knight towards them gallop fast,
That seemed from some feared foe to fly,
Or other griesly thing that him aghast.
Still as he fledd his eye was backward cast,
As if his feare still followed him behynd:
Als flew his steed as he his bandes had brast,
And with his winged heeles did tread the wynd,
As he had beene a fole of Pegasus his kynd.

22

Nigh as he drew, they might perceive his head
To bee unarmd, and curld uncombed heares
Upstaring stiffe, dismaid with uncouth dread:
Nor drop of blood in all his face appeares,
Nor life in limbe; and, to increase his feare,
In fowle reproch of knighthoodes fayre degree,
About his neck an hempen rope he weares,
That with his glistring armes does ill agree
But he of rope or armes has now no memoree.

23

The Redcrosse knight toward him crosse fast,
To weet what mister[1] wight[2] was so dismayd.
There him he findes all sencelesse and aghast
That of him selfe he seemd to be afrayd;
Whom hardly he from flying forward stayd
Till he these wordes to him deliver might:
"Sir knight, aread who hath ye thus arayd,
And eke from whom make ye this hasty flight?
For never knight I saw in such misseeming plight."

24

He answerd nought at all; but adding new
Feare to his first amazment, staring wyde
With stony eyes and hartlesse hollow hew,
Astonisht stood, as one that had aspyde
Infernall furies with their chaines untyde.
Him yett againe, and yett againe, bespake
The gentle knight; who nought to him replyde;
But, trembling every joynt, did inly quake,
And foltring tongue, at last, these words seemd forth to shake;

25

"For Gods deare love, Sir knight, doe me not stay;
For loe! he comes, he comes fast after mee."
Eft[3] looking back would faine have runne away;
But he him forst to stay, and tellen free
The secrete cause of his perplexitie:
Yet nathemore by his bold hartie speach
Could his blood frosen hart emboldened bee
But through his boldnes rather feare did reach;
Yett, forst, at last he made through silence suddein breach.

26

"And am I now in safetie sure," (quoth he)
"From him that would have forced me to dye?

1 sort of. 2 person. 3 again.

1 prey on.

nd is the point of death now turnd fro
mee,
hat I may tell this haplesse history?"
Fear nought," (quoth he) "no daunger now
is nye."
Then shall I you recount a ruefull cace,"
Said he) "the which with this unlucky eye
late beheld; and, had not greater grace
le reft from it, had bene partaker of the
place.

27

"I lately chaunst (Would I had never
chaunst!)
Vith a fayre knight to keepen companee,
ir Terwin hight, that well himselfe advaunst
n all affayres, and was both bold and free,
ut not so happy as mote happy bee:
le lov'd, as was his lot, a Lady gent,
hat him againe lov'd in the least degree;
or she was proud, and of too high intent,
nd joyd to see her lover languish and
lament:

28

"From whom retourning sad and comfort-
lesse,
s on the way together we did fare,
e met that villen, (God from him me
blesse!) [1]
hat cursed wight, from whom I scapt why-
leare,[2]
man of hell that calls himselfe Despayre:
ho first us greets, and after fayre areedes [3]
f tydinges straunge, and of adventures
rare:
o creeping close, as Snake in hidden weedes,
nquireth of our states, and of our knightly
deedes.

29

"Which when he knew, and felt our feeble
harts
mbost [4] with bale, and bitter byting griefe,
hich love had launched with his deadly
darts,
ith wounding words, and termes of foule
repriefe,
e pluckt from us all hope of dew reliefe,
hat earst us held in love of lingring life;
hen hopelesse, hartlesse, gan the cunning
thiefe
erswade us dye, to stint all further
strife:
o me he lent this rope, to him a rusty
knife.

1 protect. 2 some time before.
3 proclaims, tells. 4 worn out.

30

"With which sad instrument of hasty
death,
That wofull lover, loathing lenger light,
A wyde way made to let forth living breath:
But I, more fearefull or more lucky
wight,
Dismayd with that deformed dismall sight,
Fledd fast away, halfe dead with dying
feare;
Ne yet assur'd of life by you, Sir knight,
Whose like infirmity like chaunce may beare;
But God you never let his charmed speaches
heare!"

31

"How may a man," (said he) "with idle
speach
Be wonne to spoyle the Castle of his health?"
"I wote," (quoth he) "whom tryall late did
teach,
That like would not for all this worldes
wealth.
His subtile tong like dropping honny
mealt'h
Into the heart, and searcheth every vaine;
That, ere one be aware, by secret stealth
His powre is reft, and weaknes doth remaine.
O! never, Sir, desire to try his guilefull
traine."

32

"Certes," (sayd he) "hence [1] shall I never
rest,
Till I that treachours art have heard and
tryde:
And you, Sir knight, whose name mote I
request,
Of grace do me unto his cabin guyde."
"I, that hight Trevisan," (quoth he) "will
ryde
Against my liking backe to doe you grace:
But nor for gold nor glee will I abyde
By you, when ye arrive in that same place;
For lever [2] had I die then see his deadly
face."

33

Ere long they come where that same wicked
wight
His dwelling has, low in an hollow cave,
For underneath a craggy cliff ypight,
Darke, dolefull, dreary, like a greedy grave,
That still for carrion carcases doth crave:
On top whereof ay dwelt the ghastly Owle,
Shrieking his balefull note, which ever
drave

1 henceforth. 2 sooner.

Far from that haunt all other chearefull fowle;
And all about it wandring ghostes did wayle and howle.

34

And all about old stockes and stubs of trees,
Whereon nor fruit nor leafe was ever seene,
Did hang upon the ragged rocky knees;
On which had many wretches hanged beene,
Whose carcases were scattred on the greene,
And throwne about the cliffs. Arrived there,
That bare-head knight, for dread and dolefull teene,[1]
Would faine have fled, ne durst approchen neare;
But th' other forst him staye, and comforted in feare.

35

That darkesome cave they enter, where they find
That cursed man, low sitting on the ground,
Musing full sadly in his sullein mind:
His griesie lockes, long growen and unbound,
Disordred hong about his shoulders round,
And hid his face, through which his hollow eyne
Lookt deadly dull, and stared as astound;
His raw-bone cheekes, through penurie and pine,
Were shronke into his jawes, as he did never dyne.

36

His garment, nought but many ragged clouts,
With thornes together pind and patched was,
The which his naked sides he wrapt abouts;
And him beside there lay upon the gras
A dreary corse, whose life away did pas,
All wallowd in his own yet luke-warme blood,
That from his wound yet welled fresh, alas!
In which a rusty knife fast fixed stood,
And made an open passage for the gushing flood.

37

Which piteous spectacle, approving trew
The wofull tale that Trevisan had told,
Whenas the gentle Redcrosse knight did vew,
With firie zeale he burnt in courage bold
Him to avenge before his blood were cold,
And to the villein sayd; "Thou damned wight,
The authour of this fact we here behold,
What justice can but judge against thee right,
With thine owne blood to price his blood, here shed in sight?"

38

"What franticke fit," (quoth he) "hath thus distraught
Thee, foolish man, so rash a doome to give?
What justice ever other judgement taught,
But he should dye who merites not to live?
None els to death this man despayring drive
But his owne guiltie mind, deserving death.
Is then unjust to each his dew to give?
Or let him dye, that loatheth living breath,
Or let him die at ease, that liveth here uneath?[1]

39

"Who travailes by the wearie wandring way,
To come unto his wished home in haste,
And meetes a flood that doth his passage stay,
Is not great grace to helpe him over past,
Or free his feet that in the myre sticke fast?
Most envious man, that grieves at neighbours good;
And fond, that joyest in the woe thou hast!
Why wilt not let him passe, that long hath stood
Upon the bancke, yet wilt thy selfe not pas the flood?

40

"He there does now enjoy eternall rest
And happy ease, which thou doest want and crave,
And further from it daily wanderest:
What if some little payne the passage have,
That makes frayle flesh to feare the bitter wave,
Is not short payne well borne, that bringes long ease,
And layes the soule to sleepe in quiet grave?
Sleepe after toyle, port after stormie seas,
Ease after warre, death after life, does greatly please."

41

The knight much wondred at his suddeine wit,
And sayd; "The terme of life is limited,

1 grief.

1 with difficulty.

Ne may a man prolong, nor shorten, it:
The souldier may not move from watchfull sted,
Nor leave his stand untill his Captaine bed."
Who life did limit by almightie doome,"
Quoth he) "knowes best the termes established;
And he, that points the Centonell his roome,
Doth license him depart at sound of morning droome."

42

"Is not his deed, what ever thing is donne
In heaven and earth? Did not he all create
To die againe? All ends that was begonne:
Their times in his eternall booke of fate
Are written sure, and have their certein date.
Who then can strive with strong necessitie,
That holds the world in his still chaunging state,
Or shunne the death ordaynd by destinie?
When houre of death is come, let none aske whence, nor why.

43

"The lenger life, I wote, the greater sin;
The greater sin, the greater punishment:
All those great battels, which thou boasts to win
Through strife, and blood-shed, and avengement,
Now prayse, hereafter deare thou shalt repent;
For life must life, and blood must blood, repay.
Is not enough thy evill life forespent?
For he that once hath missed the right way,
The further he doth goe, the further he doth stray.

44

"Then doe no further goe, no further stray,
But here ly downe, and to thy rest betake,
Th' ill to prevent, that life ensewen may;
For what hath life that may it loved make,
And gives not rather cause it to forsake?
Feare, sicknesse, age, losse, labour, sorrow, strife,
Payne, hunger, cold that makes the hart to quake,
And ever fickle fortune rageth rife;
All which, and thousands mo, do make a loathsome life.

45

"Thou, wretched man, of death hast greatest need,
If in true ballaunce thou wilt weigh thy state;
For never knight, that dared warlike deed,
More luckless dissaventures did amate: [1]
Witnes the dungeon deepe, wherein of late
Thy life shutt up for death so oft did call;
And though good lucke prolonged hath thy date,
Yet death then would the like mishaps forestall,
Into the which hereafter thou maist happen fall.

46

"Why then doest thou, O man of sin! desire
To draw thy dayes forth to their last degree?
Is not the measure of thy sinfull hire
High heaped up with huge iniquitee,
Against the day of wrath to burden thee?
Is not enough, that to this Lady mild
Thou falsed hast thy faith with perjuree,
And sold thy selfe to serve Duessa vild,
With whom in al abuse thou hast thy selfe defild?

47

"Is not he just, that all this doth behold
From highest heven, and beares an equall eie?
Shall he thy sins up in his knowledge fold,
And guilty be of thine impietie?
Is not his lawe, Let every sinner die;
Die shall all flesh? What then must needs be donne
Is it not better to doe willinglie,
Then linger till the glas be all out ronne?
Death is the end of woes: die soone, O faeries sonne!"

48

The knight was much enmoved with his speach,
That as a swords poynt through his hart did perse,
And in his conscience made a secrete breach,
Well knowing trew all that he did reherse,
And to his fresh remembraunce did reverse,
The ugly vew of his deformed crimes;
That all his manly powres it did disperse,
As he were charmed with inchaunted rimes;
That oftentimes he quakt, and fainted oftentimes.

49

In which amazement when the Miscreaunt
Perceived him to waver, weake and fraile,

[1] dismay.

Whiles trembling horror did his conscience daunt,
And hellish anguish did his soule assaile;
To drive him to despaire, and quite to quaile,
Hee shewd him, painted in a table plaine,
The damned ghosts that doe in torments waile,
And thousand feends that doe them endlesse paine
With fire and brimstone, which for ever shall remaine.

50

The sight whereof so throughly him dismaid,
That nought but death before his eies he saw,
And ever burning wrath before him laid,
By righteous sentence of th' Almighties law.
Then gan the villein him to overcraw,[1]
And brought unto him swords, ropes, poison, fire,
And all that might him to perdition draw;
And bad him choose what death he would desire;
For death was dew to him that had provokt Gods ire.

51

But, whenas none of them he saw him take,
He to him raught a dagger sharpe and keene,
And gave it him in hand: his hand did quake
And tremble like a leafe of Aspin greene,
And troubled blood through his pale face was seene
To come and goe with tidings from the heart,
As it a ronning messenger had beene.
At last, resolv'd to work his finall smart,
He lifted up his hand, that backe againe did start.

52

Which whenas Una saw, through every vaine
The crudled cold ran to her well of life,
As in a swowne: but, soone reliv'd againe,
Out of his hand she snatcht the cursed knife,
And threw it to the ground, enraged rife,
And to him said; "Fie, fie, faint hearted Knight!
What meanest thou by this reprochfull strife?
Is this the battaile which thou vauntst to fight
With that fire-mouthed Dragon, horrible and bright?

1 exult over.

53

"Come; come away, fraile, feeble, fleshly wight,
Ne let vaine words bewitch thy manly hart,
Ne divelish thoughts dismay thy constant spright:
In heavenly mercies hast thou not a part?
Why shouldst thou then despeire, that chosen art?
Where justice growes, there grows eke greater grace,
The which doth quench the brond of hellish smart,
And that accurst hand-writing doth deface.
Arise, sir Knight; arise, and leave this cursed place."

54

So up he rose, and thence amounted streight.
Which when the carle beheld, and saw his guest
Would safe depart, for all his subtile sleight,
He chose an halter from among the rest,
And with it hong him selfe, unbid,[1] unblest.
But death he could not worke himselfe thereby;
For thousand times he so him selfe had drest,[2]
Yet nathelesse it could not doe him die,
Till he should die his last, that is, eternally.

## CANTO X

Her faithfull knight faire Una brings
To house of Holinesse;
Where he is taught repentaunce, and
The way to hevenly blesse.

1

What man is he, that boasts of fleshly might
And vaine assuraunce of mortality,
Which, all so soone as it doth come to fight
Against spirituall foes, yields by and by,
Or from the fielde most cowardly doth fly!
Ne let the man ascribe it to his skill,
That thorough grace hath gained victory:
If any strength we have, it is to ill,
But all the good is Gods, both power and eke will.

2

By that which lately hapned Una saw
That this her knight was feeble, and too faint;
And all his sinewes woxen weake and raw,

1 without prayer. 2 prepared.

Through long enprisonment, and hard constraint,
Which he endured in his late restraint,
That yet he was unfitt for bloody fight.
Therefore, to cherish him with diets daint,
She cast to bring him where he chearen might,
Till he recovered had his late decayed plight.

3

There was an auncient house nor far away,
Renowmd throughout the world for sacred lore
And pure unspotted life: so well, they say,
It governd was, and guided evermore,
Through wisedome of a matrone grave and hore;
Whose onely joy was to relieve the needes
Of wretched soules, and helpe the helpelesse pore:
All night she spent in bidding of her bedes,
And all the day in doing good and godly deedes.

4

Dame Cælia [1] men did her call, as thought
From heaven to come, or thither to arise;
The mother of three daughters, well upbrought
In goodly thewes, and godly exercise:
The eldest two, most sober, chast, and wise,
Fidelia [2] and Speranza,[3] virgins were;
Though spousd, yet wanting wedlocks solemnize;
But faire Charissa [4] to a lovely fere [5]
Was lincked, and by him had many pledges dere.

5

Arrived there, the dore they find fast lockt,
For it was warely watched night and day,
For feare of many foes; but, when they knockt,
The Porter opened unto them streight way.
He was an aged syre, all hory gray,
With lookes full lowly cast, and gate full slow,
Vont on a staffe his feeble steps to stay,
Hight Humiltá. They passe in, stouping low;
For streight and narrow was the way which he did show.

6

Each goodly thing is hardest to begin;
But, entred in, a spatious court they see,
Both plaine and pleasaunt to be walked in;
Where them does meete a francklin [1] faire and free,
And entertaines with comely courteous glee;
His name was Zele, that him right well became:
For in his speaches and behaveour hee
Did labour lively to expresse the same,
And gladly did them guide, till to the Hall they came.

7

There fayrely them receives a gentle Squyre,
Of myld demeanure and rare courtesee,
Right cleanly clad in comely sad attyre;
In word and deede that shewd great modestee,
And knew his good [2] to all of each degree,
Hight Reverence. He them with speaches meet
Does faire entreat; no courting nicetee,
But simple, trew, and eke unfained sweet,
As might become a Squyre so great persons to greet.

8

And afterwardes them to his Dame he leades,
That aged Dame, the Lady of the place,
Who all this while was busy at her beades;
Which doen, she up arose with seemely grace,
And toward them full matronely did pace.
Where, when that fairest Una she beheld,
Whom well she knew to spring from hevenly race,
Her heart with joy unwonted inly sweld,
As feeling wondrous comfort in her weaker eld: [3]

9

And, her embracing, said; "O happy earth,
Whereon thy innocent feet doe ever tread!
Most vertuous virgin, borne of hevenly berth,
That, to redeeme thy woefull parents head
From tyrans rage and ever-dying dread,
Hast wandred through the world now long a day,
Yett ceassest not thy weary soles to lead;
What grace hath thee now hither brought this way?
Or doen thy feeble feet unweeting hither stray?

10

"Straunge thing it is an errant knight to see
Here in this place; or any other wight,

1 Heavenly. 2 Faith. 3 Hope. 4 Charity. 5 companion.

1 a man of property. 2 "knew how to act." 3 age.

That hither turnes his steps. So few there bee,
That chose the narrow path, or seeke the right:
All keepe the broad high way, and take delight
With many rather for to goe astray,
And be partakers of their evill plight,
Then with a few to walke the rightest way.
O foolish men! why hast ye to your own decay?"

11

"Thy selfe to see, and tyred limbes to rest,
O matrone sage," (quoth she) "I hither came;
And this good knight his way with me addrest,
Ledd with thy prayses, and broad-blazed fame,
That up to heven is blowne." The auncient Dame
Him goodly greeted in her modest guyse,
And enterteynd them both, as best became,
With all the court'sies that she could devyse,
Ne wanted ought to shew her bounteous or wise.

12

Thus as they gan of sondrie thinges devise,[1]
Loe! two most goodly virgins came in place,
Ylinked arme in arme in lovely wise:
With countenance demure, and modest grace,
They numbred even steps and equall pace;
Of which the eldest, that Fidelia hight,
Like sunny beames threw from her Christall face
That could have dazd the rash beholders sight,
And round about her head did shine like heavens light.

13

She was araied all in lilly white,
And in her right hand bore a cup of gold,
With wine and water fild up to the hight,
In which a Serpent did himselfe enfold,
That horrour made to all that did behold;
But she no whitt did chaunge her constant mood:
And in her other hand she fast did hold
A booke, that was both signd and seald with blood;
Wherein darke things were writt, hard to be understood.

1 talk.

14

Her younger sister, that Speranza hight,
Was clad in blew, that her beseemed well:
Not all so chearefull seemed she of sight,
As was her sister; whether dread did dwell
Or anguish in her hart, is hard to tell.
Upon her arme a silver anchor lay,
Whereon she leaned ever, as befell;
And ever up to heven, as she did pray,
Her stedfast eyes were bent, ne swarved other way.

15

They, seeing Una, towardes her gan wend,
Who them encounters with like courtesee;
Many kind speeches they betweene them spend,
And greatly joy each other for to see:
Then to the knight with shamefast modestie
They turne themselves, at Unaes meeke request,
And him salute with well beseeming glee;
Who faire them quites, as him beseemed best,
And goodly gan discourse of many a noble gest.[1]

16

Then Una thus; "But she, your sister deare,
The deare Charissa, where is she become?
Or wants she health, or busie is elswhere?"
"Ah! no," said they, "but forth she may not come;
For she of late is lightned of her wombe,
And hath encreast the world with one sonne more,
That her to see should be but troublesome."
"Indeed," (quoth she) "that should her trouble sore,
But thankt be God, and her encrease so evermore!"

17

Then said the aged Cælia, "Deare dame,
And you, good Sir, I wote that of youre toyle
And labors long, through which ye hither came,
Ye both forwearied be: therefore, a whyle
I read[2] you rest, and to your bowres recoyle."[3]
Then called she a Groome,[4] that forth him ledd
Into a goodly lodge, and gan despoile
Of puissant armes, and laid in easie bedd
His name was meeke Obedience, rightfully aredd.[5]

1 action. 2 advise. 3 retire.
4 servant 5 proclaimed.

18

Now when their wearie limbes with kindly rest,
And bodies were refresht with dew repast,
Fayre Una gan Fidelia fayre request,
To have her knight into her schoolehous plaste,
That of her heavenly learning he might taste,
And heare the wisedom of her wordes divine.
She graunted; and that knight so much agraste,[1]
That she him taught celestiall discipline,
And opened his dull eyes, that light mote in them shine.

19

And that her sacred Booke, with blood ywritt,
That none could reade except she did them teach,
She unto him disclosed every whitt;
And heavenly documents thereout did preach,
That weaker witt of man could never reach;
Of God; of grace; of justice; of free-will;
That wonder was to heare her goodly speach:
For she was hable with her wordes to kill,
And rayse againe to life the hart that she did thrill.[2]

20

And, when she list poure out her larger spright,
She would commaund the hasty Sunne to stay;
Or backward turne his course from hevens hight:
Sometimes great hostes of men she could dismay;
Dry-shod to passe she parts the flouds in tway;
And eke huge mountaines from their native seat
She would commaund themselves to beare away,
And throw in raging sea with roaring threat.
Almightie God her gave such powre and puissaunce great.

21

The faithfull knight now grew in little space,
By hearing her, and by her sisters lore,
To such perfection of all hevenly grace,
That wretched world he gan for to abhore,
And mortall life gan loath as thing forlore,
Greevd with remembrance of his wicked wayes,
And prickt with anguish of his sinnes so sore,
That he desirde to end his wretched dayes:
So much the dart of sinfull guilt the soule dismayes.

1 favored. 2 pierce.

22

But wise Speranza gave him comfort sweet,
And taught him how to take assured hold
Upon her silver anchor, as was meet;
Els had his sinnes, so great and manifold,
Made him forget all that Fidelia told.
In this distressed doubtfull agony,
When him his dearest Una did behold
Disdeining life, desiring leave to dye,
She found her selfe assayld with great perplexity;

23

And came to Cælia to declare her smart;
Who, well acquainted with that commune plight,
Which sinfull horror workes in wounded hart,
Her wisely comforted all that she might,
With goodly counsell and advisement right;
And streightway sent with carefull diligence,
To fetch a Leach[1] the which had great insight
In that disease of grieved conscience,
And well could cure the same: His name was Patience.

24

Who, comming to that sowle-diseased knight,
Could hardly him intreat to tell his grief:
Which knowne, and all that noyd his heavie spright
Well searcht, eftsoones he gan apply relief
Of salves and med'cines, which had passing prief;[2]
And thereto added wordes of wondrous might
By which to ease he him recured brief,
And much aswag'd the passion[3] of his plight,
That he his paine endur'd, as seeming now more light.

25

But yet the cause and root of all his ill,
Inward corruption and infected sin,
Not purg'd nor heald, behind remained still,
And festring sore did ranckle yett within,
Close creeping twixt the marow and the skin:
Which to extirpe, he laid him privily
Downe in a darksome lowly place far in,

1 doctor. 2 surpassing power.
3 pain.

Whereas he meant his corrosives to apply,
And with streight diet tame his stubborne malady.

26

In ashes and sackcloth he did array
His daintie corse, proud humors to abate;
And dieted with fasting every day,
The swelling of his woundes to mitigate;
And made him pray both earely and eke late:
And ever, as superfluous flesh did rott,
Amendment readie still at hand did wayt,
To pluck it out with pincers fyrie whott,
That soone in him was lefte no one corrupted jott.[1]

27

And bitter Penaunce, with an yron whip,
Was wont him once to disple every day:
And sharp Remorse his hart did prick and nip,
That drops of blood thence like a well did play:
And sad Repentance used to embay
His blamefull body in salt water sore,
The filthy blottes of sin to wash away.
So in short space they did to health restore
The man that would not live, but erst lay at deathes dore.

28

In which his torment often was so great,
That like a Lyon he would cry and rore,
And rend his flesh, and his owne synewes eat.
His owne deare Una, hearing evermore
His ruefull shriekes and gronings, often tore
Her guiltlesse garments and her golden heare,
For pitty of his payne and anguish sore:
Yet all with patience wisely she did beare,
For well she wist his cryme could els be never cleare.

29

Whom, thus recover'd by wise Patience
And trew Repentaunce, they to Una brought;
Who, joyous of his cured conscience,
Him dearely kist, and fayrely eke besought
Himselfe to chearish, and consuming thought
To put away out of his carefull brest.
By this Charissa, late in child-bed brought,
Was woxen strong, and left her fruitfull nest:
To her fayre Una brought this unacquainted guest.

1 smallest fragment.

30

She was a woman in her freshest age,
Of wondrous beauty, and of bounty[1] rare,
With goodly grace and comely personage,
That was on earth not easie to compare;
Full of great love, but Cupids wanton snare
As hell she hated; chaste in worke and will:
Her necke and brests were ever open bare,
That ay thereof her babes might sucke their fill;
The rest was all in yellow robes arayed still.

31

A multitude of babes about her hong,
Playing their sportes, that joyd her to behold;
Whom still she fed whiles they were weake and young
But thrust them forth still as they wexed old:
And on her head she wore a tyre of gold,
Adornd with gemmes and owches wondrous fayre,
Whose passing price uneath was to be told:
And by her syde there sate a gentle payre,
Of turtle doves, she sitting in an yvory chayre.

32

The knight and Una entring fayre her greet,
And bid her joy of that her happy brood;
Who them requites with court'sies seeming meet,
And entertaynes with friendly chearefull mood.
Then Una her besought, to be so good
As in her vertuous rules to schoole her knight,
Now after all his torment well withstood
In that sad house of Penaunce, where his spright
Had past the paines of hell and long-enduring night.

33

She was right joyous of her just request;
And taking by the hand that Faeries sonne,
Gan him instruct in everie good behest,
Of love, and righteousnes, and well to donne;
And wrath and hatred warely to shonne,
That drew on men Gods hatred and his wrath,
And many soules in dolours had fordonne:
In which when him she well instructed hath,
From whence to heaven she teacheth him the ready path.

1 goodness.

34

Wherein his weaker wandring steps to guyde,
An auncient matrone she to her does call,
Whose sober lookes her wisedome well descryde:[1]
Her name was Mercy; well knowne over-all
To be both gratious and eke liberall:
To whom the carefull charge of him she gave,
To leade aright, that he should never fall
In all his waies through this wide worldes wave;
That Mercy in the end his righteous soule might save.

35

The godly Matrone by the hand him beares
Forth from her presence, by a narrow way,
Scattred with bushy thornes and ragged breares,
Which still before him she remov'd away,
That nothing might his ready passage stay:
And ever, when his feet encombred were,
Or gan to shrinke, or from the right to stray,
She held him fast, and firmely did upbeare,
As carefull Nourse her child from falling oft does reare.

36

Eftsoones unto an holy Hospitall,
That was foreby the way, she did him bring;
In which seven Bead-men,[2] that had vowed all
Their life to service of high heavens King,
Did spend their daies in doing godly thing.
Their gates to all were open evermore,
That by the wearie way were traveiling;
And one sate wayting ever them before,
To call in commers-by that needy were and pore.

37

The first of them, that eldest was and best,
Of all the house had charge and governement,
As Guardian and Steward of the rest.
His office was to give entertainement
And lodging unto all that came and went;
Not unto such as could him feast againe,
And double quite for that he on them spent;
But such as want of harbour did constraine:
Those for Gods sake his dewty was to entertaine.

38

The second was an Almner[3] of the place;
His office was the hungry for to feed,
And thirsty give to drinke; a worke of grace,
He feard not once himselfe to be in need,
Ne car'd to hoord for those whom he did breede;
The grace of God he layd up still in store,
Which as a stocke he left unto his seede.
He had enough; what need him care for more?
And had he lesse, yet some he would give to the pore.

39

The third had of their wardrobe custody,
In which were not rich tyres, nor garments gay,
The plumes of pride, and winges of vanity,
But clothes meet to keepe keene cold away,
And naked nature seemely to aray;
With which bare wretched wights he dayly clad,
The images of God in earthly clay;
And, if that no spare clothes to give he had,
His owne cote he would cut, and it distribute glad.

40

The fourth appointed by his office was
Poore prisoners to relieve with gratious ayd,
And captives to redeeme with price of bras
From Turkes and Sarazins, which them had stayd:
And though they faulty were, yet well he wayd,
That God to us forgiveth every howre
Much more then that why they in bands were layd;
And he, that harrowd hell[1] with heavie stowre,
The faulty soules from thence brought to his heavenly bowre.

41

The fift had charge sick persons to attend,
And comfort those in point of death which lay;
For them most needeth comfort in the end,
When sin, and hell, and death, doe most dismay
The feeble soule departing hence away.
All is but lost, that living we bestow,
If not well ended at our dying day.
O man! have mind of that last bitter throw:
For as the tree does fall, so lyes it ever low.

1 revealed. 2 men who pray for others.
3 Almoner, a distributor of charity.

1 The reference is to the "harrowing of hell" by Christ when, after his death, he descended to hell and redeemed worthy souls.

42

The sixt had charge of them now being dead,
In seemely sort their corses to engrave,
And deck with dainty flowres their brydall bed,
That to their heavenly spouse both sweet and brave
They might appeare, when he their soules shall save.
The wondrous workmanship of Gods owne mould,
Whose face he made all beastes to feare, and gave
All in his hand, even dead we honour should.
Ah, dearest God, me graunt, I dead be not defould!

43

The seventh, now after death and buriall done,
Had charge the tender Orphans of the dead
And wydowes ayd, least they should be undone:
In face of judgement he their right would plead,
Ne ought the powre of mighty men did dread
In their defence; nor would for gold or fee
Be wonne their rightfull causes downe to tread;
And, when they stood in most necessitee,
He did supply their want, and gave them ever free.

44

There when the Elfin knight arrived was,
The first and chiefest of the seven, whose care
Was guests to welcome, towardes him did pas;
Where seeing Mercie, that his steps upbare
And alwaies led, to her with reverence rare
He humbly louted [1] in meeke lowlinesse,
And seemely welcome for her did prepare:
For of their order she was Patronesse,
Albe Charissa were their chiefest founderesse.

45

There she awhile him stayes, himselfe to rest,
That to the rest more hable he might bee;
During which time, in every good behest,
And godly worke of Almes and charitee,
Shee him instructed with great industree.
Shortly therein so perfect he became,
That, from the first unto the last degree,
His mortall life he learned had to frame
In holy righteousnesse, without rebuke or blame.

46

Thence forward by that painfull way they pas
Forth to an hill that was both steepe and hy
On top whereof a sacred chappell was,
And eke a litle Hermitage thereby,
Wherein an aged holy man did lie,
That day and night said his devotion,
Ne other worldly busines did apply:
His name was hevenly Contemplation;
Of God and goodnes was his meditation.

47

Great grace that old man to him given had;
For God he often saw from heavens hight:
All [1] were his earthly eien both blunt and bad,
And through great age had lost their kindly sight,
Yet wondrous quick and persaunt [2] was his spright,
As Eagles eie that can behold the Sunne.
That hill they scale with all their powre and might,
That his fraile thighes, nigh weary and fordonne,
Gan faile; but by her helpe the top at last he wonne.

48

There they doe finde that godly aged Sire,
With snowy lockes adowne his shoulders shed;
As hoary frost with spangles doth attire
The mossy braunches of an Oke halfe ded.
Each bone might through his body well be red
And every sinew seene, through his long fast;
For nought he car'd his carcas long unfed;
His mind was full of spiritual repast,
And pyn'd his flesh to keepe his body low and chast.

49

Who, when these two approching he aspide,
At their first presence grew agrieved sore,
That forst him lay his hevenly thoughts aside;
And had he not that Dame respected more,
Whom highly he did reverence and adore,
He would not once have moved for the knight.
They him saluted, standing far afore,

1 bowed.

1 although. 2 piercing.

Who, well them greeting, humbly did requight,
And asked to what end they clomb that tedious hight?

50

"What end," (quoth she) "should cause us take such paine,
But that same end, which every living wight should make his marke high heaven to attaine?
Is not from hence the way, that leadeth right
To that most glorious house, that glistreth bright
With burning starres and everliving fire,
Whereof the keies are to thy hand behight [1]
By wise Fidelia? Shee doth thee require,
To shew it to this knight, according his desire."

51

"Thrise happy man," said then the father grave,
Whose staggering steps thy steady hand doth lead,
And shewes the way his sinfull soule to save!
Who better can the way to heaven aread
Then thou thyselfe, that was both borne and bred
In hevenly throne, where thousand Angels shine?
Thou doest the praiers of the righteous sead
Present before the majesty divine,
And his avenging wrath to clemency incline.

52

"Yet, since thou bidst, thy pleasure shalbe donne.
Then come, thou man of earth, and see the way,
That never yet was seene of Faeries sonne;
That never leads the traveiler astray,
But after labors long and sad delay,
Brings them to joyous rest and endlesse blis.
But first thou must a season fast and pray,
Till from her bands the spright assoiled [2] is,
And have her strength recur'd from fraile infirmitis."

53

That done, he leads him to the highest Mount,
Such one as that same mighty man [3] of God,
That blood-red billowes, like a walled front,
On either side disparted with his rod,
Till that his army dry-foot through them yod,[1]
Dwelt forty daies upon; where, writt in stone
With bloody letters by the hand of God,
The bitter doome of death and balefull mone
He did receive, whiles flashing fire about him shone:

54

Or like that sacred hill,[2] whose head full hie,
Adornd with fruitfull Olives all arownd,
Is, as it were for endlesse memory
Of that deare Lord who oft thereon was fownd,
For ever with a flowring girlond crownd:
Or like that pleasaunt Mount,[3] that is for ay
Through famous Poets verse each where renownd,
On which the thrise three learned Ladies [4] play
Their hevenly notes, and make full many a lovely lay.

55

From thence, far off he unto him did shew
A little path that was both steepe and long,
Which to a goodly Citty led his vew,
Whose wals and towres were builded high and strong
Of perle and precious stone, that earthly tong
Cannot describe, nor wit of man can tell;
Too high a ditty [5] for my simple song.
The Citty of the greate king hight it well,
Wherein eternall peace and happinesse doth dwell.

56

As he thereon stood gazing, he might see
The blessed Angels to and fro descend
From highest heven in gladsome companee,
And with great joy into that Citty wend,
As commonly as frend does with his frend.
Whereat he wondred much, and gan enquere,
What stately building durst so high extend
Her lofty towres unto the starry sphere,
And what unknowen nation there empeopled were?

57

"Faire Knight," (quoth he) "Hierusalem that is,
The new Hierusalem, that God has built
For those to dwell in that are chosen his,
His chosen people, purg'd from sinful guilt

1 entrusted. 2 released. 3 Moses.
1 went. 2 The Mount of Olives.
3 Parnassus. 4 The Muses. 5 subject.

With pretious blood, which cruelly was spilt
On cursed tree, of that unspotted lam,
That for the sinnes of al the world was kilt:
Now are they Saints all in that Citty sam,[1]
More dear unto their God then younglings to their dam."

58

"Till now," said then the knight, "I weened well,
That great Cleopolis, where I have beene,
In which that fairest Faery Queene doth dwell,
The fairest citty was that might be seene;
And that bright towre, all built of christall clene,
Panthea,[2] seemd the brightest thing that was;
But now by proofe all otherwise I weene,
For this great Citty that does far surpas,
And this bright Angels towre quite dims that towre of glas."

59

"Most trew," then said the holy aged man;
"Yet is Cleopolis, for earthly frame,
The fairest peece that eie beholden can;
And well beseemes all knights of noble name,
That covett in th' immortall booke of fame
To be eternized, that same to haunt,
And doen their service to that soveraigne Dame,
That glory does to them for guerdon graunt:
For she is hevenly borne, and heaven may justly vaunt.

60

"And thou, faire ymp, sprong out from English race,
How ever now accompted Elfins sonne,
Well worthy doest thy service for her grace,
To aide a virgin desolate, foredonne;
But when thou famous victory hast wonne,
And high emongst all knights hast hong thy shield,
Thenceforth the suitt[3] of earthly conquest shonne,
And wash thy hands from guilt of bloody field:
For blood can nought but sin, and wars but sorrows yield.

61

"Then seek this path that I to thee presage,[4]
Which after all to heaven shall thee send;
Then peaceably thy painefull pilgrimage
To yonder same Hierusalem doe bend,
Where is for thee ordaind a blessed end:
For thou, emongst those Saints whom thou doest see,
Shalt be a Saint, and thine owne nations frend
And Patrone: thou Saint George shalt called bee,
Saint George of mery England, the signe of victoree."

62

"Unworthy wretch," (quoth he) "of so great grace,
How dare I thinke such glory to attaine?"
"These, that have it attaynd, were in like cace,
As wretched men, and lived in like paine."
"But deeds of armes must I at last be faine
And Ladies love to leave, so dearely bought?"
"What need of armes, where peace doth ay remaine,"
(Said he) "and bitter battailes all are fought?
As for loose loves, they'are vaine, and vanish into nought."

63

"O! let me not," (quoth he) "then turne againe
Backe to the world, whose joyes so fruitlesse are;
But let me heare for aie in peace remaine,
Or steightway on that last long voiage fare,
That nothing may my present hope empare."
"That may not be," (said he) "ne maist thou yitt
Forgoe that royal maides bequeathed care,
Who did her cause into thy hand committ,
Till from her cursed foe thou have her freely quitt."

64

"Then shall I soone," (quoth he) "so God me grace,
Abett that virgins cause disconsolate,
And shortly back returne unto this place,
To walke this way in Pilgrims poore estate.
But now aread, old father, why of late
Didst thou behight me borne of English blood,
Whom all a Faeries sonne doen nominate?"
"That word shall I," (said he) "avouchen good,
Sith to thee is unknowne the cradle of thy brood.

1 together.
2 What building in London this refers to is hard to say.
3 pursuit, 4 indicate.

65

"For, well I wote, thou springst from ancient race
Of Saxon kinges, that have with mightie hand,
And many bloody battailes fought in face,
High reard their royall throne in Britans land,
And vanquisht them, unable to withstand:
From thence a Faery thee unweeting reft,
There as thou slepst in tender swadling band,
And her base Elfin brood there for thee left:
Such, men do Chaungelings call, so chaung'd by Faeries theft.

66

"Thence she thee brought into this Faery lond,
And in an heaped furrow did thee hyde;
Where thee a Ploughman all unweeting fond,
As he his toylesome teme that way did guyde,
And brought thee up in ploughmans state to byde,
Whereof Georgos[1] he thee gave to name;
Till prickt with courage, and thy forces pryde,
To Faery court thou cam'st to seek for fame,
And prove thy puissant armes, as seemes thee best became."

67

"O holy Sire!" (quoth he) "how shall I quight
The many favours I with thee have fownd,
That hast my name and nation redd aright,
And taught the way that does to heaven bownd!"
This saide, adowne he looked to the grownd
To have returnd; but dazed were his eyne
Through passing brightnes, which did quite confound
His feeble sence, and too exceeding shyne.
So darke are earthly thinges compard to things divine.

68

At last, whenas himselfe he gan to fynd,
To Una back he cast him to retyre,
Who him awaited still with pensive mynd.
Great thankes, and goodly meed, to that good syre
He thens departing gave for his paynes hyre
So came to Una, who him joyd to see;
And, after litle rest, gan him desyre
Of her adventure myndfull for to bee.
So leave they take of Cælia and her daughters three.

[1] The Greek word for farmer.

## CANTO XI

The knight with that old Dragon fights
Two days incessantly:
The third him overthrowes, and gayns
Most glorious victory.

1

High time now gan it wex for Una fayre
To thinke of those her captive Parents deare,
And their forwasted kingdom to repayre:
Whereto whenas they now approched neare,
With hartie wordes her knight she gan to cheare,
And in her modest maner thus bespake:
"Deare knight, as deare as ever knight was deare,
That all these sorrowes suffer for my sake,
High heven behold the tedious toyle ye for me take!

2

"Now are we come unto my native soyle,
And to the place where all our perilles dwell;
Here hauntes that feend, and does his dayly spoyle;
Therefore, henceforth, bee at your keeping well,
And ever ready for your foeman fell:
The sparke of noble corage now awake,
And strive your excellent selfe to excell:
That shall ye evermore renowmed make
Above all knights on earth, that batteill undertake."

3

And pointing forth, "Lo! yonder is," (said she)
"The brasen towre, in which my parents deare
For dread of that huge feend emprisond be;
Whom I from far see on the walles appeare,
Whose sight my feeble soule doth greatly cheare:
And on the top of all I do espye
The watchman wayting tydings glad to heare;
That, (O my Parents!) might I happily
Unto you bring, to ease you of your misery!"

4

With that they heard a roaring hideous sownd,
That all the ayre with terror filled wyde,
And seemd uneath to shake the stedfast ground.
Eftsoones that dreadful Dragon they espyde,
Where stretcht he lay upon the sunny side
Of a great hill, himselfe like a great hill:
But, all so soone as he from far descryde

Those glistring armes that heven with light
did fill,
He rousd himselfe full blyth, and hastned
them untill.

5

Then badd the knight his Lady yede[1] aloof,
And to an hill herselfe withdraw asyde;
From whence she might behold that bat-
tailes proof,
And eke be safe from daunger far descryde.
She him obayd, and turnd a little wyde.—
Now, O thou sacred Muse![2] most learned
Dame,
Fayre ympe of Phœbus and his aged bryde,[3]
The Nourse of time and everlasting fame,
That warlike handes ennoblest with im-
mortall name;

6

O! gently come into my feeble brest;
Come gently, but not with that mightie rage,
Wherewith the martiall troupes thou doest
infest,
And hartes of great Heroës doest enrage,
That nought their kindled corage may
aswage:
Soone as thy dreadfull trompe begins to
sownd,
The God of warre[4] with his fiers equipage
Thou doest awake, sleepe never he so sownd,
And scared nations doest with horror sterne
astownd.

7

Fayre Goddesse, lay that furious fitt[5]
asyde,
Till I of warres and bloody Mars doe sing,
And Bryton fieldes with Sarazin blood bedyde,
Twixt that great faery Queene and Paynim
king,
That with their horror heven and earth did
ring;
A worke of labour long, and endlesse
prayse:
But now a while lett downe that haughtie
string,
And to my tunes thy second tenor rayse,
That I this man of God his godly armes may
blaze.[6]

8

By this, the dreadful Beast drew nigh to
hand,
Halfe flying and halfe footing in his haste,
That with his largenesse measured much
land,
And made wide shadow under his huge
waste,
As mountaine doth the valley overcaste.
Approching nigh, he reared high afore
His body monstrous, horrible, and vaste;
Which, to increase his wondrous greatnes
more,
Was swoln with wrath and poyson, and with
bloody gore;

9

And over all with brasen scales was armd,
Like plated cote of steele, so couched neare
That nought mote perce; ne might his corse
bee harmd
With dint of sword, nor push of pointed
speare:
Which as an Eagle, seeing pray appeare,
His aery plumes doth rouze,[1] full rudely
dight;
So shaked he, that horror was to heare:
For as the clashing of an Armor bright,
Such noyse his rouzed scales did send unto
the knight.

10

His flaggy winges, when forth he did
display,
Were like two sayles, in which the hollow
wynd
Is gathered full, and worketh speedy way:
And eke the pennes,[2] that did his pineons
bynd,
Were like mayne-yardes with flying canvas
lynd;
With which whenas him list the ayre to beat,
And there by force unwonted passage fynd,
The cloudes before him fledd for terror great,
And all the hevens stood still amazed with
his threat.

11

His huge long tayle, wownd up in hundred
foldes,
Does overspred his long bras-scaly back,
Whose wreathed boughtes[3] when ever he
unfoldes,
And thick entangled knots adown does slack,
Bespotted as with shieldes of red and
blacke,
It sweepeth all the land behind him farre,
And of three furlongs does but litle lacke;
And at the point two stinges in fixed arre,
Both deadly sharp, that sharpest steele ex-
ceeden farre.

1 go. 2 Clio, Muse of history.
3 Mnemosyne or Memory. 4 Mars.
5 strain of music. 6 praise.

1 ruffle. 2 feathers. 3 coils.

12

But stinges and sharpest steele did far exceed
The sharpnesse of his cruel rending clawes:
Dead was it sure, as sure as death in deed,
What ever thing does touch his ravenous pawes,
Or what within his reach he ever drawes.
But his most hideous head my tongue to tell
Does tremble; for his deepe devouring jawes
Wyde gaped, like the griesly mouth of hell,
Through which into his darke abysse all ravin fell.

13

And, that more wondrous was, in either jaw
Three ranckes of yron teeth enraunged were,
In which yett trickling blood, and gobbets raw,
Of late devoured bodies did appeare,
That sight thereof bredd cold congealed feare;
Which to increase, and all atonce to kill,
A cloud of smoothering smoke, and sulphure seare,
Out of his stinking gorge forth steemed still,
That all the ayre about with smoke and stench did fill.

14

His blazing eyes, like two bright shining shieldes,
Did burne with wrath, and sparkled living fyre:
As two broad Beacons, sett in open fieldes,
Send forth their flames far off to every shyre,
And warning give that enimies conspyre
With fire and sword the region to invade:
So flam'd his eyne with rage and rancorous yre;
But far within, as in a hollow glade,
Those glaring lampes were sett that made a dreadfull shade.

15

So dreadfully he towardes him did pas,
Forelifting up a-loft his speckled brest,
And often bounding on the brused gras,
As for great joyance of his newcome guest.
Eftsoones he gan advance his haughty crest,
As chauffed[1] Bore his bristles doth upreare;
And shoke his scales to battaile ready drest,
That made the Redcrosse knight nigh quake for feare,
As bidding bold defyaunce to his foeman neare.

16

The knight gan fayrely couch his steady speare,
And fiersely ran at him with rigorous might:
The pointed steele, arriving rudely theare,
His harder hyde would nether perce nor bight,
But, glauncing by, foorth passed forward right.
Yet sore amoved with so puissaunt push,
The wrathfull beast about him turned light,
And him so rudely, passing by, did brush
With his long tayle, that horse and man to ground did rush.

17

Both horse and man up lightly rose againe,
And fresh encounter towardes him addrest;
But th' ydle stroke yet backe recoyld in vaine,
And found no place his deadly point to rest.
Exceeding rage enflam'd the furious Beast,
To be avenged of so great despight;
For never felt his imperceable brest
So wondrous force from hand of living wight;
Yet had he prov'd the powre of many a puissant knight.

18

Then, with his waving wings displayed wyde,
Himselfe up high he lifted from the ground,
And with strong flight did forcibly divyde
The yielding ayre, which nigh too feeble found
Her flitting parts, and element unsound,
To beare so great a weight: he, cutting way
With his broad sayles, about him soared round;
At last, low stouping with unweldy sway,
Snatcht up both horse and man, to beare them quite away.

19

Long he them bore above the subject[1] plaine,
So far as Ewghen bow a shaft may send,
Till struggling strong did him at last constraine
To let them downe before his flightes end:

[1] irritated.

[1] lying below.

As hagard [1] hauke, presuming to contend
With hardy fowle above his hable might,
His wearie pounces [2] all in vaine doth spend
To trusse [3] the pray too heavy for his flight;
Which, comming down to ground, does free it selfe by fight.

20

He so disseized [4] of his gryping grosse,[5]
The knight his thrillant speare againe assayd
In his bras-plated body to embosse,
And three mens strength unto the stroake he layd;
Wherewith the stiffe beame quaked as affrayd,
And glauncing from his scaly necke did glyde
Close under his left wing, then broad displayd:
The percing steele there wrought a wound full wyde,
That with the uncouth [6] smart the Monster lowdly cryde.

21

He cryde, as raging seas are wont to rore
When wintry storme his wrathful wreck does threat;
The rolling billowes beate the ragged shore,
As they the earth would shoulder from her seat;
And greedy gulfe does gape, as he would eat
His neighbour element in his revenge:
Then gin the blustring brethren [7] boldly threat
To move the world from off his stedfast henge,
And boystrous battaile make, each other to avenge.

22

The steely head stuck fast still in his flesh,
Till with his cruell clawes he snatcht the wood,
And quite a sunder broke. Forth flowed fresh
A gushing river of blacke gory blood,
That drowned all the land whereon he stood;
The streame thereof would drive a water-mill:
Trebly augmented was his furious mood
With bitter sence of his deepe rooted ill,
That flames of fire he threw forth from his large nose-thril.

23

His hideous tayle then hurled he about,
And therewith all enwrapt the nimble thyes
Of his froth-fomy steed, whose courage stout
Striving to loose the knott that fast him tyes,
Himselfe in streighter bandes too rash implyes,[1]
That to the ground he is perforce constrayned
To throw his ryder; who can [2] quickly ryse
From off the earth, with durty blood disteyned,[3]
For that reprochfull fall right fowly he disdaynd;

24

And fercely tooke his trenchand blade in hand,
With which he stroke so furious and so fell,
That nothing seemd the puissaunce could withstand:
Upon his crest the hardned yron fell,
But his more hardned crest was armd so well
That deeper dint therein it would not make
Yet so extremely did the buffe [4] him quell,
That from thenceforth he shund the like to take,
But when he saw them come he did them still [5] forsake.

25

The knight was wroth to see his stroke beguyld,[6]
And smot againe with more outrageous might
But backe againe the sparcling steele recoyld,
And left not any marke where it did light,
As if in Adamant rocke it had beene pight.
The beast, impatient of his smarting wound
And of so fierce and forcible despight,
Thought with his winges to stye [7] above the ground;
But his late wounded wing unserviceable found.

26

Then full of griefe and anguish vehement
He lowdly brayd, that like was never heard
And from his wide devouring oven sent
A flake of fire, that flashing in his beard
Him all amazd, and almost made afeard:
The scorching flame sore swinged [8] all his face,

1 enfolds. 2 "gan," did. 3 stained. 4 blow.
5 ever. 6 foiled. 7 ascend. 8 singed.

1 wild. 2 claws.
3 To pierce so as to hold a thing together or to get a grip on it.
4 deprived. 5 rough, heavy.
6 unusual. 7 the winds.

And through his armour all his body seard,
That he could not endure so cruell cace,
But thought his armes to leave, and helmet to unlace.

27

Not that great Champion [1] of the antique world,
Whom famous Poetes verse so much doth vaunt,
And hath for twelve huge labours high extold,
So many furies and sharpe fits did haunt,
When him the poysoned garment did enchaunt,
When Centaures blood and bloody verses charmd;
As did this knight twelve thousand dolours daunt,
Whom fyrie steele now burnt, that erst him armd;
That erst him goodly armd, now most of all him harmd.

28

Faynt, wearie, sore, emboyled, grieved, brent,
With heat, toyle, wounds, armes, smart, and inward fire,
That never man such mischiefes did torment:
Death better were; death did he oft desire,
But death will never come when needes require.
Whom so dismayd when that his foe beheld,
He cast to suffer him no more respire,
But gan his sturdy sterne [2] about to weld,
And him so strongly stroke, that to the ground him feld.

29

It fortuned, (as fayre it then befell)
Behynd his backe, unweeting, where he stood,
Of auncient time there was a springing well,
From which fast trickled forth a silver flood,
Full of great vertues, and for med'cine good:
Whylome, before that cursed Dragon got
That happy land, and all with innocent blood
Defyld those sacred waves, it rightly hot [3]
The well of life, ne yet his vertues had forgot:

30

For unto life the dead it could restore,
And guilt of sinfull crimes cleane wash away;
Those that with sicknesse were infected sore
It could recure; and aged long decay
Renew, as one were borne that very day.

1 Hercules. 2 tail. 3 was named.

Both Silo [1] this, and Jordan, did excell,
And th' English Bath, and eke the German Spau:
Ne can Cephise, nor Hebrus, match this well:
Into the same the knight back overthrowen fell.

31

Now gan the golden Phœbus for to steepe
His fierie face in billowes of the west,
And his faint steedes watred in Ocean deepe,
Whiles from their journall [2] labours they did rest;
When that infernall Monster, having kest
His wearie foe into that living well,
Gan high advaunce his broad discoloured brest
Above his wonted pitch, with countenance fell,
And clapt his yron wings as victor he did dwell.

32

Which when his pensive Lady saw from farre,
Great woe and sorrow did her soule assay,
As weening that the sad end of the warre;
And gan to highest God entirely pray
That feared chaunce from her to turne away:
With folded hands, and knees full lowly bent,
All night shee watcht, ne once adowne would lay
Her dainty limbs in her sad dreriment,
But praying still did wake, and waking did lament.

33

The morrow next gan earely to appeare,
That Titan rose to runne his daily race;
But earely, ere the morrow next gan reare
Out of the sea faire Titans deawy face,
Up rose the gentle virgin from her place,
And looked all about, if she might spy
Her loved knight to move his manly pace:
For she had great doubt of his safety,
Since late she saw him fall before his enimy.

34

At last she saw where he upstarted brave
Out of the well, wherein he drenched lay:
As Eagle, fresh out of the ocean wave,
Where he hath lefte his plumes all hory gray,
And deckt himselfe with fethers youthly gay,

1 Siloam, the healing pool in the Bible; the rest are famous streams or watering places.
2 daily.

Like eyas[1] hauke up mounts unto the skies,
His newly-budded pineons to assay,
And marveiles at himselfe stil as he flies:
So new this new-borne knight to battell new
did rise.

35

Whom when the damned feend so fresh did spy,
No wonder if he wondred at the sight,
And doubted whether his late enimy
It were, or other new supplied knight.
He now, to prove his late-renewed might,
High brandishing his bright deaw-burning[2] blade,
Upon his crested scalp so sore did smite,
That to the scull a yawning wound it made:
The deadly dint his dulled sences all dismaid.

36

I wote not whether the revenging steele
Were hardned with that holy water dew
Wherein he fell, or sharper edge did feele,
Or his baptized hands now greater grew,
Or other secret vertue did ensew;
Els never could the force of fleshly arme,
Ne molten mettall, in his blood embrew;[3]
For till that stownd could never wight him harme
But subtilty, nor slight, nor might, nor mighty charme.

37

The cruell wound enraged him so sore,
That loud he yelled for exceeding paine;
As hundred ramping Lions seemd to rore,
Whom ravenous hunger did thereto constraine:
Then gan he tosse aloft his stretched traine,
And therewith scourge the buxome[4] aire so sore,
That to his force to yielden it was faine;
Ne ought his sturdy strokes might stand afore,
That high trees overthrew, and rocks in peeces tore.

38

The same advauncing high above his head,
With sharpe intended[5] sting so rude him smott,
That to the earth him drove, as stricken dead;
Ne living wight would have him life behott:
The mortall sting his angry needle shott
Quite through his shield, and in his shoulde seasd,
Where fast it stucke, ne would thereout b gott:
The griefe thereof him wondrous sore diseasd
Ne might his rancling paine with patienc be appeasd.

39

But yet, more mindfull of his honour dear
Then of the grievous smart which him dic wring,
From loathed soile he can[2] him lightly reare
And strove to loose the far infixed sting:
Which when in vaine he tryde with strug geling,
Inflam'd with wrath, his raging blade he hefte,
And strooke so strongly, that the knotty string
Of his huge taile he quite a sonder clefte;
Five joints thereof he hewd, and but the stump him lefte.

40

Hart cannot thinke what outrage and what cries,
With fowle enfouldred[3] smoake and flashing fire,
The hell-bred beast threw forth unto the skies,
That all was covered with darknesse dire:
Then, fraught with rancour and engorged yre,
He cast at once him to avenge for all;
And, gathering up himselfe out of the mire
With his uneven wings, did fiercely fall
Upon his sunne-bright shield, and grypt it fast withall.

41

Much was the man encombred with his hold,
In feare to lose his weapon in his paw,
Ne wist yett how his talaunts[4] to unfold;
Nor harder was from Cerberus greedy jaw
To plucke a bone, then from his cruell claw
To reave[5] by strength the griped gage away:
Thrise he assayd it from his foote to draw,
And thrise in vaine to draw it did assay;
It booted nought to thinke to robbe him of his pray.

1 young. 2 glistening with dew. 3 plunge.
4 bending, unresisting. 5 outstretched.

1 held out hope for. 2 "gan."
3 like a thunder-storm. 4 claws. 5 take.

42

Tho, when he saw no power might prevaile,
His trusty sword he cald to his last aid,
Wherewith he fiersly did his foe assaile,
And double blowes about him stoutly laid,
That glauncing fire out of the yron plaid,
As sparkles from the Andvile use to fly,
When heavy hammers on the wedge are swaid:
Therewith at last he forst him to unty
One of his grasping feete, him to defend thereby.

43

The other foote, fast fixed on his shield,
Whenas no strength nor stroks mote him constraine
To loose, ne yet the warlike pledge to yield,
He smott thereat with all his might and maine,
That nought so wondrous puissaunce might sustaine:
Upon the joint the lucky steele did light,
And made such way that hewd it quite in twaine;
The paw yett missed not his minisht might,
But hong still on the shield, as it at first was pight.

44

For griefe thereof and divelish despight,
From his infernall fournace forth he threw
Huge flames that dimmed all the hevens light,
Enrold in duskish smoke and brimstone blew:
As burning Aetna from his boyling stew
Doth belch out flames, and rockes in peeces broke,
And ragged ribs of mountaines molten new,
Enwrapt in coleblacke clowds and filthy smoke,
That al the land with stench and heven with horror choke.

45

The heate whereof, and harmefull pestilence,
So sore him noyd, that forst him to retire
A little backeward for his best defence,
To save his body from the scorching fire,
Which he from hellish entrailes did expire.
It chaunst, (eternall God that chaunce did guide)
As he recoiled backeward, in the mire
His nigh foreweried feeble feet did slide,
And downe he fell, with dread of shame sore terrifide.

46

There grew a goodly tree him faire beside,
Loaden with fruit and apples rosy redd,
As they in pure vermilion had been dide,
Whereof great vertues over-all were redd;[1]
For happy life to all which thereon fedd,
And life eke everlasting did befall:
Great God it planted in that blessed stedd[2]
With his Almighty hand, and did it call
The tree of life, the crime of our first fathers fall.

47

In all the world like was not to be fownd,
Save in that soile, where all good things did grow,
And freely sprong out of the fruitfull grownd,
As incorrupted Nature did them sow,
Till that dredd Dragon all did overthrow.
Another like faire tree eke grew thereby,
Whereof whoso did eat, eftsoones did know
Both good and ill. O mournfull memory!
That tree through one mans fault hath doen us all to dy.

48

From the first tree forth flowd, as from a well,
A trickling streame of Balme, most soveraine
And dainty deare, which on the ground still fell,
And overflowed all the fertile plaine,
As it had deawed bene with timely raine:
Life and long health that gracious ointment gave,
And deadly wounds could heale, and reare againe
The sencelesse corse appointed for the grave:
Into that same he fell, which did from death him save.

49

For nigh thereto the ever damned Beast
Durst not approch, for he was deadly made,
And al that life preserved did detest;
Yet he it oft adventur'd to invade.
By this the drouping day-light gan to fade,
And yield his rowme to sad succeeding night,
Who with her sable mantle gan to shade
The face of earth and wayes of living wight,
And high her burning torch set up in heaven bright.

50

When gentle Una saw the second fall
Of her deare knight, who, weary of long fight

[1] perceived. [2] place.

And faint through losse of blood, moov'd not at all,
But lay, as in a dreame of deepe delight,
Besmeard with pretious Balme, whose vertuous might
Did heale his woundes, and scorching heat alay;
Againe she stricken was with sore affright,
And for his safetie gan devoutly pray,
And watch the noyous night, and wait for joyous day.

51

The joyous day gan early to appeare;
And fayre Aurora from the deawy bed
Of aged Tithone gan herselfe to reare
With rosy cheekes, for shame as blushing red:
Her golden locks for hast were loosely shed
About her eares, when Una her did marke
Clymbe to her charet, all with flowers spred,
From heven high to chace the chearelesse darke;
With mery note her lowd salutes the mounting larke.

52

Then freshly up arose the doughty knight,
All healed of his hurts and woundes wide,
And did himselfe to battaile ready dight;
Whose early foe awaiting him beside
To have devourd, so soone as day he spyde,
When now he saw himselfe so freshly reare,
As if late fight had nought him damnifyde,
He woxe dismaid, and gan his fate to feare:
Nathlesse with wonted rage he him advaunced neare.

53

And in his first encounter, gaping wyde,
He thought attonce him to have swallowd quight,
And rusht upon him with outragious pryde;
Who him rencountring fierce, as hauke in flight,
Perforce rebutted backe. The weapon bright,
Taking advantage of his open jaw,
Ran through his mouth with so importune might,
That deepe emperst his darksom hollow maw,
And, back retyrd, his life blood forth with all did draw.

54

So downe he fell, and forth his life did breath,
That vanisht into smoke and cloudes swift;
So downe he fell, that th' earth him underneath
Did grone, as feeble so great load to lift;
So downe he fell, as an huge rocky clift,
Whose false foundacion waves have washt away,
With dreadfull poyse [1] is from the mayneland rift,
And rolling downe great Neptune doth dismay:
So downe he fell, and like an heaped mountaine lay.

55

The knight him selfe even trembled at his fall,
So huge and horrible a masse it seemd;
And his deare Lady, that beheld it all,
Durst not approch for dread which she misdeemd;
But yet at last, whenas the direfull feend
She saw not stirre, off-shaking vaine affright
She nigher drew, and saw that joyous end:
Then God she praysd, and thankt her faithfull knight,
That had atchievde so great a conquest by his might.

## CANTO XII

Fayre Una to the Redcrosse Knight
Betrouthed is with joy:
Though false Duessa, it to barre,
Her false sleightes doe imploy.

1

Behold! I see the haven nigh at hand
To which I meane my wearie course to bend;
Vere [2] the maine shete, and beare up with the land,
The which afore [3] is fayrly to be kend,[4]
And seemeth safe from storms that may offend;
There this fayre virgin wearie of her way
Must landed bee, now at her journeyes end;
There eke my feeble barke a while may stay,
Till mery wynd and weather call her thence away.

2

Scarsely had Phoebus in the glooming East
Yett harnessed his fyrie-footed teeme,
Ne reard above the earth his flaming creast,
When the last deadly smoke aloft did steeme,
That signe of last outbreathed life did seeme

1 crash.
2 Trim the mainsheet to swing the bow of the ship to leeward.
3 ahead. 4 recognized.

Unto the watchman on the castle-wall;
Who thereby dead that balefull Beast did deeme,
And to his Lord and Lady lowd gan call,
To tell how he had seene the Dragons fatall fall.

3

Uprose with hasty joy, and feeble speed,
That aged Syre, the Lord of all that land,
And looked forth, to weet if trew indeed
Those tydinges were, as he did understand:
Which whenas trew by tryall he out fond,
He badd to open wyde his brasen gate,
Which long time had beene shut, and out of hond [1]
Proclaymed joy and peace through all his state;
For dead now was their foe, which them forrayed late.

4

Then gan triumphant Trompets sownd on hye,
That sent to heven the ecchoed report
Of their new joy, and happie victory
Gainst him, that had them long opprest with tort,[2]
And fast imprisoned in sieged fort.
Then all the people, as in solemne feast,
To him assembled with one full consort,
Rejoycing at the fall of that great beast,
From whose eternall bondage now they were releast.

5

Forth came that auncient Lord, and aged Queene,
Arayd in antique robes downe to the grownd,
And sad habiliments right well beseene:
A noble crew about them waited rownd
Of sage and sober peres, all gravely gownd;
Whom far before did march a goodly band
Of tall young men, all hable armes to sownd;
But now they laurell braunches bore in hand,
Glad signe of victory and peace in all their land.

6

Unto that doughtie Conquerour they came,
And him before themselves prostrating low,
Their Lord and Patrone loud did him proclame,
And at his feet their lawrell boughes did throw.
Soone after them, all dauncing on a row,
The comely virgins came, with girlands dight,
As fresh as flowres in medow greene doe grow
When morning deaw upon their leaves doth light;
And in their handes sweet Timbrels all upheld on hight.

7

And them before the fry [1] of children yong
Their wanton sportes and childish mirth did play,
And to the Maydens sownding tymbrels song
In well attuned notes a joyous lay,
And made delightfull musick all the way,
Untill they came where that faire virgin stood:
As fayre Diana in fresh sommers day
Beholdes her nymphes enraung'd in shady wood,
Some wrestle, some do run, some bathe in christall flood.

8

So she beheld those maydens meriment
With chearefull vew; who, when to her they came,
Themselves to ground with gracious humblesse bent,
And her ador'd by honorable name,
Lifting to heven her everlasting fame:
Then on her head they sett a girlond greene,
And crowned her twixt earnest and twixt game:
Who, in her self-resemblance well beseene,
Did seeme, such as she was, a goodly maiden Queene.

9

And after all the raskall [2] many [3] ran,
Heaped together in rude rablement,
To see the face of that victorious man,
Whom all admired as from heaven sent,
And gazd upon with gaping wonderment;
But when they came where that dead Dragon lay,
Stretcht on the ground in monstrous large extent,
The sight with ydle feare did them dismay,
Ne durst approch him nigh to touch, or once assay.

10

Some feard, and fledd; some feard, and well it faynd;
One, that would wiser seeme then all the rest,
Warnd him not touch, for yet perhaps remaynd

1 immediately. 2 wrong.

1 swarm. 2 low, common. 3 crowd.

Some lingring life within his hollow brest,
Or in his wombe might lurke some hidden nest
Of many Dragonettes, his fruitfull seede:
Another saide, that in his eyes did rest
Yet sparckling fyre, and badd thereof take heed;
Another said, he saw him move his eyes indeed.

11

One mother, whenas her foolehardy chyld
Did come too neare, and with his talants play,
Halfe dead through feare, her litle babe revyld,
And to her gossibs [1] gan in counsell say;
"How can I tell, but that his talants may
Yet scratch my sonne, or rend his tender hand?"
So diversly them selves in vaine they fray; [2]
Whiles some more bold to measure him nigh stand,
To prove how many acres he did spred of land.

12

Thus flocked all the folke him rownd about;
The whiles that hoarie king, with all his traine,
Being arrived where that champion stout
After his foes defeasaunce did remaine,
Him goodly greetes, and fayre does entertayne
With princely gifts of yvory and gold,
And thousand thankes him yeeldes for all his paine.
Then when his daughter deare he does behold,
Her dearely doth imbrace, and kisseth manifold.

13

And after to his Pallace he them bringes,
With shaumes, and trompets, and with Clarions sweet,
And all the way the joyous people singes,
And with their garments strowes the paved street;
Whence mounting up, they fynd purveyaunce [3] meet
Of all, that royall Princes court became;
And all the floore was underneath their feet
Bespredd with costly scarlott of great name,[4]
On which they lowly sitt, and fitting purpose frame.

1 friends. 2 terrify. 3 provision. 4 quality.

14

What needes me tell their feast and goodly guize,
In which was nothing riotous nor vaine?
What needes of dainty dishes to devize,
Of comely services, or courtly trayne?
My narrow leaves cannot in them contayne
The large discourse of roiall Princes state.
Yet was their manner then but bare and playne;
For th' antique world excesse and pryde did hate:
Such proud luxurious pompe is swollen up but late.

15

Then, when with meates and drinkes of every kinde
Their fervent appetites they quenched had,
That auncient Lord gan fit occasion finde,
Of straunge adventures, and of perils sad
Which in his travell him befallen had,
For to demaund of his renowmed guest:
Who then with utt'rance grave, and count'nance sad,
From poynt to poynt, as is before exprest,
Discourst his voyage long, according his request.

16

Great pleasure, mixt with pittiful regard,
That godly King and Queene did passionate,[1]
Whyles they his pittifull adventures heard;
That oft they did lament his lucklesse state,
And often blame the too importune [2] fate
That heapd on him so many wrathfull wreakes; [3]
For never gentle knight, as he of late,
So tossed was in fortunes cruell freakes:
And all the while salt teares bedeawd the hearers cheaks.

17

Then sayd that royall Pere in sober wise;
"Deare Sonne, great beene the evils which ye bore
From first to last in your late enterprise,
That I note [4] whether praise or pitty more;
For never living man, I weene, so sore
In sea of deadly daungers was distrest:
But since now safe ye seised have the shore,
And well arrived are, (high God be blest!)
Let us devize of ease and everlasting rest."

1 express with emotion. 2 harsh.
3 punishments. 4 "ne wot," know not.

18

"Ah dearest Lord!" said then that doughty knight,
Of ease or rest I may not yet devize;
For by the faith which I to armes have plight,
bownden am streight after this emprize,
As that your daughter can ye well advize,
Backe to retourne to that great Faery Queene,
And her to serve sixe yeares in warlike wize,
Gainst that proud Paynim king that works her teene:[1]
Therefore I ought crave pardon, till I there have beene."

19

"Unhappy falls that hard necessity,"
(Quoth he) "the troubler of my happy peace,
And vowed foe of my felicity;
Ne I against the same can justly preace:[2]
But since that band ye cannot now release,
Nor doen undo, (for vowes may not be vayne)
Soone as the terme of those six yeares shall cease,
Ye then shall hither backe retourne agayne,
The marriage to accomplish vowd betwixt you twayn.

20

"Which, for my part, I covet to performe
In sort as[3] through the world I did proclame,
That who-so kild that monster most deforme,
And him in hardy battayle overcame,
Should have mine onely daughter to his Dame,[4]
And of my kingdome heyre apparaunt bee:
Therefore, since now to thee perteynes the same
By dew desert of noble chevalree,
Both daughter and eke kingdome lo! I yield to thee."

21

Then forth he called that his daughter fayre,
The fairest Un', his onely daughter deare,
His onely daughter and his only hayre;
Who forth proceeding with sad sober cheare,
As bright as doth the morning starre appeare
Out of the East, with flaming lockes bedight,
To tell that dawning day is drawing neare,
And to the world does bring long-wished light:
So faire and fresh that Lady shewd herselfe in sight.

1 injury. 2 press, contend.
3 just as. 4 as his wife.

22

So faire and fresh, as freshest flowre in May;
For she had layd her mournefull stole aside,
And widow-like sad wimple[1] throwne away,
Wherewith her heavenly beautie she did hide,
Whiles on her wearie journey she did ride;
And on her now a garment she did weare
All lilly white, withoutten spot or pride,
That seemd like silke and silver woven neare;[2]
But neither silke nor silver therein did appeare.

23

The blazing brightnesse of her beauties beame,
And glorious light of her sunshyny face,
To tell were as to strive against the streame:
My ragged rimes are all too rude and bace
Her heavenly lineaments for to enchace.
Ne wonder; for her own deare loved knight,
All were she daily with himselfe in place,
Did wonder much at her celestial sight:
Oft had he seene her faire, but never so faire dight.

24

So fairely dight when she in presence came,
She to her Syre made humble reverence,
And bowed low, that her right well became,
And added grace unto her excellence:
Who with great wisedome and grave eloquence
Thus gan to say — But, eare he thus had sayd,
With flying speede, and seeming great pretence,
Came running in, much like a man dismayd,
A Messenger with letters, which his message sayd.

25

All in the open hall amazed stood
At suddeinnesse of that unwary[3] sight,
And wondred at his breathlesse hasty mood:
But he for nought would stay his passage right,
Till fast before the king he did alight;
Where falling flat great humblesse he did make,
And kist the ground whereon his foot was pight;[4]
Then to his handes that writt he did betake,
Which he disclosing[5] read thus, as the paper spake:

1 linen head- and neck-dress. 2 closely.
3 unexpected. 4 placed. 5 unfolding.

26

"To thee, most mighty king of Eden fayre,
Her greeting sends in these sad lines addrest,
The wofull daughter and forsaken heyre
Of that great Emperour of all the West;
And bids thee be advized for the best,
Ere thou thy daughter linck, in holy band
Of wedlocke, to that new unknowen guest:
For he already plighted his right hand
Unto another love, and to another land.

27

"To me, sad mayd, or rather widow sad,
He was affyaunced long time before,
And sacred pledges he both gave, and had,
False erraunt knight, infamous, and forswore!
Witnesse the burning Altars, which he swore,
And guilty heavens of his bold perjury;
Which though he hath polluted oft of yore,
Yet I to them for judgement just doe fly,
And them conjure t' avenge this shamefull injury.

28

"Therefore, since mine he is, or free or bond,
Or false or trew, or living or else dead,
Withhold, O soverayne Prince! your hasty hond
From knitting league with him, I you aread;
Ne weene my right with strength adowne to tread,
Through weaknesse of my widowhed or woe;
For truth is strong her rightfull cause to plead,
And shall finde friends, if need requireth soe.
So bids thee well to fare, Thy neither friend nor foe,

*Fidessa.*"

29

When he these bitter byting wordes had red,
The tydings straunge did him abashed make,
That still he sate long time astonished,
As in great muse, ne word to creature spake.
At last his solemn silence thus he brake,
With doubtfull eyes fast fixed on his guest:
"Redoubted knight, that for myne only sake
Thy life and honour late adventurest,
Let nought be hid from me that ought to be exprest.

30

"What meane these bloody vowes and idle threats,
Throwne out from womanish impatient mynd?
What hevens? what altars? what enraged heates,
Here heaped up with termes of love unkynd,
My conscience cleare with guilty bands would bynd?
High God be witnesse that I guiltlesse ame;
But if yourselfe, Sir knight, ye faulty fynd,
Or wrapped be in loves of former Dame,
With cryme doe not it cover, but disclose the same."

31

To whom the Redcrosse knight this answere sent:
"My Lord, my king, be nought hereat dismayd,
Till well ye wote by grave intendiment,[1]
What woman, and wherefore, doth me upbrayd
With breach of love and loialty betrayd.
It was in my mishaps, as hitherward
I lately traveild, that unwares I strayd
Out of my way, through perils straunge and hard,
That day should faile me ere I had them all declard.

32

"There did I find, or rather I was fownd
Of this false woman that Fidessa hight,
Fidessa hight the falsest Dame on grownd,
Most false Duessa, royall richly dight,
That easy was t' inveigle weaker sight:
Who by her wicked arts and wylie skill,
Too false and strong for earthly skill or might,
Unwares me wrought unto her wicked will,
And to my foe betrayd when least I feared ill."

33

Then stepped forth the goodly royall Mayd,
And on the ground herselfe prostrating low,
With sober countenance thus to him sayd:
"O! pardon[2] me, my soveraine Lord, to sheow
The secret treasons, which of late I know
To have bene wrought by that false sorceresse:
Shee, onely she, it is, that earst did throw
This gentle knight into so great distresse,
That death him did awaite in daily wretchednesse.

1 attention. 2 allow.

34

"And now it seemes, that she suborned hath
This crafty messenger with letters vaine,
To worke new woe and improvided[1] scath,
By breaking of the band betwixt us twaine;
Wherein she used hath the practicke[2] paine
Of this false footman, clokt with simplenesse,
Whome if ye please for to discover plaine,
Ye shall him Archimago find, I ghesse,
The falsest man alive: who tries, shall find
no lesse."

35

The king was greatly moved at her speach;
And, all with suddein indignation fraight,[3]
Bad on that Messenger rude hands to reach.
Eftsoones the Gard, which on his state did
wait,
Attacht that faytor[4] false, and bound him
strait;
Who seeming sorely chauffed at his band,
As chained beare whom cruell dogs doe bait,
With ydle force did faine them to withstand,
And often semblaunce made to scape out of
their hand.

36

But they him layd full low in dungeon
deepe,
And bound him hand and foote with yron
chains;
And with continual watch did warely keepe.
Who then would thinke that by his subtile
trains
He could escape fowle death or deadly
pains?
Thus, when that Princes wrath was pacifide,
He gan renew the late forbidden bains,[5]
And to the knight his daughter deare he tyde
With sacred rites and vowes for ever to abyde.

37

His owne two hands the holy knotts did
knitt,
That none but death for ever can divide;
His owne two hands, for such a turne most
fitt,
The housling[6] fire did kindle and provide,
And holy water thereon sprinckled wide;
At which the bushy teade[7] a groome did
light,
And sacred lamp in secret chamber hide,
Where it should not be quenched day nor
night,
For feare of evil fates, but burnen ever bright.

38

Then gan they sprinckle all the posts with
wine,
And made great feast to solemnize that
day:
They all perfumde with frankincense divine,
And precious odours fetcht from far away,
That all the house did sweat with great aray:
And all the while sweete Musicke did apply
Her curious skill the warbling notes to
play,
To drive away the dull Melancholy;
The whiles one sung a song of love and jollity.

39

During the which there was an heavenly
noise
Heard sownd through all the Pallace pleas-
antly,
Like as it had bene many an Angels voice
Singing before th' eternall majesty,
In their trinall[1] triplicities[2] on hye:
Yett wist no creature whence that hevenly
sweet
Proceeded, yet each one felt secretly
Himselfe thereby refte of his sences meet,
And ravished with rare impression in his
sprite.

40

Great joy was made that day of young and
old,
And solemne feast proclaymd throughout
the land,
That their exceeding merth may not be told:
Suffice it heare by signes to understand
The usuall joyes at knitting of loves band.
Thrise happy man the knight himselfe did
hold,
Possessed of his Ladies hart and hand;
And ever, when his eie did her behold,
His heart did seeme to melt in pleasures
manifold.

41

Her joyous presence, and sweet company,
In full content he there did long enjoy;
Ne wicked envy, ne vile gealosy,
His deare delights were hable to annoy:
Yet, swimming in that sea of blisfull joy,
He nought forgott how he whilome had
sworne,
In case he could that monstrous beast destroy,
Unto his Faery Queene backe to retourne;
The which he shortly did, and Una left to
mourne.

1 unforeseen. 2 crafty. 3 fraught.
4 impostor. 5 banns. 6 sacramental.
7 torch.

1 threefold.
2 trinities, referring to the nine orders of angels.

42

Now, strike your sailes, yee jolly Mariners,
For we be come unto a quiet rode,[1]
Where we must land some of our passengers,
And light this weary vessell of her lode:
Here she a while may make her safe abode,
Till she repaired have her tackles spent,
And wants supplide; And then againe abroad
On the long voiage whereto she is bent:
Well may she speede, and fairely finish her intent!

## AMORETTI

1

Happy ye leaves! when as those lilly hands,
Which hold my life in their dead doing[2] might,
Shall handle you, and hold in loves soft bands,
Lyke captives trembling at the victors sight.
And happy lines! on which, with starry light,
Those lamping[3] eyes will deigne sometimes to look,
And reade the sorrowes of my dying spright,[4]
Written with teares in harts close bleeding book.
And happy rymes! bath'd in the sacred brooke
Of Helicon,[5] whence she derived is,
When ye behold that angels blessed looke,
My soules long lacked foode, my heavens blis.
Leaves, lines, and rymes, seeke her to please alone,
Whom if ye please, I care for other none.

34

Lyke as a ship, that through the Ocean wyde,
By conduct of some star doth make her way;
Whenas a storme hath dimd her trusty guyde,
Out of her course doth wander far astray!
So I, whose star, that wont with her bright ray
Me to direct, with cloudes is over cast,
Doe wander now, in darknesse and dismay,
Through hidden perils round about me plast.
Yet hope I well that, when this storme is past,
My Helice,[6] the lodestar of my lyfe,
Will shine again, and looke on me at last,
With lovely light to cleare my cloudy grief.
Till then I wander carefull, comfortlesse,
In secret sorow, and sad pensivenesse.

1 roadstead, anchorage. 2 death-dealing.
3 flashing. 4 spirit.
5 Hill in Greece dedicated to the Muses.
6 Constellation of the Great Bear.

79

Men call you fayre, and you doe credit it,
For that your selfe ye dayly such doe see:
But the trew fayre, that is the gentle wit
And vertuous mind, is much more praysd of me.
For all the rest, how ever fayre it be,
Shall turne to nought and loose that glorious hew:
But onely that is permanent and free
From frayle corruption, that doth flesh ensew.
That is true beautie: that doth argue you
To be divine and borne of heavenly seed:
Deriv'd from that fayre Spirit from whom al true
And perfect beauty did at first proceed.
He onely fayre, and what he fayre hath made:
All other fayre, lyke flowres, untymely fade.

82

Joy of my life! full oft for loving you
I blesse my lot, that was so lucky placed:
But then the more your owne mishap I rew,
That are so much by so meane love embased.
For, had the equall hevens so much you graced
In this as in the rest, ye mote invent
Som hevenly wit, whose verse could have enchased
Your glorious name in golden moniment.
But since ye deignd so goodly to relent
To me your thrall, in whom is little worth,
That little, that I am, shall all be spent
In setting your immortall prayses forth:
Whose lofty argument, uplifting me,
Shall lift you up unto an high degree.

1594

## PROTHALAMION;

OR A SPOUSAL VERSE MADE IN HONOUR OF THE DOUBLE MARRIAGE OF THE LADIE ELIZABETH AND THE LADIE KATHERINE SOMERSET

I

Calme was the day, and through the trembling ayre
Sweete breathing Zephyrus did softly play
A gentle spirit, that lightly did delay
Hot Titans[1] beames, which then did glyster fayre:

1 the sun's.

When I, whom sullein care,
Through discontent of my long fruitlesse stay
In princes court, and expectation vayne
Of idle hopes, which still doe fly away,
Like empty shaddowes, did aflict my brayne,
Walkt forth to ease my payne
Along the shoare of silver streaming Themmes,
Whose rutty[1] bancke, the which his river hemmes,
Was paynted all with variable flowers,
And all the meades adornd with daintie gemmes,
Fit to decke maydens bowres,
And crowne their paramours,
Against the brydale day, which is not long:
Sweete Themmes, runne softly, till I end my song.

2

There, in a meadow, by the rivers side,
A flocke of nymphes I chaunced to espy,
All lovely daughters of the flood thereby,
With goodly greenish locks all loose untyde,
As each had bene a bryde,
And each one had a little wicker basket,
Made of fine twigs entrayled curiously,
In which they gathered flowers to fill their flasket;
And with fine fingers cropt full feateously[2]
The tender stalkes on hye.
Of every sort, which in that meadow grew,
They gathered some; the violet pallid blew,
The little dazie, that at evening closes,
The virgin lillie, and the primrose trew,
With store of vermeil roses,
To decke their bridegromes posies
Against the brydale day, which was not long:
Sweete Themmes, runne softly, till I end my song.

3

With that I saw two swannes of goodly hewe
Come softly swimming downe along the lee;[3]
Two fairer birds I yet did never see:
The snow which doth the top of Pindus[4] strew
Did never whiter shew,
Nor Jove himselfe, when he a swan would be
For love of Leda,[5] whiter did appear:
Yet Leda was, they say, as white as he,
Yet not so white as these, nor nothing neare;
So purely white they were,
That even the gentle streame, the which them bare,
Seem'd foule to them, and bad his billowes spare
To wet their silken feathers, least they might
Soyle their fayre plumes with water not so fayre,
And marre their beauties bright,
That shone as heavens light,
Against their brydale day, which was not long:
Sweete Themmes, runne softly, till I end my song.

1 rooty. 2 skilfully. 3 river.
4 A mountain in Greece.
5 Beloved by Jove in the shape of a swan.

4

Eftsoones[1] the nymphes, which now had flowers their fill,
Ran all in haste to see that silver brood,
As they came floating on the christal flood;
Whom when they sawe, they stood amazed still,
Their wondring eyes to fill.
Them seem'd they never saw a sight so fayre,
Of fowles so lovely, that they sure did deeme
Them heavenly borne, or to be that same payre
Which through the skie draw Venus silver teeme;
For sure they did not seeme
To be begot of any earthly seede,
But rather angels or of angels breede:
Yet were they bred of Somers-heat,[2] they say,
In sweetest season, when each flower and weede
The earth did fresh aray;
So fresh they seem'd as day,
Even as their brydale day, which was not long:
Sweete Themmes, runne softly, till I end my song.

5

Then forth they all out of their baskets drew
Great store of flowers, the honour of the field,
That to the sense did fragrant odours yeild,
All which upon those goodly birds they threw,
And all the waves did strew,
That like old Peneus[3] waters they did seeme,
When downe along by pleasant Tempes[3] shore,
Scattred with flowres, through Thessaly they streeme,

1 immediately. 2 A pun for Somerset.
3 in Thessaly.

That they appeare, through lillies plenteous store,
Like a brydes chamber flore.
Two of those nymphes, meane while, two garlands bound
Of freshest flowres which in that mead they found,
The which presenting all in trim array,
Their snowie foreheads therewithall they crownd,
Whil'st one did sing this lay,
Prepar'd against that day,
Against their brydale day, which was not long:
Sweete Themmes, runne softly, till I end my song.

6

"Ye gentle birdes, the worlds faire ornament,
And heavens glorie, whom this happie hower
Doth leade unto your lovers blissfull bower,
Joy may you have and gentle hearts content
Of your loves couplement:
And let faire Venus, that is Queene of Love,
With her heart-quelling sonne upon you smile,
Whose smile, they say, hath vertue to remove
All loves dislike, and friendships faultie guile
For ever to assoile.[1]
Let endlesse peace your steadfast hearts accord,
And blessed plentie wait upon you[r] bord;
And let your bed with pleasures chast abound,
That fruitfull issue may to you afford,
Which may your foes confound,
And make your joyes redound,
Upon your brydale day, which is not long:
Sweete Themmes, run softlie, till I end my song."

7

So ended she; and all the rest around
To her redoubled that her undersong,
Which said, their bridale daye should not be long.
And gentle Eccho from the neighbour ground
Their accents did resound.
So forth those joyous birdes did passe along,
Adowne the lee, that to them murmurde low,
As he would speake, but that he lackt a tong,
Yeat did by signes his glad affection show,
Making his streame run slow.
And all the foule which in his flood did dwell
Gan flock about these twaine, that did excell
The rest, so far, as Cynthia[2] doth shend[3]

1 dispel. 2 the moon. 3 put to shame.

The lesser starres. So they enranged[1] well,
Did on those two attend,
And their best service lend,
Against their wedding day, which was not long:
Sweete Themmes run softly, till I end my song.

8

At length they all to mery London came,
To mery London, my most kyndly nurse,
That to me gave this lifes first native sourse:
Though from another place I take my name,
An house of auncient fame.
There when they came, whereas[2] those bricky towres,[3]
The which on Themmes brode aged backe doe ryde,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers
There whylome wont the Templer-Knights to byde,
Till they decayd through pride:
Next whereunto there standes a stately place,
Where oft I gayned giftes and goodly grace
Of that great Lord,[4] which therein wont to dwell,
Whose want too well now feeles my freendles case:
But ah here fits not well
Olde woes but joyes to tell
Against the bridale daye, which is not long:
Sweete Themmes runne softly, till I end my song.

9

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble Peer,[5]
Great Englands glory and the worlds wide wonder,
Whose dreadfull name late through all Spaine did thunder,[6]
And Hercules two pillors standing neere,
Did make to quake and feare:
Faire branch of Honor, flower of Chevalrie,
That fillest England with thy triumphs fame,
Joy have thou of thy noble victorie,
And endlesse happinesse of thine owne name[7]
That promiseth the same:
That through thy prowesse and victorious armes,

1 placed in a row. 2 where.
3 The Temple (Inner and Middle), a set of buildings and gardens extending from the Strand to the Thames; in the fourteenth century it belonged to the Knights Templars; since then, to students of law.
4 The Earl of Leicester.
5 Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex.
6 Referring to Essex's part in capturing Cadiz in 1596.
7 Spenser playfully suggests that Essex's name is made up of *ever* + *heureux* (happy).

hy country may be freed from forraine harmes:
nd great Elisaes glorious name may ring
hrough al the world, fil'd with thy wide alarmes,
Vhich some brave muse may sing
o ages following,
pon the brydale day, which is not long:
Sweete Themmes runne softly, till I end my song.

10

rom those high towers, this noble Lord issuing,
ike radiant Hesper when his golden hayre
n th' ocean billowes he hath bathed fayre,
escended to the rivers open vewing,
Vith a great traine ensuing.
Above the rest were goodly to bee seene
Two gentle knights of lovely face and feature
Beseeming well the bower of anie Queene,
With gifts of wit and ornaments of nature,
Fit for so goodly stature:
That like the twins of Jove [1] they seem'd in sight,
Which decke the bauldricke of the heavens bright.
They two forth pacing to the rivers side,
Received those two faire brides, their loves delight,
Which at th' appointed tyde,
Each one did make his bryde,
Against their brydale day, which is not long:
Sweete Themmes runne softly, till I end my song.

1596

1 Castor and Pollux, later the constellation Gemini.

## SIR WALTER RALEIGH (1552?–1618)

At a time when every man aspired to be a "complete gentleman," adept in many lines, Raleigh urpassed every one in versatility, displaying unusual skill and achieving prominence in everyhing he undertook. More than any one he is the embodiment of the Elizabethan era, an age vhich saw life as a beautiful adventure, and which investigated the things of the spirit as ardently nd curiously as it explored lands beyond the seas.

After studying at Oxford, Raleigh was a soldier in France and the Low Countries. In 1579 e went on an unsuccessful voyage of discovery to America with his half-brother, Sir Humphrey ilbert. On his return he helped put down an insurrection in Ireland. In 1584 he headed an xpedition to America which founded a colony named by Raleigh "Virginia" in honor of his ueen. He took part in the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588; later, as admiral, he was resent at the attack on the Azores.

As a courtier he stood high in the favor of Elizabeth. As a statesman, he played his part at ourt in affairs both big and petty, twice going to the Tower, in this dangerous game, after James I ecame king. And in addition to all these accomplishments, he was a poet who put feeling and incerity into lyrics that were phrased in the best Elizabethan manner, and an historian, accurate nd descriptive, who wrote some of the greatest prose passages in English.

When, in 1618, he was led to the block on Tower Hill, he made his exit from this life with a ne gesture, as befitted a true Elizabethan. The scene has been vividly described by William ldys, the antiquarian scholar, in his biography of Raleigh, published in 1736.

For the life of Raleigh see E. W. Gosse (English Worthies Series) and Sidney Lee, *Great Englishmen of the Sixteenth Century* (Scribners), which contains estimates of More, Sidney, Raleigh, penser, Bacon, and Shakespeare. Excellent selections from Raleigh's writings have been made y F. W. C. Hersey (Macmillan) and G. E. Hadow (Oxford University Press).

### A VISION UPON THIS CONCEIT OF THE FAERIE QUEENE

This sonnet was one of the commendatory erses that appeared in the first installment of he *Faerie Queene*, books 1–3, 1590.

Methought I saw the grave where Laura [1] lay,
Within that temple where the vestal flame
Was wont to burn: and, passing by that way,
To see that buried dust of living fame,
Whose tomb fair Love and fairer Virtue kept,
All suddenly I saw the Fairy Queen;
At whose approach the soul of Petrarch wept,
And from thenceforth those graces were not seen,
For they this Queen attended; in whose stead
Oblivion laid him down on Laura's hearse.
Hereat the hardest stones were seen to bleed,
And groans of buried ghosts the heavens did pierce:
Where Homer's spright did tremble all for grief,
And cursed th' access of that celestial thief.

1 Petrarch's lady.

## THE SILENT LOVER

1

Passions are likened best to floods and streams:
The shallow murmur, but the deep are dumb.
So, when affection yields discourse, it seems
The bottom is but shallow whence they come.
They that are rich in words, in words discover
That they are poor in that which makes a lover.

2

Wrong not, sweet empress of my heart,
The merit of true passion,
With thinking that he feels no smart,
That sues for no compassion.

Silence in love bewrays more woe
Than words, though ne'er so witty:
A beggar that is dumb, you know,
May challenge double pity.

Then wrong not, dearest to my heart,
My true, though secret passion;
He smarteth most that hides his smart,
And sues for no compassion.

## HIS PILGRIMAGE

Give me my scallop-shell [1] of quiet,
My staff of faith to walk upon,
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,
My bottle of salvation,
My gown of glory, hope's true gauge;
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage.

Blood must be my body's balmer;
No other balm will there be given;
Whilst my soul, like a quiet palmer,
Traveleth towards the land of heaven,
Over the silver mountains,
Where spring the nectar fountains.
There will I kiss
The bowl of bliss;
And drink mine everlasting fill
Upon every milken [2] hill.
My soul will be a-dry before;
But after, it will thirst no more.

Then by that happy blissful day,
More peaceful pilgrims I shall see,
That have cast off their rags of clay,
And walk apparelled fresh like me.
I'll take them first
To quench their thirst
And taste of nectar suckets,[1]
At those clear wells
Where sweetness dwells,
Drawn up by saints in crystal buckets.

And when our bottles and all we
Are filled with immortality,
Then the blessed paths we'll travel,
Strowed with rubies thick as gravel;
Ceilings of diamonds, sapphire floors,
High walls of coral, and pearly bowers.
From thence to heaven's bribeless hall,
Where no corrupted voices brawl;
No conscience molten into gold,
No forged accuser bought or sold,
No cause deferred, no vain-spent journey,
For there Christ is the King's attorney,
Who pleads for all, without degrees,
And He hath angels,[2] but no fees.
And when the grand twelve-million jury
Of our sins, with direful fury,
Against our souls black verdicts give,
Christ pleads His death; and then we live.
Be Thou my speaker, taintless pleader,
Unblotted lawyer, true proceeder!
Thou giv'st salvation, even for alms,
Not with a bribed lawyer's palms.
And this is mine eternal plea
To Him that made heaven and earth and sea:
That, since my flesh must die so soon,
And want a head to dine next noon,
Just at the stroke, when my veins start and spread,
Set on my soul an everlasting head!
Then am I ready, like a palmer fit,
To tread those blest paths which before I writ.

Of death and judgment, heaven and hell,
Who oft doth think, must needs die well.

About 1603.

1 A shell found in Palestine, worn by a pilgrim to show that he had been to the Holy Land.
2 abounding in milk.

## VERSES FOUND IN HIS BIBLE IN THE GATE-HOUSE AT WESTMINSTER

According to tradition, Raleigh wrote this poem the night before his execution.

Even such is time, that takes in trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,

1 sweetmeats.
2 A pun on angel, an old English coin that bore the head of the archangel Michael.

And pays us but with earth and dust;
Who, in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days;
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
My God shall raise me up, I trust!

## THE LIE

Go, Soul, the body's guest
  Upon a thankless arrant;[1]
Fear not to touch the best;
  The truth shall be thy warrant:
Go, since I needs must die,
And give the world the lie.

Say to the court, it glows
  And shines like rotten wood;
Say to the church, it shows
  What's good, and doth no good:
If court and church reply,
Then give them both the lie.

Tell potentates, they live
  Acting by others' action;
Not loved unless they give,
  Not strong but by a faction:
If potentates reply,
Give potentates the lie.

Tell men of high condition,
  That manage the estate,[2]
Their purpose is ambition,
  Their practice only hate:
And if they once reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell them that brave it most,
  They beg for more by spending,
Who, in their greatest cost,
  Seek nothing but commending:
And if they make reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell zeal it wants devotion;
  Tell love it is but lust;
Tell time it is but motion;
  Tell flesh it is but dust:
And wish them not reply,
For thou must give the lie.

Tell age it daily wasteth;
  Tell honour how it alters;
Tell beauty how she blasteth;
  Tell favour how it falters:
And as they shall reply,
Give every one the lie.

Tell wit how much it wrangles
  In tickle[1] points of niceness;
Tell wisdom she entangles
  Herself in over-wiseness:
And when they do reply,
Straight give them both the lie.

Tell physic of her boldness;
  Tell skill it is pretension;
Tell charity of coldness;
  Tell law it is contention:
And as they do reply,
So give them still the lie.

Tell fortune of her blindness;
  Tell nature of decay;
Tell friendship of unkindness;
  Tell justice of delay:
And if they will reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell arts they have no soundness,
  But vary by esteeming;
Tell schools they want profoundness,
  And stand too much on seeming:
If arts and schools reply,
Give arts and schools the lie.

Tell faith it's fled the city;
  Tell how the country erreth;
Tell manhood shakes off pity;
  Tell virtue least preferreth:
And if they do reply,
Spare not to give the lie.

So when thou hast, as I
  Commanded thee, done blabbing, —
Although to give the lie
  Deserves no less than stabbing, —
Stab at thee he that will,
No stab the soul can kill.

[1] errand. [2] state.

## *From* THE DISCOVERY OF GUIANA

After we departed from the port of these Ciawani, we passed up the river with the flood, and anchored the ebb; and in this sort we went onward. The third day that we entered the river our galley came on ground, and stuck so fast, as we thought that even there our discovery had ended, and that we must have left sixty of our men to have inhabited, like rooks upon trees, with those nations: but the next morning, after we had cast out all her ballast, with tugging and

[1] unsteady.

hauling to and fro, we got her afloat, and went on: at four days' end we fell into as goodly a river as ever I beheld, which was called the great Amana, which ran more directly without windings and turnings than the other: but soon after, the flood of the sea left us, and we enforced either by main strength to row against a violent current, or to return as wise as we went out. We had then no shift but to persuade the companies that it was but two or three days' work, and therefore desired them to take pains, every gentleman and others taking their turns to row, and to spell one the other at the hour's end. Every day we passed by goodly branches of rivers, some falling from the west, others from the east, into Amana; but those I leave to the description in the chart of discovery, where every one shall be named with his rising and descent. When three days more were overgone, our companies began to despair, the weather being extreme hot, the river bordered with very high trees that kept away the air, and the current against us every day stronger than other: but we evermore commanded our pilots to promise an end the next day, and used it so long as we were driven to assure them from four reaches of the river to three, and so to two, and so to the next reach;[1] but so long we labored as many days were spent, and so driven to draw ourselves to harder allowance, our bread even at the last, and no drink at all; and our men and ourselves so wearied and scorched, and doubtful withal whether we should ever perform it or no, the heat increasing as we drew towards the line; for we were now in five degrees.

The further we went on, (our victual decreasing, and the air breeding great faintness,) we grew weaker and weaker, when we had most need of strength and ability; for hourly the river ran more violently than other against us, and the barge, wherries, and ship's boat of captain Gifford and captain Calfield had spent all their provisions, so as we were brought into despair and discomfort, had we not persuaded all the company that it was but only one day's work more to attain the land, where we should be relieved of all we wanted; and if we returned, that we were sure to starve by the way, and that the world would also laugh us to scorn. On the banks of these rivers were divers sorts of fruits good to eat, flowers and trees of that variety as were sufficient to make ten volumes of herbals.[2] We relieved ourselves many times with the fruits of the country, and sometimes with fowl and fish: we saw birds of all colors, some carnation, some crimson, orange tawny, purple, green, watchet,[1] and of all other sorts, both simple and mixed; as it was unto us a great good passing of the time to behold them, besides the relief we found by killing some store of them with our fowling pieces, without which, having little or no bread, and less drink, but only the thick and troubled water of the river, we had been in a very hard case.

Our old pilot of the Ciawani (whom, as I said before, we took to redeem Ferdinando[2]) told us, that if we would enter a branch of a river on the right hand with our barge and wherries, and leave the galley at anchor the while in the great river, he would bring us to a town of the Arwacas, where we should find store of bread, hens, fish and of the country wine, and persuaded us, that departing from the galley at noon, we might return ere night. I was very glad to hear this speech, and presently took my barge, with eight musketeers, captain Gifford's wherry, with himself and four musketeers, and captain Calfield with his wherry and as many, and so we entered the mouth of this river; and because we were persuaded that it was so near, we took no victual with us at all. When we had rowed three hours, we marvelled we saw no sign of any dwelling, and asked the pilot where the town was; he told us a little further. After three hours more, the sun being almost set, we began to suspect that he led us that way to betray us, for he confessed that those Spaniards which fled from Trinedado, and also those that remained with Carapana in Emeria, were joined together in some village upon that river. But when it grew towards night, and we demanding where the place was, he told us but four reaches more: when we had rowed four and four we saw no sign, and our poor watermen, even heart-broken and tired, were ready to give up the ghost; for we had now come from the galley near forty miles.

At the last we determined to hang the pilot, and, if we had well known the way back again by night, he had surely gone; but our own necessities pleaded sufficiently for his safety: for it was as dark as pitch, and the river began so to narrow itself, and the trees to hang over from side to side, as we were driven with arming swords to cut a passage through those branches that covered the

1 straight section of a river. 2 books about plants.

1 light blue.

2 Raleigh's Indian pilot, who had been captured a short time before by a hostile tribe.

water. We were very desirous to find this town, hoping of a feast, because we made but a short breakfast aboard the galley in the morning, and it was now eight o'clock at night, and our stomachs began to gnaw apace; but whether it was best to return or go on we began to doubt, suspecting treason in the pilot more and more; but the poor old Indian ever assured us that it was but a little further, and but this one turning and that turning; and at last, about one o'clock after midnight, we saw a light, and rowing towards it we heard the dogs of the village. When we landed, we found few people; for the lord of that place was gone with divers canoes above four hundred miles off, upon a journey towards the head of Oroonoko, to trade for gold, and to buy women of the cannibals, who afterward unfortunately passed by us, as we rode at an anchor in the port of Morequito, in the dark of night, and yet came so near us, as his canoes grated against our barges. He left one of his company at the port of Morequito, by whom we understood that he had brought thirty young women, divers plates of gold, and had great store of fine pieces of cotton cloth and cotton beds. In his house we had good store of bread, fish, hens, and Indian drink, and so rested that night; and in the morning, after we had traded with such of his people as came down, we returned towards our galley, and brought with us some quantity of bread, fish, and hens.

On both sides of this river we passed the most beautiful country that ever mine eyes beheld; and whereas all that we had seen before was nothing but woods, prickles, bushes, and thorns, here we beheld plains of twenty miles in length, the grass short and green, and in divers parts groves of trees by themselves, as if they had been by all the art and labor in the world so made of purpose: and still as we rowed, the deer came down feeding by the water's side, as if they had been used to a keeper's call. Upon this river there were great store of fowl, and of many sorts: we saw in it divers sorts of strange fishes, and of marvellous bigness; but for lagartos[1] it exceeded; for there were thousands of those ugly serpents, and the people call it for the abundance of them the river of Lagartos, in their language. I had a negro, a very proper young fellow, that, leaping out of the galley to swim in the mouth of this river, was in all our sights taken and devoured with one of those lagartos. In the meanwhile our companies in the galley thought we had been all lost, (for we promised to return before night,) and sent the Lion's Whelp's ship's boat with captain Whiddon to follow us up the river; but the next day, after we had rowed up and down some fourscore miles, we returned, and went on our way up the great river, and, when we were even at the last cast for want of victuals, captain Gifford being before the galley and the rest of the boats, seeking out some place to land upon the banks to make fire, espied four canoes coming down the river, and with no small joy caused his men to try the uttermost of their strengths, and after a while two of the four gave over, and ran themselves ashore, every man betaking himself to the fastness of the woods; the two other lesser got away while he landed to lay hold of these, and so turned into some by-creek, we knew not whither: those canoes that were taken were loaden with bread, and were bound for Marguerita in the West Indies, which those Indians, called Arwacas, proposed to carry thither for exchange: but in the lesser there were three Spaniards, who having heard of the defeat of their governor in Trinedado, and that we purposed to enter Guiana, came away in those canoes: one of them was a cavallero, as the captain of the Arwacas after told us, another a soldier, and the third a refiner.

In the meantime nothing on the earth could have been more welcome to us, next unto gold, than the great store of very excellent bread which we found in these canoes; for now our men cried, Let us go on, we care not how far. After that Captain Gifford had brought the two canoes to the galley, I took my barge, and went to the bank's side with a dozen shot, where the canoes first ran themselves ashore, and landed there, sending out captain Gifford and captain Thyn on one hand, and captain Calfield on the other, to follow those that were fled into the woods; and as I was creeping through the bushes I saw an Indian basket hidden, which was the refiner's basket; for I found in it his quicksilver, saltpetre, and divers things for the trial of metals, and also the dust of such ore as he had refined; but in those canoes which escaped there was a good quantity of ore and gold.

## *From* THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD

The following extract is the conclusion of the *History*, with its famous last paragraph. It was

1 lizards; here, alligators.

written in the Tower between 1607 and 1614, and published in 1614, while Raleigh was still in prison. Raleigh planned two more volumes, which were never completed. The one volume that he finished ends with the foundation of the Roman Empire.

For the rest, if we seek a reason of the succession and continuance of this boundless ambition in mortal men, we may add to that which hath been already said, that the kings and princes of the world have always laid before them the actions, but not the ends, of those great ones which preceded them. They are always transported with the glory of the one, but they never mind the misery of the other, till they find the experience in themselves. They neglect the advice of God, while they enjoy life, or hope it; but they follow the counsel of Death upon his first approach. It is he that puts into man all the wisdom of the world, without speaking a word, which God, with all the words of his law, promises, or threats, doth not infuse. Death, which hateth and destroyeth man is believed; God, which hath made him and loves him, is always deferred. *I have considered,* saith Solomon, *all the works that are under the sun, and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.* But who believes it, till Death tells us? It was Death which, opening the conscience of Charles the Fifth, made him enjoin his son Philip to restore Navarre; and king Francis the First of France, to command that justice should be done upon the murderers of the Protestants in Merindol and Cabrieres, which till then he neglected. It is therefore Death alone that can suddenly make man to know himself. He tells the proud and insolent that they are but abjects and humbles them at the instant, makes them cry, complain, and repent, yea, even to hate their forepast happiness. He takes the account of the rich and proves him a beggar, a naked beggar, which hath interest in nothing but in the gravel that fills his mouth. He holds a glass before the eyes of the most beautiful, and makes them see therein their deformity and rottenness, and they acknowledge it.

O eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised; thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *Hic jacet!*

[Here follows a paragraph announcing the second and third volumes. Raleigh's "first volume" comprises six modern octavo volumes

## SIR PHILIP SIDNEY (1554–1586)

Sidney, like Raleigh, a splendid Elizabethan gentleman, came of an excellent family, was educated at Oxford, and soon thereafter became a courtier and diplomat under Elizabeth. In a short and busy life he produced *Astrophel and Stella*, a sonnet sequence addressed to his beloved, Penelope Devereux; *Arcadia*, a romance, written for his sister, the Countess of Pembroke, which set a new style in prose writing; and *The Defense of Poesy*, a beautifully written appreciation of poetry. His accomplishment in literature merits Arthur Symons' enthusiastic praise: "It is in Sidney that we find the true beginning in England of the novel, of literary criticism, of the sonnet, and of the lyric."

His chivalric death on the field of Zutphen in the Low Countries is commemorated in the biography written by Fulke Greville which appeared in 1652. Spenser, who had dedicated his *Faerie Queene* to Sidney, mourned the death of his friend in a series of sonnets, *Astrophel*.

For the life of Sidney, see J. A. Symonds (English Men of Letters), and Greville (Oxford University Press). John Drinkwater has edited the poems (Dutton); and A. Feuillerat, the complete works, in two volumes (Cambridge University Press). The best edition of *The Defense of Poesy* is A. S. Cook's (Ginn).

### THE BARGAIN

This poem first appeared in Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy*, 1589. Another version is incorporated in the *Arcadia*, 1590.

My true love hath my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange one for another given:
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss,
There never was a better bargain driven:
My true love hath my heart, and I have his.

His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides:

He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
I cherish his because in me it bides:
My true love hath my heart, and I have his.

## ASTROPHEL AND STELLA

### 1

Loving in truth, and fain in verse my love to show,
That she, dear she, might take some pleasure of my pain,
Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know,
Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain,
I sought fit words to paint the blackest face of woe;
Studying inventions fine, her wits to entertain,
Oft turning others' leaves, to see if thence would flow
Some fresh and fruitful showers upon my sun-burned brain.
But words came halting forth, wanting Invention's stay;
Invention, Nature's child, fled step-dame Study's blows;
And others' feet still seemed but strangers in my way.
Thus, great with child to speak, and helpless in my throes,
Biting my truant pen, beating myself for spite,
Fool, said my Muse to me, look in thy heart, and write.

### 31

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies!
How silently, and with how wan a face!
What, may it be that even in heavenly place
That busy archer his sharp arrows tries?
Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case;
I read it in thy looks; thy languished grace,
To me, that feel the like, thy state descries.
Then, even of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deemed there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be loved, and yet
Those lovers scorn whom that love doth possess?
Do they call virtue there ungratefulness?

### 39

Come, Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
Th' indifferent judge between the high and low;
With shield of proof shield me from out the prease[1]
Of those fierce darts Despair at me doth throw;
O make in me those civil wars to cease;
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed,
A chamber deaf to noise and blind to light,
A rosy garland and a weary head:
And if these things, as being thine in right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

### 41

Having this day my horse, my hand, my lance
Guided so well that I obtained the prize,
Both by the judgment of the English eyes
And of some sent from that sweet enemy, France;
Horsemen my skill in horsemanship advance,[2]
Townfolks my strength; a daintier judge applies
His praise to sleight,[3] which from good use[4] doth rise;
Some lucky wits impute it but to chance;
Others, because of both sides I do take
My blood from them who did excel in this,
Think Nature me a man-of-arms did make.
How far they shot awry! the true cause is,
Stella looked on, and from her heavenly face
Sent forth the beams which made so fair my race.

### 64

No more, my dear, no more these counsels try;
O give my passions leave to run their race;
Let Fortune lay on me her worst disgrace;
Let folk o'ercharged with brain against me cry;
Let clouds bedim my face, break in mine eye;
Let me no steps but of lost labor trace;
Let all the earth with scorn recount my case, —
But do not will me from my love to fly.

1 press. 2 praise. 3 dexterity. 4 habit.

I do not envy Aristotle's wit,
Nor do aspire to Cæsar's bleeding fame;[1]
Nor aught do care though some above me sit;
Nor hope nor wish another course to frame,
But that which once may win thy cruel heart:
Thou art my wit, and thou my virtue art.

66

And do I see some cause a hope to feed,
Or doth the tedious burden of long woe
In weakened minds quick apprehending breed
Of every image which may comfort show?
I cannot brag of word, much less of deed,
Fortune wheels still with me in one sort,[2] slow;
My wealth no more, and no whit less my need;
Desire still on stilts of fear doth go.
And yet amid all fears a hope there is,
Stolen to my heart since last fair night, nay day,
Stella's eyes sent to me the beams of bliss,
Looking on me while I looked other way:
But when mine eyes back to their heaven did move,
They fled with blush which guilty seemed of love.

107

Stella, since thou so right a princess art
Of all the powers which life bestows on me,
That ere by them ought[3] undertaken be,
They first resort unto that sovereign part;
Sweet, for a while give respite to my heart,
Which pants as though it still should leap to thee:
And on my thoughts give thy lieutenancy
To this great cause, which needs both use and art.
And as a queen, who from her presence sends
Whom she employs, dismiss from thee my wit,
Till it have wrought what thy own will attends,
On servants' shame oft masters' blame doth sit:
O let not fools in me thy works reprove,
And scorning say, "See what it is to love!"

## LOVE IS DEAD

Ring out your bells, let mourning shows be spread;
For Love is dead:
All Love is dead, infected
With plague of deep disdain:
Worth, as nought worth, rejected,
And Faith fair scorn doth gain.
From so ungrateful fancy,
From such a female frenzy,
From them that use men thus,
Good Lord, deliver us!

Weep, neighbours, weep; do you not hear said
That Love is dead?
His death-bed, peacock's folly;
His winding-sheet is shame;
His will, false-seeming wholly;
His sole executor, blame.
From so ungrateful fancy,
From such a female frenzy,
From them that use men thus,
Good Lord, deliver us!

Let dirge be sung, and trentals[1] rightly rea
For Love is dead;
Sir Wrong his tomb ordaineth
My mistress' marble heart;
Which epitaph containeth,
"Her eyes were once his dart."
From so ungrateful fancy,
From such a female frenzy,
From them that use men thus,
Good Lord, deliver us!

Alas, I lie: rage hath this error bred;
Love is not dead;
Love is not dead, but sleepeth
In her unmatched mind,
Where she his counsel keepeth,
Till due desert she find.
Therefore from so vile fancy,
To call such wit a frenzy,
Who Love can temper thus,
Good Lord, deliver us!

## *From* THE DEFENSE OF POETR

This extract is from the middle of Sidne essay, following his arguments for placi poetry foremost among human studies. T essay, written about 1581 and published in 15 in two editions (one called *Defense*, the oth *Apology*), was an answer to the direct and direct attacks of the Puritans against poet The immediate cause was an invective agair poets, *The School of Abuse*, 1579, by Steph Gosson, dedicated, strangely enough, to Sidne Sidney's answer is a general reply, carefully co sidered, philosophic, and in good taste. T text given below is a modernized version

1 Reference to Cæsar's assassination.
2 manner. 3 aught.

1 thirty masses for the dead.

fessor A. S. Cook based upon both early ions.

conclude, therefore, that he [the poet] elleth history, not only in furnishing the d with knowledge, but in setting it for- d to that which deserveth to be called accounted good; which setting forward, moving to well-doing, indeed setteth the rel crown upon the poet as victorious, not y of the historian, but over the philoso- r, howsoever in teaching it may be ques- able. For suppose it be granted — that ch I suppose with great reason may be ied — that the philosopher, in respect of methodical proceeding, teach more per- ly than the poet, yet do I think that no n is so much *φιλοφιλόσοφος*[1] as to com- e the philosopher in moving with the t. And that moving is of a higher degree n teaching, it may by this appear, that s well nigh both the cause and the effect eaching; for who will be taught, if he be moved with desire to be taught? And at so much good doth that teaching bring th — I speak still of moral doctrine — as t it moveth one to do that which it doth ch? For, as Aristotle saith, it is not *νσις*[2] but *πρᾶξις*[3] must be the fruit; and *ν πρᾶξις* cannot be, without being moved practise, it is no hard matter to consider. e philosopher showeth you the way, he in- meth you of the particularities, as well of tediousness of the way, as of the pleasant ging you shall have when your journey is led, as of the many by-turnings that may ert you from your way; but this is to no n but to him that will read him, and read with attentive, studious painfulness; ich constant desire whosoever hath in him, h already passed half the hardness of the y, and therefore is beholding to the phi- opher but for the other half. Nay, truly, rned men have learnedly thought, that ere once reason hath so much over- stered passion as that the mind hath a free ire to do well, the inward light each mind h in itself is as good as a philosopher's ok; since in nature we know it is well to do l, and what is well and what is evil, though not in the words of art which phi- ophers bestow upon us; for out of natural nceit the philosophers drew it. But to be ved to do that which we know, or to be ved with desire to know, *hoc opus, hic or est.*[4]

Now therein of all sciences — I speak still of human, and according to the human conceit — is our poet the monarch. For he doth not only show the way, but giveth so sweet a prospect into the way as will entice any man to enter into it. Nay, he doth, as if your journey should lie through a fair vineyard, at the very first give you a cluster of grapes, that full of that taste you may long to pass further. He beginneth not with obscure definitions, which must blur the margent[1] with interpretations, and load the memory with doubtfulness. But he cometh to you with words set in delightful proportion, either accompanied with, or prepared for, the well-enchanting skill of music; and with a tale, forsooth, he cometh unto you, with a tale which holdeth children from play, and old men from the chimney-corner, and, pretending no more, doth intend the winning of the mind from wickedness to virtue; even as the child is often brought to take most wholesome things, by hiding them in such other as have a pleasant taste, — which, if one should begin to tell them the nature of the aloes or rhubarb they should receive, would sooner take their physic at their ears than at their mouth. So is it in men, most of which are childish in the best things, till they be cradled in their graves, — glad they will be to hear the tales of Hercules, Achilles, Cyrus, Æneas; and, hearing them, must needs hear the right description of wisdom, valor, and justice; which, if they had been barely, that is to say philosophically, set out, they would swear they be brought to school again.

That imitation whereof poetry is, hath the most conveniency to nature of all other; insomuch that, as Aristotle saith, those things which in themselves are horrible, as cruel battles, unnatural monsters, are made in poetical imitation delightful. Truly, I have known men, that even with reading Amadis de Gaule, which, God knoweth, wanteth much of a perfect poesy, have found their hearts moved to the exercise of courtesy, liberality, and especially courage. Who readeth Æneas carrying old Anchises on his back, that wisheth not it were his fortune to perform so excellent an act? Whom do not those words of Turnus move, the tale of Turnus having planted his image in the imagination?

Fugientem hæc terra videbit?
Usque adeone mori miserum est?[2]

*philophilosophos*, friend of the philosopher.
*gnosis*, knowledge. 3 *praxis*, practice.
This is the work, this the task.

1 margin.
2 Will this land see me flee? Is it so very unhappy to die?

Where the philosophers, as they scorn to delight, so must they be content little to move — saving wrangling whether virtue be the chief or the only good, whether the contemplative or the active life do excel — which Plato and Boethius well knew, and therefore made Mistress Philosophy very often borrow the masking raiment of Poesy. For even those hard-hearted evil men who think virtue a school-name, and know no other good but *indulgere genio*,[1] and therefore despise the austere admonitions of the philosopher, and feel not the inward reason they stand upon, yet will be content to be delighted, which is all the good-fellow poet seemeth to promise; and so steal to see the form of goodness — which seen, they cannot but love — ere themselves be aware, as if they took a medicine of cherries.

Infinite proofs of the strange effects of this poetical invention might be alleged; only two shall serve, which are so often remembered as I think all men know them. The one of Menenius Agrippa, who, when the whole people of Rome had resolutely divided themselves from the senate, with apparent show of utter ruin, though he were, for that time, an excellent orator, came not among them upon trust either of figurative speeches or cunning insinuations, and much less with far-fet[2] maxims of philosophy, which, especially if they were Platonic, they must have learned geometry before they could well have conceived; but, forsooth, he behaves himself like a homely and familiar poet. He telleth them a tale, that there was a time when all the parts of the body made a mutinous conspiracy against the belly, which they thought devoured the fruits of each other's labor; they concluded they would let so unprofitable a spender starve. In the end, to be short — for the tale is notorious, and as notorious that it was a tale — with punishing the belly they plagued themselves. This, applied by him, wrought such effect in the people, as I never read that ever words brought forth but then so sudden and so good an alteration; for upon reasonable conditions a perfect reconcilement ensued.

The other is of Nathan[3] the prophet, who, when the holy David had so far forsaken God as to confirm adultery with murder, when he was to do the tenderest office of a friend, in laying his own shame before his eyes, — sent by God to call again so chosen a servant, how doth he it but by telling of a man whose beloved lamb was ungratefully taken from his bosom? The application most divinely true, but the discourse itself feigned; which made David (I speak of the second and instrumental cause) as in a glass to see his own filthiness, as that heavenly Psalm of Mercy well testifieth.

By these, therefore, examples and reasons, I think it may be manifest that the poet, with that same hand of delight, doth draw the mind more effectually than any other art doth. And so a conclusion not unfitly ensueth: that as virtue is the most excellent resting-place for all worldly learning to make his end of, so poetry, being the most familiar to teach it, and most princely to move towards it, in the most excellent work is the most excellent workman.

But I am content not only to decipher him by his works — although works in commendation or dispraise must ever hold a high authority — but more narrowly will examine his parts; so that, as in a man, though all together may carry a presence full of majesty and beauty, perchance in some one defectious piece we may find a blemish.

Now in his parts, kinds, or species, as you list to term them, it is to be noted that some poesies have coupled together two or three kinds, — as tragical and comical, whereupon is risen the tragi-comical; some, in the like manner, have mingled prose and verse, as Sannazzaro[1] and Boethius;[2] some have mingled matters heroical and pastoral; but that cometh all to one in this question, for, if severed they be good, the conjunction cannot be hurtful. Therefore, perchance forgetting some, and leaving some as needless to be remembered, it shall not be amiss in a word to cite the special kinds, to see what faults may be found in the right use of them.

Is it then the pastoral poem which is misliked? — for perchance where the hedge is lowest they will soonest leap over. Is the poor pipe disdained, which sometimes out of Melibœus'[3] mouth can show the misery of people under hard lords and ravening soldiers, and again, by Tityrus,[4] what blessedness is derived to them that lie lowest from the goodness of them that sit highest? sometimes, under the pretty tales of wolves and sheep, can include the whole considerations of wrong-doing and patience; sometimes show

1 indulge your nature. 2 far-fetched.
3 2 Samuel, xii.

1 An Italian poet who wrote an *Arcadia*, 1504, which, like Sidney's romance, was in prose and verse.
2 In his *Consolation of Philosophy*, written in prison about 522.
3 A character in Virgil's *First Eclogue*.
4 He and Melibœus carry on the dialogue in Virgil's poem.

hat contention for trifles can get but a rifling victory; where perchance a man may ee that even Alexander and Darius, when hey strave who should be cock of this world's unghill, the benefit they got was that the fter-livers may say:

Hæc memini et victum frustra contendere Thyrsim;
Ex illo Corydon, Corydon est tempore nobis.[1]

Or is it the lamenting elegiac, which in a kind heart would move rather pity than blame; who bewaileth, with the great philosopher Heraclitus,[2] the weakness of mankind and the wretchedness of the world; who surely is to be praised, either for compassionate accompanying just causes of lamentation, or for rightly painting out how weak be the passions of wofulness?

Is it the bitter but wholesome iambic, who rubs the galled mind, in making shame the trumpet of villainy with bold and open crying out against naughtiness?

Or the satiric? who

Omne vafer vitium ridenti tangit amico;[3]

who sportingly never leaveth till he make a man laugh at folly, and at length ashamed to laugh at himself, which he cannot avoid without avoiding the folly; who, while *circum præcordia ludit*,[4] giveth us to feel how many headaches a passionate life bringeth us to, — how, when all is done,

Est Ulubris, animus si nos non deficit æquus.[5]

No, perchance it is the comic; whom naughty playmakers and stage-keepers have justly made odious. To the argument of abuse [6] I will answer after. Only thus much now is to be said, that the comedy is an imitation of the common errors of our life, which he representeth in the most ridiculous and scornful sort that may be, so as it is impossible that any beholder can be content to be such a one. Now, as in geometry the oblique must be known as well as the right, and in arithmetic the odd as well as the even; so in the actions of our life who seeth not the filthiness of evil, wanteth a great foil to perceive the beauty of virtue. This doth the comedy handle so, in our private and domestical matters, as with hearing it we get, as it were, an experience what is to be looked for of a niggardly Demea, of a crafty Davus, of a flattering Gnatho, of a vain-glorious Thraso; [1] and not only to know what effects are to be expected, but to know who be such, by the signifying badge given them by the comedian. And little reason hath any man to say that men learn evil by seeing it so set out; since, as I said before, there is no man living, but by the force truth hath in nature, no sooner seeth these men play their parts, but wisheth them *in pistrinum*,[2] although perchance the sack of his own faults lie so behind his back, that he seeth not himself to dance the same measure, — whereto yet nothing can more open his eyes than to find his own actions contemptibly set forth.

So that the right use of comedy will, I think, by nobody be blamed, and much less of the high and excellent tragedy, that openeth the greatest wounds, and showeth forth the ulcers that are covered with tissue; that maketh kings fear to be tyrants, and tyrants manifest their tyrannical humors; that with stirring the effects of admiration and commiseration teacheth the uncertainty of this world, and upon how weak foundations gilden roofs are builded; that maketh us know:

Qui sceptra sævus duro imperio regit,
Timet timentes, metus in auctorem redit.[3]

But how much it can move, Plutarch yieldeth a notable testimony of the abominable tyrant Alexander Pheræus; from whose eyes a tragedy, well made and represented, drew abundance of tears, who without all pity had murdered infinite numbers, and some of his own blood; so as he that was not ashamed to make matters for tragedies, yet could not resist the sweet violence of a tragedy. And if it wrought no further good in him, it was that he, in despite of himself, withdrew himself from hearkening to that which might mollify his hardened heart. But it is not the tragedy they do mislike, for it were too absurd to cast out so excellent a representation of whatsoever is most worthy to be learned.

1 I remember this, and how defeated Thyrsis fought in vain. From that time on, it has been Corydon, Corydon with us. (Virgil's *Seventh Eclogue*.)

2 The "weeping" philosopher, 535?-475 B.C., who taught that all things are in a state of flux, and that knowledge can only be relative.

3 The rascal touches every fault, while making his friend laugh. (The quotation is abridged from Persius' *First Satire*.)

4 He plays around our deepest feelings. (From the next line in the quotation from Persius.)

5 Freely translated: we may even dwell in and enjoy Ulubræ [a particularly desolate town], if we have tranquility of spirit. (Horace's *First Epistle*.)

6 A reference to Gosson's pamphlet.

1 These are stock characters in the plays of Terence, the Latin comic dramatist.

2 in the work-mill.

3 The cruel ruler who governs harshly fears those who fear him, and fear comes over him who started it. (Seneca.)

Is it the lyric that most displeaseth, who with his tuned lyre and well-accorded voice, giveth praise, the reward of virtue, to virtuous acts; who giveth moral precepts and natural problems; who sometimes raiseth up his voice to the height of the heavens, in singing the lauds of the immortal God? Certainly I must confess mine own barbarousness; I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas [1] that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet; and yet it is sung but by some blind crowder, with no rougher voice than rude style; which being so evil apparelled in the dust and cobwebs of that uncivil age, what would it work, trimmed in the gorgeous eloquence of Pindar? In Hungary I have seen it the manner at all feasts, and other such meetings, to have songs of their ancestors' valor, which that right soldier-like nation think the chiefest kindlers of brave courage. The incomparable Lacedæmonians did not only carry that kind of music ever with them to the field, but even at home, as such songs were made, so were they all content to be singers of them; when the lusty men were to tell what they did, the old men what they had done, and the young men what they would do. And where a man may say that Pindar many times praiseth highly victories of small moment, matters rather of sport than virtue; as it may be answered, it was the fault of the poet, and not of the poetry, so indeed the chief fault was in the time and custom of the Greeks, who set those toys at so high a price that Philip of Macedon reckoned a horserace won at Olympus [2] among his three fearful felicities.[3] But as the unimitable Pindar often did, so is that kind most capable and most fit to awake the thoughts from the sleep of idleness, to embrace honorable enterprises.

There rests the heroical, whose very name, I think, should daunt all backbiters. For by what conceit can a tongue be directed to speak evil of that which draweth with it no less champions than Achilles, Cyrus, Æneas, Turnus, Tydeus, Rinaldo? [4] who doth not only teach and move to a truth, but teacheth and moveth to the most high and excellent truth; who maketh magnanimity and justice shine through all misty fearfulness and foggy desires; who, if the saying of Plato and Tully [1] be true, that who could see virtue would be wonderfully ravished with the love of her beauty, this man setteth her out to make her more lovely, in her holiday apparel, to the eye of any that will deign not to disdain until they understand. But if anything be already said in the defense of sweet poetry, all concurreth to the maintaining the heroical, which is not only a kind, but the best and most accomplished kind of poetry. For, as the image of each action stirreth and instructeth the mind, so the lofty image of such worthies most inflameth the mind with desire to be worthy, and informs with counsel how to be worthy. Only let Æneas be worn in the tablet of your memory, how he governeth himself in the ruin of his country; in the preserving his old father, and carrying away his religious ceremonies; in obeying the god's commandment to leave Dido, though not only all passionate kindness, but even the human consideration of virtuous gratefulness, would have craved other of him; how in storms, how in sports, how in war, how in peace, how a fugitive, how victorious, how besieged, how besieging, how to strangers, how to allies, how to enemies, how to his own; lastly, how in his inward self, and how in his outward government; and I think, in a mind most prejudiced with a prejudicating humor, he will be found in excellency fruitful, — yea, even as Horace saith, *melius Chrysippo et Crantore*.[2] But truly I imagine it falleth out with these poet-whippers as with some good women who often are sick, but in faith they cannot tell where. So the name of poetry is odious to them, but neither his cause nor effects, neither the sum that contains him nor the particularities descending from him, give any fast handle to their carping dispraise.

Since, then, poetry is of all human learnings the most ancient and of most fatherly antiquity, as from whence other learnings have taken their beginnings; since it is so universal that no learned nation doth despise it, nor barbarous nation is without it: since both Roman and Greek gave divine names unto it, the one of "prophesying," the other of "making," and that indeed that name of "making" is fit for him, considering that whereas other arts retain themselves within their subject, and receive, as it were, their being from it, the poet only bringeth his own stuff, and doth not learn a conceit out of

1 Probably in an older version than the one we have now. See p. 137 of this volume.

2 A slip for Olympia.

3 Philip was informed at the same time of the victory of his army in battle, the winning of a race by his horse, and the birth of his famous son Alexander. See Plutarch's *Lives*.

4 The first three heroes are well enough known. Turnus appears near the end of the *Æneid*, Tydeus in the *Iliad*, and Rinaldo in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*.

1 Cicero.

2 Better than Chrysippus and Crantor. (They were two scholars contemporaneous with Horace.)

matter, but maketh matter for a conceit; nce neither his description nor his end con- lineth any evil, the thing described cannot e evil; since his effects be so good as to teach oodness, and delight the learners of it; since herein — namely in moral doctrine, the hief of all knowledges — he doth not only r pass the historian, but for instructing is ell nigh comparable to the philosopher, and r moving leaveth him behind him; since the Holy Scripture, wherein there is no uncleanness, hath whole parts in it poetical, and that even our Savior Christ vouchsafed to use the flowers of it; since all his kinds are not only in their united forms, but in their several dissections fully commendable; I think, and think I think rightly, the laurel crown appointed for triumphant captains doth worthily, of all other learnings, honor the poet's triumph.

# ELIZABETHAN LYRICS

## THOMAS SACKVILLE, LORD BUCKHURST (1536–1608)

Thomas Sackville, first Earl of Dorset and ord Buckhurst, was a prominent statesman, e holder of many important offices under lizabeth. Early in his career, 1561, he wrote, ith Thomas Norton, *Gorboduc, or, Ferrex and orrex*, the first English tragedy in blank verse. n 1563 he contributed to *A Mirror for Magistates* the *Induction* and *The Complaint of the uke of Buckingham*. The *Mirror* was started n years before as a collection of stories narrating the tragedy or fall of prominent Englishmen, fter the manner of Boccaccio's *De Casibus irorum* or Lydgate's version of Boccaccio's tories, *The Fall of Princes*. These two contributions of Sackville's to the *Mirror* are by ir the best in the collection. They are the nly poems that Sackville published, but they how, in the opinion of most critics, the greatest echnical skill and imagination since the days Chaucer.

### COMPLAINT OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM

o long as fortune would permit the same,
lived in rule and riches with the best,
nd passed my time in honor and in fame,
hat of mishap no fear was in my breast;
ut false fortune, when I suspected least,
id turn the wheel, and with a doleful fall
ath me bereft of honor, life, and all.

o, what avails in riches floods that flows?
hough she so smiled, as all the world were his:
ven kings and cæsars biden fortune's throws,
nd simple sort must bear it as it is.
ake heed by me that blithed in baleful bliss:
ly rule, my riches, royal blood and all,
hen fortune frowned, the feller made my fall.

For hard mishaps, that happens unto such
Whose wretched state erst[1] never felt no change,
Agrieve them not in any part so much
As their distress, to whom it is so strange
That all their lives, nay, passed pleasures range,
Their sudden woe, that aye wield wealth at will,
Algates[2] their hearts more piercingly must thrill.

For of my birth, my blood was of the best,
First born an earl, then duke by due descent;
To swing the sway in court among the rest,
Dame Fortune me her rule most largely lent,
And kind with courage so my corpse had blent,
That lo, on whom but me did she most smile?
And whom but me, lo, did she most beguile?

Now hast thou heard the whole of my unhap,
My chance, my change, the cause of all my care;
In wealth and woe, how fortune did me wrap,
With world at will, to win me to her snare.
Bid kings, bid cæsars, bid all states beware,
And tell them this from me that tried it true:
Who reckless rules, right soon may hap to rue.

## GEORGE GASCOIGNE (1525?–1577)

Gascoigne came of a distinguished family, was a graduate of Cambridge University, and a courtier at the great Queen's court. As an author he ranks high among those lesser writers of the period whose work, distinguished in itself, is more important in the history of the development of some type. To the drama he

1 formerly. 2 always.

contributed *The Supposes*, 1566, which was a translation from Ariosto, and *Jocasta*, 1566, translated at second hand from Euripides. The first (*supposes* means *disguises*) is a type of play better known through *The Comedy of Errors*. *Jocasta* is a "tragedy of blood" in blank verse. His lyrics were gathered in a volume, *An Hundred Sundrie Floures bound up in one Poesie*, in 1572. To the warm discussion of the time regarding the principles of English verse-making he contributed *Notes of Instruction*. In the field of satire he wrote *The Glasse of Government*, 1575, and *The Steele Glasse*, 1576. A "steele glasse" is a mirror made of polished steel.

## PIERS PLOUGHMAN

(From *The Steel Glass*)

Behold him, priests, and though he stink of sweat,
Disdain him not: for shall I tell you what?
Such climb to heaven before the shaven crowns.
But how? forsooth with true humility.
Not that they hoard their grain when it is cheap,
Nor that they kill the calf to have the milk,
Nor that they set debate between their lords,
By earing[1] up the balks[2] that part their bounds:
Nor for because they can both crouch and creep
(The guileful'st men that ever God yet made)
When as they mean most mischief and deceit,
Nor that they can cry out on landlords loud,
And say they rack their rents an ace too high,
When they themselves do sell their landlord's lamb
For greater price than ewe was wont be worth.
(I see you, Piers, my glass was lately scoured.)
But for they feed with fruits of their great pains
Both king and knight and priests in cloister pent.
Therefore I say that sooner some of them
Shall scale the walls which lead us up to heaven,
Than cornfed beasts, whose belly is their God,
Although they preach of more perfection.

1 ploughing. 2 unploughed ridges between fields.

## SIR EDWARD DYER
## (1550?–1607)

Dyer was an Oxford man, courtier, and knight, the friend of most of the writers who received preferment from Queen Elizabeth. He is remembered now solely for the poem which follows. In his time he was rated high as a poet, but most of his poems have either been lost or remain at present unidentified.

## MY MIND TO ME A KINGDOM IS

My mind to me a kingdom is,
Such present joys therein I find,
That it excels all other bliss
That earth affords or grows by kind:[1]
Though much I want which most would have,
Yet still my mind forbids to crave.

No princely pomp, no wealthy store,
No force to win the victory,
No wily wit to salve a sore,
No shape to feed a loving eye;
To none of these I yield as thrall:
For why? My mind doth serve for all.

I see how plenty [surfeits] oft,
And hasty climbers soon do fall;
I see that those which are aloft
Mishap doth threaten most of all;
They get with toil, they keep with fear:
Such cares my mind could never bear.

Content to live, this is my stay;
I seek no more than may suffice;
I press to bear no haughty sway;
Look, what I lack my mind supplies:
Lo, thus I triumph like a king,
Content with that my mind doth bring.

Some have too much, yet still do crave;
I little have, and seek no more;
They are but poor, though much they have.
And I am rich with little store:
They poor, I rich; they beg, I give;
They lack, I leave; they pine, I live.

I laugh not at another's loss;
I grudge[2] not at another's pain;
No worldly waves my mind can toss;
My state at one doth still remain:
I fear no foe, I fawn no friend;
I loathe not life, nor dread my end.

1 nature. 2 grieve.

Some weigh their pleasure by their lust,
Their wisdom by their rage of will;
Their treasure is their only trust;
A cloaked craft their store of skill:
But all the pleasure that I find
Is to maintain a quiet mind.

My wealth is health and perfect ease;
My conscience clear my chief defence;
I neither seek by bribes to please,
Nor by deceit to breed offence:
Thus do I live; thus will I die;
Would all did so as well as I!

## JOHN LYLY (1554?–1606)

John Lyly, dramatist and prose writer, was born about 1554 in Kent. He was educated at Oxford, and soon afterwards settled in London as a writer. His fame rests partly upon his positive achievement, but more upon the influence that his plays and his prose style exerted upon succeeding authors. Of his nine plays, *Campaspe*, 1581, *Sappho and Phao*, 1584, and *Endymion*, 1591, are the best. As their titles imply, they are on mythological subjects, loaded, however, with allegorical references to the court of Queen Elizabeth. This is particularly true of *Endymion*. These plays were not intended for an ordinary audience. They were usually performed at the court by the children of St. Paul's choir, or at night at the fashionable Blackfriars, the one theater within the city walls. Much of the charm of the plays is due to the songs. There are critics, however, who question Lyly's authorship of all the lyrics.

More popular and influential than the plays were his two prose romances, written during his first years in London: *Euphues, the Anatomy of Wit*, 1578, and *Euphues and his England*, 1580. The highly artificial style of Euphues immediately became the vogue, parodied by a few as by Shakespeare in parts of *Love's Labour's Lost*, but leaving, in the end, a definite mark upon Elizabethan style. Most striking among the characteristics of euphuism are the many references and veiled allusions to the classics and ancient history, elaborate alliteration, the extreme balance and cadence of sentences, puns, — in short, all species of "wit."

Lyly also had a hand in the Marprelate controversy, writing a pamphlet, *Pappe with an Hatchet*, 1589, in support of the Bishops. He was likewise a member of four Parliaments between 1589 and 1591; but at court he never rose as high as he hoped to. He died in 1606.

The complete works of Lyly have been edited with a life and notes, in three volumes, by R. W. Bond (Oxford University Press).

### APELLES' SONG

(From *Campaspe*)

Cupid and my Campaspe played
At cards for kisses; Cupid paid.
He stakes his quiver, bows and arrows,
His mother's doves and team of sparrows;
Loses them too. Then down he throws
The coral of his lip, the rose
Growing on's cheek (but none knows how);
With these, the crystal of his brow,
And then the dimple of his chin;
All these did my Campaspe win.
At last he set her both his eyes;
She won, and Cupid blind did rise.
O Love, has she done this to thee?
What shall, alas! become of me?

### SPRING'S WELCOME

(From *Campaspe*)

What bird so sings, yet so does wail?
O 'tis the ravished nightingale.
"Jug, jug, jug, jug, tereu," she cries,
And still her woes at midnight rise.
Brave prick-song![1] who is't now we hear?
None but the lark so shrill and clear;
Now at heaven's gates[2] she claps her wings,
The morn not waking till she sings.
Hark, hark, with what a pretty throat
Poor robin redbreast tunes his note!
Hark how the jolly cuckoos sing,
"Cuckoo," to welcome in the spring,
"Cuckoo," to welcome in the spring!

## GEORGE PEELE (1558?–1598?)

The facts about Peele's life are scant. After graduating from Oxford in 1577, he went to London, where he earned a precarious living as an actor and a writer. He wrote much, gaining for himself a high position among the playwrights before Shakespeare, especially for his excellent blank verse, his genuine humor, and the realism that he introduced into the drama, even when the subject was romantic. Most of his lyrics exhibit the same exuberance that is found in his plays. Among the best of the latter are *The Arraignment of Paris*, 1584, *The Old Wives Tale*, 1595, and *David and Bethsabe*, 1599. (The dates are those of publication.)

Peele's collected works have been edited by A. H. Bullen in two volumes, 1888.

1 song written in parts.
2 Compare this with Shakespeare's song in *Cymbeline*.

## SONG

(From *The Arraignment of Paris*)

*Œnone.* Fair and fair, and twice so fair,
As fair as any may be;
The fairest shepherd on our green,
A love for any lady.
*Paris.* Fair and fair, and twice so fair,
As fair as any may be;
Thy love is fair for thee alone,
And for no other lady.
*Œn.* My love is fair, my love is gay,
As fresh as bin the flowers in May,
And of my love my roundelay,
My merry, merry roundelay,
Concludes with Cupid's curse:
"They that do change old love for new,
Pray gods they change for worse!"
*Ambo simul.*[1] They that do change, etc.
*Œn.* My love can pipe, my love can sing,
My love can many a pretty thing,
And of his lovely praises ring
My merry, merry roundelays,
Amen to Cupid's curse:
"They that do change," etc.
*Ambo.* They that do change, etc.

## HARVESTMEN A-SINGING

(From *The Old Wives Tale*)[2]

All ye that lovely lovers be,
Pray you for me.
Lo, here we come a-sowing, a-sowing,
And sow sweet fruits of love;
In your sweet hearts well may it prove!

Lo, here we come a-reaping, a-reaping,
To reap our harvest-fruit!
And thus we pass the year so long,
And never be we mute.

## FAREWELL TO ARMS

His golden locks time hath to silver turned;
O time too swift, O swiftness never ceasing!
His youth 'gainst time and age hath ever spurned,
But spurned in vain; youth waneth by increasing:
Beauty, strength, youth are flowers but fading seen;
Duty, faith, love are roots, and ever green.

His helmet now shall make a hive for bees,
And, lovers' sonnets turned to holy psalms,
A man-at-arms must now serve on his knees,
And feed on prayers, which are age his alms:
But though from court to cottage he depart,
His saint is sure of his unspotted heart.

And when he saddest sits in homely cell,
He'll teach his swains this carol for a song:
"Blessed be the hearts that wish my sovereign well,
Cursed be the souls that think her any wrong."
Goddess, allow this aged man his right,
To be your beadsman now that was your knight.

1 Both together.

2 The first stanza is sung when the harvestmen enter; the second, at the end of their scene, when they make their exit.

## ROBERT GREENE

(1560?–1592)

Greene was a Cambridge man, who became a member of the madcap literary crew in London, leading a careless, tavern life, while turning out plays, miscellaneous prose works, and poems. Of his plays, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, a companion piece to, perhaps a parody of, Marlowe's *Faustus*, is the best. Among his prose works, most striking are *Pandosto* (the source of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*), *Menaphon*, and his last pamphlet, *A Groat's-worth of Wit, bought with a Million of Repentance.* His lyrics, introduced here and there in his prose writings, are among the best of the Elizabethan era.

## SONG

(From *The Farewell to Folly*)

Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content;
The quiet mind is richer than a crown;
Sweet are the nights in careless slumber spent;
The poor estate scorns fortune's angry frown:
Such sweet content, such minds, such sleep, such bliss,
Beggars enjoy, when princes oft do miss.

The homely house that harbors quiet rest;
The cottage that affords no pride nor care;
The mean that 'grees with country music best;

The sweet consort of mirth and music's fare:
Obscured life sets down a type of bliss;
A mind content both crown and kingdom is.

## PHILOMELA'S ODE

Sitting by a river's side,
Where a silent stream did glide,
Muse I did of many things,
That the mind in quiet brings.
I 'gan think how some men deem
Gold their god; and some esteem
Honor is the chief content
That to man in life is lent.
And some others do contend,
Quiet none like to a friend.
Others hold there is no wealth
Compared to a perfect health.
Some man's mind in quiet stands,
When he is lord of many lands.
But I did sigh, and said all this
Was but a shade of perfect bliss;
And in my thoughts I did approve,[1]
Nought so sweet as is true love.
Love 'twixt lovers passeth these,
When mouth kisseth and heart 'grees,
With folded arms and lips meeting,
Each soul another sweetly greeting;
For by the breath the soul fleeteth,
And soul with soul in kissing meeteth.
If love be so sweet a thing,
That such happy bliss doth bring,
Happy is love's sugared thrall,
But unhappy maidens all,
Who esteem your virgin blisses
Sweeter than a wife's sweet kisses.
No such quiet to the mind
As true Love with kisses kind;
But if a kiss prove unchaste,
Then is true love quite disgraced.
Though love be sweet, learn this of me,
No sweet love but honesty.

## SEPHESTIA'S SONG TO HER CHILD

(From *Menaphon*)

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee;
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.
Mother's wag, pretty boy,
Father's sorrow, father's joy;
When thy father first did see
Such a boy by him and me,
He was glad, I was woe,
Fortune changed made him so,
When he left his pretty boy,
Last his sorrow, first his joy.

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee;
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.
Streaming tears that never stint,
Like pearl drops from a flint,
Fell by course from his eyes,
That one another's [1] place supplies;
Thus he grieved in every part,
Tears of blood fell from his heart,
When he left his pretty boy,
Father's sorrow, father's joy.

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee;
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.
The wanton smiled, father wept,
Mother cried, baby leapt;
More he crowed, more he cried,
Nature could not sorrow hide:
He must go, he must kiss
Child and mother, baby bless,
For he left his pretty boy,
Father's sorrow, father's joy.
Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee;
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee.

## MENAPHON'S SONG

(From *Menaphon*)

Some say Love,
Foolish Love,
Doth rule and govern all the gods:
I say Love,
Inconstant Love,
Sets men's senses far at odds.
Some swear Love,
Smooth-faced Love,
Is sweetest sweet that men can have:
I say Love,
Sour Love,
Makes virtue yield as beauty's slave.
A bitter sweet, a folly worst of all,
That forceth wisdom to be folly's thrall.

Love is sweet,
Wherein sweet?
In fading pleasures that do pain.
Beauty sweet:
Is that sweet
That yieldeth sorrow for a gain?

[1] prove.

[1] Referring to tears.

If Love's sweet,
Herein sweet,
That minute's joys are monthly woes:
'Tis not sweet,
That is sweet
Nowhere but where repentance grows.
Then love who list, if beauty be so sour;
Labor for me, Love rest in prince's bower.

## THE SHEPHERD'S WIFE'S SONG

(From *Menaphon*)

Ah, what is love? It is a pretty thing,
As sweet unto a shepherd as a king;
And sweeter too:
For kings have cares that wait upon a crown,
And cares can make the sweetest love to frown.
Ah then, ah then,
If country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

His flocks are folded, he comes home at night,
As merry as a king in his delight;
And merrier too:
For kings bethink then what the state require,
Where shepherds careless carol by the fire.
Ah then, ah then,
If country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

He kisseth first, then sits as blithe to eat
His cream and curds as doth the king his meat;
And blither too:
For kings have often fears when they do sup,
Where shepherds dread no poison in their cup.
Ah then, ah then,
If country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

To bed he goes, as wanton then, I ween,
As is a king in dalliance with a queen;
More wanton too:
For kings have many griefs affects[1] to move,
Where shepherds have no greater grief than love.
Ah then, ah then,
If country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

Upon his couch of straw he sleeps as sound
As doth the king upon his bed of down;
More sounder too:
For cares cause kings full oft their sleep to spill,[1]
Where weary shepherds lie and snort[2] their fill.
Ah then, ah then,
If country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

Thus with his wife he spends the year as blithe
As doth the king at every tide or sithe;[3]
And blither too:
For kings have wars and broils to take in hand,
Where shepherds laugh and love upon the land.
Ah then, ah then,
If country loves such sweet desires do gain,
What lady would not love a shepherd swain?

1 affections.

# ANONYMOUS

## CRABBED AGE AND YOUTH

(From *The Passionate Pilgrim*, 1599)

Crabbed Age and Youth
Cannot live together:
Youth is full of pleasance,
Age is full of care;
Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather;
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare.
Youth is full of sport,
Age's breath is short;
Youth is nimble, Age is lame;
Youth is hot and bold,
Age is weak and cold;
Youth is wild, and Age is tame.
Age, I do abhor thee;
O, my Love, my Love is young!
Age, I do defy thee:
O, sweet shepherd, hie thee!
For methinks thou stay'st too long.

## HEY NONNY NO!

Hey nonny no!
Men are fools that wish to die!
Is't not fine to dance and sing,
When the bells of death do ring?
Is't not fine to swim in wine,
And turn upon the toe,
And sing hey nonny no,
When the winds blow and the seas flow?
Hey nonny no!

1 kill. 2 snore. 3 occasion.

## BACK AND SIDE, GO BARE, GO BARE

(From *Gammer Gurton's Needle*)

Back and side, go bare, go bare,
Both foot and hand go cold;
But, belly, God send thee good ale enough,
Whether it be new or old.

I cannot eat but little meat,
My stomach is not good;
But, sure, I think that I can drink
With him that wears a hood.
Though I go bare, take ye no care,
I am nothing a-cold;
I stuff my skin so full within
Of jolly good ale and old.

Back and side, go bare, go bare, etc.

I love no roast, but a nut-brown toast,
And a crab [1] laid in the fire;
A little bread shall do me stead,
Much bread I not desire.
No frost nor snow, no wind, I trow,
Can hurt me if i[t] would,
I am so wrapt and throughly lapt
Of jolly good ale and old.

Back and side, go bare, go bare, etc.

And Tib, my wife, that as her life
Loveth well good ale to seek,
Full oft drinks she till ye may see
The tears run down her cheek;
Then doth she trowl [2] to me the bowl,
Even as malt-worm [3] should,
And saith, "Sweetheart, I took my part
Of this jolly good ale and old."

Back and side, go bare, go bare, etc.

Now let them drink till they nod and wink,
Even as good fellows should do;
They shall not miss to have the bliss
Good ale doth bring men to.
And all poor souls that have scoured [4] bowls,
Or have them lustily trowled,
God save the lives of them and their wives,
Whether they be young or old.

Back and side, go bare, go bare, etc.

1 apple. 2 pass. 3 toper.
4 worn smooth.

## SAMUEL DANIEL (1562–1619)

Daniel, a court poet, reached his highest achievement in his *Epistles* and his series of sonnets to *Delia*, in which he followed the tradition of Petrarch, Marot and the French *Pléiade* of writing a "sonnet-sequence" to his beloved. Some of his sonnets show unusual skill, but they fall short of the sequences written by Sidney, Spenser, and Shakespeare. His *History of the Civil Wars between York and Lancaster*, 1604, is a very long, matter-of-fact account of the Wars of the Roses. To the contemporary discussion about English versification Daniel contributed an essay, *A Defense of Rhyme*, 1603.

### LOVE IS A SICKNESS

Love is a sickness full of woes,
All remedies refusing;
A plant that with most cutting grows,
Most barren with best using.
Why so?
More we enjoy it, more it dies;
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries —
Heigh ho!

Love is a torment of the mind,
A tempest everlasting;
And Jove hath made it of a kind
Not well, nor full nor fasting.
Why so?
More we enjoy it, more it dies;
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries —
Heigh ho!

### TO THE LADY MARGARET, COUNTESS OF CUMBERLAND

He that of such a height hath built his mind,
And reared the dwelling of his thoughts so strong,
As neither fear nor hope can shake the frame
Of his resolved powers; nor all the wind
Of vanity or malice pierce to wrong
His settled peace, or to disturb the same,
What a fair seat hath he, from whence he may
The boundless wastes and wilds of man survey!

And with how free an eye doth he look down
Upon these lower regions of turmoil!
Where all the storms of passion mainly beat
On flesh and blood; where honor, power, renown
Are only gay afflictions, golden toil;
Where greatness stands upon as feeble feet

As frailty doth, and only great doth seem
To little minds, who do it so esteem.

He looks upon the mightiest monarch's wars
But only as on stately robberies;
Where evermore the fortune that prevails
Must be the right: the ill-succeeding mars
The fairest and the best-faced enterprise.
Great pirate Pompey lesser pirates quails:
Justice, he sees, (as if seduced) still
Conspires with power, whose cause must not be ill.

He sees the face of right t' appear as manifold
As are the passions of uncertain man;
Who puts it in all colors, all attires,
To serve his ends and make his courses hold.
He sees, that let deceit work what it can,
Plot and contrive base ways to high desires,
That the all-guiding Providence doth yet
All disappoint, and mocks this smoke of wit.

Nor is he moved with all the thunder cracks
Of tyrants' threats, or with the surly brow
Of Power, that proudly sits on others' crimes,
Charged with more crying sins than those he checks.
The storms of sad confusion, that may grow
Up in the present for the coming times,
Appal not him, that hath no side at all
But of himself, and knows the worst can fall.

Although his heart (so near allied to earth)
Cannot but pity the perplexed state
Of troublous and distressed mortality,
That thus make way unto the ugly birth
Of their own sorrows, and do still beget
Affliction upon imbecility;
Yet seeing thus the course of things must run
He looks thereon not strange, but as foredone.

And whilst distraught ambition compasses,
And is encompassed; whilst as craft deceives,
And is deceived; whilst man doth ransack man,
And builds on blood, and rises by distress;
And th' inheritance of desolation leaves
To great-expecting hopes: he looks thereon
As from the shore of peace, with unwet eye,
And bears no venture in impiety.

## SONNETS

(From *Delia*)

### 51

Care-charmer Sleep, son of the sable Night
Brother to Death, in silent darkness born,
Relieve my languish, and restore the light;
With dark forgetting of my care, return,
And let the day be time enough to mourn
The shipwreck of my ill-adventured youth;
Let waking eyes suffice to wail their scorn,
Without the torment of the night's untruth.
Cease, dreams, the images of day-desires,
To model forth the passions of the morrow;
Never let rising sun approve you liars,
To add more grief to aggravate my sorrow.
Still let me sleep, embracing clouds in vain,
And never wake to feel the day's disdain.

### 52

Let others sing of Knights and Paladins
In aged accents and untimely words;
Paint shadows in imaginary lines
Which well the reach of their high wits records:
But I must sing of thee, and those fair eyes
Authentic shall my verse in time to come;
When yet th' unborn shall say, "Lo where she lies
Whose beauty made him speak that else was dumb."
These are the arcs, the trophies I erect,
That fortify thy name against old age;
And these thy sacred virtues must protect
Against the dark, and Time's consuming rage.
Though the error of my youth in them appear,
Suffice they show I lived and loved thee dear.

## MICHAEL DRAYTON
## (1563–1631)

Although Drayton collaborated with some of the dramatists of his day, his fame rests upon the large body of poetry that he produced. Chief among his many works are *England's Heroical Epistles*, 1598; *Poems, Lyric and Heroic*, 1606, in which some of his best ballads appeared; *Nymphidia; Idea*, a sonnet-sequence; and his masterpiece, *Polyolbion*, 1612–1622, a vigorous description of the topography and history of England.

Drayton was fired with love for England, and at his best expresses this ardor in genuine poetry, even when keeping severely to facts, as was his custom.

## SONNETS

(From *Idea*)

TO THE READER OF THESE SONNETS

to these loves, who but for passion looks,
t this first sight, here let him lay them by,
nd seek elsewhere in turning other books,
'hich better may his labor satisfy.
o far-fetched sigh shall ever wound my breast;
ove from mine eye a tear shall never wring;
or in "Ah me's!" my whining sonnets drest!
libertine! fantastically I sing!
y verse is the true image of my mind,
ver in motion, still desiring change;
nd as thus, to variety inclined,
in all humors sportively I range!
y Muse is rightly of the English strain,
hat cannot long one fashion entertain.

24

hear some say, "This man is not in love!"
Who! can he love? a likely thing!" they say.
Read but his verse, and it will easily prove!"
, judge not rashly, gentle Sir, I pray!
ecause I loosely trifle in this sort,
s one that fain his sorrows would beguile,
ou now suppose me, all this time, in sport,
nd please yourself with this conceit the while.
e shallow Censures! sometimes, see ye not,
n greatest perils some men pleasant be?
here Fame by death is only to be got,
hey resolute! So stands the case with me.
here other men in depth of passion cry,
laugh at Fortune, as in jest to die!

44

hilst thus my pen strives to eternize thee,
ge rules my lines with wrinkles in my face,
here, in the map of all my misery,
s modeled out the world of my disgrace;
hilst in despite of tyrannizing times,
Medea-like,[1] I make thee young again,
roudly thou scorn'st my world-outwearing rimes,
nd murder'st Virtue with thy coy disdain!
nd though in youth my youth untimely perish
o keep thee from oblivion and the grave,
Ensuing ages yet my rimes shall cherish,
Where I entombed, my better part shall save;
And though this earthly body fade and die,
My name shall mount upon Eternity!

[1] Medea could restore a person's youth.

61

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part, —
Nay I have done, you get no more of me;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain!
Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
When his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies,
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes,
— Now if thou would'st, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover!

## ODE XI

This, and the succeeding ode, are from the *Ballad of Agincourt*.

TO THE VIRGINIAN VOYAGE

You brave heroic minds,
Worthy your country's name,
That honor still pursue;
Go and subdue!
Whilst loitering hinds
Lurk here at home with shame.

Britons, you stay too long;
Quickly aboard bestow you!
And with a merry gale
Swell your stretched sail,
With vows as strong
As the winds that blow you!

Your course securely steer,
West-and-by-south forth keep!
Rocks, lee-shores, nor shoals,
When Eolus scowls,
You need not fear,
So absolute the deep.

And, cheerfully at sea,
Success you still entice,
To get the pearl and gold;
And ours to hold,
Virginia,
Earth's only Paradise.

Where Nature hath in store
Fowl, venison, and fish;
And the fruitful'st soil,
Without your toil,
Three harvests more,
All greater than your wish.

And the ambitious vine
Crowns with his purple mass
The cedar reaching high
To kiss the sky,
The cypress pine,
And useful sassafras.

To whom, the Golden Age
Still Nature's laws doth give:
Nor other cares attend,
But them to defend
From winter's rage,
That long there doth not live.

When as the luscious smell
Of that delicious land,
Above the seas that flows,
The clear wind throws,
Your hearts to swell,
Approaching the dear strand.

In kenning[1] of the shore
(Thanks to God first given!)
O you, the happiest men,
Be frolic then!
Let cannons roar,
Frightening the wide heaven!

And in regions far,
Such heroes bring ye forth
As those from whom we came!
And plant our name
Under that star
Not known unto our North!

And as there plenty grows,
The laurel everywhere,
Apollo's sacred tree
You may it see
A poet's brows
To crown, that may sing there.

Thy Voyages attend,
Industrious Hakluyt![2]
Whose reading shall inflame
Men to seek fame;
And much commend
To after times thy wit.

1 recognition.
2 Richard Hakluyt (1553?–1616), a clergyman, whose thrilling collection of voyages inspired English explorers and men of letters.

## ODE XII

TO THE CAMBRO-BRITONS[1] AND THEIR HAI
HIS BALLAD OF AGINCOURT

Fair stood the wind for France,
When we our sails advance;
Nor now to prove our chance
Longer will tarry;
But putting to the main,
At Caux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his martial train
Landed King Harry.[2]

And taking many a fort,
Furnished in warlike sort,
Marcheth towards Agincourt
In happy hour;
Skirmishing, day by day,
With those that stopped his way,
Where the French general lay
With all his power.

Which, in his height of pride,
King Henry to deride,
His ransom to provide,
To the King sending;
Which he neglects the while,
As from a nation vile,
Yet, with an angry smile,
Their fall portending.

And turning to his men,
Quoth our brave Henry then:
"Though they to one be ten
Be not amazed!
Yet have we well begun;
Battles so bravely won
Have ever to the sun
By Fame been raised!

"And for myself," quoth he,
"This my full rest[3] shall be:
England ne'er mourn for me,
Nor more esteem me!
Victor I will remain,
Or on this earth lie slain;
Never shall she sustain
Loss to redeem me!

"Poitiers and Cressy tell,
When most their pride did swell,
Under our swords they fell.
No less our skill is,
Than when our grandsire great,
Claiming the regal seat,
By many a warlike feat
Lopped the French lilies."

1 The Welsh. 2 Henry V. 3 decision.

The Duke of York so dread
The eager vanward led;
With the main, Henry sped
Amongst his henchmen.
Exeter had the rear,
A braver man not there!
O Lord, how hot they were
On the false Frenchmen!

They now to fight are gone,
Armor on armor shone,
Drum now to drum did groan;
To hear, was wonder;
That, with the cries they make,
The very earth did shake;
Trumpet to trumpet spake;
Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became,
O noble Erpingham,
Which didst the signal aim
To our hid forces!
When from a meadow by,
Like a storm suddenly,
The English archery
Stuck the French horses.

With Spanish yew so strong,
Arrows a cloth-yard long,
That like to serpents stung,
Piercing the weather.
None from his fellow starts;
But, playing manly parts,
And like true English hearts,
Stuck close together.

When down their bows they threw,
And forth their bilboes [1] drew,
And on the French they flew:
Not one was tardy.
Arms were from shoulders sent,
Scalps to the teeth were rent,
Down the French peasants went;
Our men were hardy.

This while our noble King,
His broad sword brandishing,
Down the French host did ding,[2]
As to o'erwhelm it;
And many a deep wound lent,
His arms with blood besprent,
And many a cruel dent
Bruised his helmet.

Gloucester, that duke so good,
Next of the royal blood,
For famous England stood,
With his brave brother.
Clarence, in steel so bright,
Though but a maiden knight,
Yet in that furious fight
Scarce such another!

Warwick in blood did wade,
Oxford, the foe invade,
And cruel slaughter made,
Still as they ran up.
Suffolk his axe did ply;
Beaumont and Willoughby
Bare them right doughtily,
Ferrers, and Fanhope.

Upon Saint Crispin's Day
Fought was this noble Fray;[1]
Which Fame did not delay
To England to carry.
O when shall English men
With such acts fill a pen?
Or England breed again
Such a King Harry?

1 swords. 2 strike.

## CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE
## (1564–1593)

Marlowe, the greatest dramatist of his time, was born in Canterbury in 1564, the son of a shoemaker. He was educated at the King's School, Canterbury, and at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where he held a scholarship from 1581 to 1587, receiving both the bachelor's and the master's degrees. When he went to London is not known, but by 1587 he had produced the first part of *Tamburlaine* and made himself a powerful influence in English drama. Then followed in quick succession the second part of *Tamburlaine*, *Faustus*, *The Jew of Malta*, and *Edward II*, Marlowe's four great plays. *The Massacre of Paris* and *The Tragedy of Dido*, the latter written with Nash, are below his standard. It is possible likewise that he had a hand in the second and third parts of Shakespeare's *Henry VI*, and a smaller share in *Titus Andronicus*. His non-dramatic works include translations of Ovid and Lucan, splendid miscellaneous poems, and the well-known *Hero and Leander*, completed by Chapman after Marlowe's death.

Little is known of Marlowe's life aside from his writings, which are biography enough. That he was a dissolute, social outcast is not to be believed. His association with Sir Walter Raleigh, Kyd, and other liberal and speculative minds gave him the reputation of being an atheist. In 1593, because of his views, a warrant was issued for his arrest. Marlowe

1 October 25, 1415.

left London for Deptford where he was killed in a tavern quarrel by Ingram Frizer.

Dead at twenty-nine, he had greatly surpassed as a poet and playwright all his contemporaries, including Shakespeare, who was exactly his age. In his fluent handling of blank verse, which he established as the vehicle of expression in the drama, in his incisive character studies, his vivid imagination, and exuberant lyrical power, he was supreme. To-day he is second only to Shakespeare in the history of English drama.

Marlowe's best plays are printed in the Mermaid Series, edited by Havelock Ellis, with an introduction by J. A. Symonds.

## THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE

There is a version of this famous song in *The Passionate Pilgrim and other Sonnets*, 1599, ascribed to Shakespeare. The poem presented here appeared in *England's Helicon*, 1600, with Marlowe's name attached, seven years after his death.

Come live with me, and be my love;
And we will all the pleasures prove
That hills and valleys, dales and fields,
Woods, or steepy mountain yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks,
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses,
And a thousand fragrant posies;
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair-lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy-buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs;
An if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me, and be my love.

The shepherd-swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning;
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me, and be my love.

## THOMAS NASH
## (1567–1601)

Thomas Nash, a Cambridge graduate, had a restless, pleasure-loving nature, a keen mind and a keener tongue, and a gift for expression. The result was a Bohemian life in London; poverty; many enemies, because of his satires among the Puritans and at court; imprisonment; but the friendship of men like Greene, and some splendid pages of prose and verse. His reputation to-day is based upon his poems and *The Unfortunate Traveller, or, The Life of Jack Wilton*, 1594, a realistic tale important in the history of the picaresque novel.

## SPRING

Spring, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king;
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing.
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The palm [1] and may [2] make country houses gay,
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,
And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo.

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,
In every street these tunes our ears do greet,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!
Spring! the sweet Spring!

## LITANY IN TIME OF PLAGUE

Adieu, farewell earth's bliss!
This world uncertain is;
Fond [3] are life's lustful joys,
Death proves them all but toys.
None from his darts can fly;
I am sick, I must die —
Lord, have mercy on us!

Rich men, trust not in wealth,
Gold cannot buy you health;
Physic himself must fade;
All things to end are made;
The plague full swift goes by;
I am sick, I must die —
Lord, have mercy on us.

1 the American pussy-willow.
2 hawthorn. 3 foolish.

Beauty is but a flower,
Which wrinkles will devour;
Brightness falls from the air;
Queens have died young and fair;
Dust hath closed Helen's eye;
I am sick, I must die —
  Lord, have mercy on us!

Strength stoops unto the grave,
Worms feed on Hector brave;
Swords may not fight with fate;
Earth still holds ope her gate;
"Come, come!" the bells do cry;
I am sick, I must die —
  Lord, have mercy on us!

Wit with his wantonness
Tasteth death's bitterness;
Hell's executioner
Hath no ears for her to hear
What vain art can reply;
I am sick, I must die —
  Lord, have mercy on us!

Haste therefore each degree
To welcome destiny;
Heaven is our heritage,
Earth but a player's stage.
Mount we unto the sky;
I am sick, I must die —
  Lord, have mercy on us!

## THOMAS CAMPION (d. 1619)

Campion, a graduate of Cambridge University, showed marked ability as a student of the law, as a doctor of medicine, and as a musician. As a poet he is second to few as a writer of exquisite verses after the manner of Horace and Catullus.

### MY SWEETEST LESBIA

My sweetest Lesbia, let us live and love;
And though the sager sort our deeds reprove,
Let us not weigh them: heaven's great lamps do dive
Into their west, and straight again revive:
But soon as once set is our little light,
Then must we sleep one ever-during night.

If all would lead their lives in love like me,
Then bloody swords and armor should not be;
No drum nor trumpet peaceful sleeps should move,
Unless alarm came from the camp of love:
But fools do live, and waste their little light,
And seek with pain their ever-during night.

When timely death my life and fortune ends,
Let not my hearse be vexed with mourning friends;
But let all lovers, rich in triumph, come
And with sweet pastimes grace my happy tomb:
And, Lesbia, close up thou my little light,
And crown with love my ever-during night.

### WHEN TO HER LUTE CORINNA SINGS

When to her lute Corinna sings,
Her voice revives the leaden strings,
And doth in highest notes appear,
As any challenged echo clear;
But when she doth of mourning speak,
E'en with her sighs the strings do break.

And as her lute doth live or die,
Led by her passion, so must I!
For when of pleasure she doth sing,
My thoughts enjoy a sudden spring;
But if she doth of sorrow speak,
Ev'n from my heart the strings do break.

### WHETHER MEN DO LAUGH OR WEEP

Whether men do laugh or weep,
Whether they do wake or sleep,
Whether they die young or old,
Whether they feel heat or cold;
There is, underneath the sun,
Nothing in true earnest done.

All our pride is but a jest;
None are worst, and none are best;
Grief and joy, and hope and fear,
Play their pageants everywhere:
Vain opinion all doth sway,
And the world is but a play.

Powers above in clouds do sit,
Mocking our poor apish wit;
That so lamely, with such state,
Their high glory imitate:
No ill can be felt but pain,
And that happy men disdain.

## VAIN MEN, WHOSE FOLLIES MAKE A GOD OF LOVE

Vain men, whose follies make a god of Love,
Whose blindness beauty doth immortal deem;
Praise not what you desire but what you prove,
Count those things good that are, not those that seem:
I cannot call her true that's false to me,
Nor make of women more than women be.

How fair an entrance breaks the way to love!
How rich of golden hope and gay delight!
What heart cannot a modest beauty move?
Who, seeing clear day once, will dream of night?
She seemed a saint, that brake her faith with me,
But proved a woman as all other be.

So bitter is their sweet that true content
Unhappy men in them may never find:
Ah! but without them none. Both must consent,
Else uncouth[1] are the joys of either kind.
Let us then praise their good, forget their ill!
Men must be men, and women women still.

## NEVER LOVE UNLESS YOU CAN

Never love unless you can
Bear with all the faults of man:
Men sometimes will jealous be,
Though but little cause they see;
And hang the head, as discontent,
And speak what straight they will repent.

Men that but one saint adore,
Make a show of love to more:
Beauty must be scorned in none,
Though but truly served in one:
For what is courtship, but disguise?
True hearts may have dissembling eyes.

Men when their affairs require,
Must a while themselves retire:
Sometimes hunt, and sometimes hawk,
And not ever sit and talk.
If these, and such like you can bear,
Then like, and love, and never fear!

1 unknown.

## CHERRY RIPE

There is a garden in her face,
Where roses and white lilies grow;
A heavenly paradise is that place,
Wherein all pleasant fruits do flow.
There cherries grow, which none may buy
Till "Cherry ripe" themselves do cry.

Those cherries fairly do enclose
Of orient pearl a double row;
Which when her lovely laughter shows,
They look like rosebuds filled with snow.
Yet them nor peer nor prince can buy
Till "Cherry ripe" themselves do cry.

Her eyes like angels watch them still;
Her brows like bended bows do stand,
Threatening with piercing frowns to kill
All that attempt, with eye or hand,
Those sacred cherries to come nigh
Till "Cherry ripe" themselves do cry.

## CHANCE AND CHANGE

What if a day, or a month, or a year,
Crown thy delights, with a thousand sweet contentings?
Cannot a chance of a night, or an hour,
Cross thy desires, with as many sad tormentings?
Fortune, honor, beauty, youth,
Are but blossoms dying!
Wanton pleasure, doting love,
Are but shadows flying!
All our joys are but toys,
Idle thoughts deceiving;
None have power of an hour
In their life's bereaving.

Earth's but a point to the world; and a man
Is but a point to the world's compared center!
Shall, then, a point of a point be so vain
As to triumph in a silly point's adventure?
All is hazard that we have!
There is nothing biding!
Days of pleasure are like streams,
Through fair meadows gliding!
Weal and woe, Time doth go!
Time is never turning!
Secret fates guide our states;
Both in mirth and mourning!

## JOHN FLETCHER
(1579–1625)

Fletcher, the son of a clergyman, was a graduate of Cambridge. In London he became associated with Beaumont, living with him, according to tradition, "on the Bankside, not far from the Play-house." Here they turned out a long series of popular and able plays. After Beaumont's retirement Fletcher collaborated with other dramatists, especially Shakespeare, Jonson, and Massinger. He died during the plague of 1625.

Fletcher's rank as a playwright is high, both in comedy and in tragedy, as a collaborator and alone. With Beaumont, he introduced a new era in English drama, during which they enjoyed a vogue greater than Shakespeare himself. He is, besides, an individual poet, with a genuine lyric note.

### MELANCHOLY
(From *The Nice Valour*)

Hence, all you vain delights,
As short as are the nights
Wherein you spend your folly!
There's nought in this life sweet,
If man were wise to see't,
But only melancholy;
O sweetest melancholy!

Welcome, folded arms and fixed eyes,
A sigh that piercing mortifies,
A look that's fastened to the ground,
A tongue chained up without a sound!
Fountain heads and pathless groves,
Places which pale passion loves!
Moonlight walks, when all the fowls
Are warmly housed, save bats and owls!

A midnight bell, a parting groan,
These are the sounds we feed upon.
Then stretch our bones in a still gloomy valley;
Nothing's so dainty sweet as lovely melancholy.

### INVOCATION TO SLEEP
(From *Valentinian*)

Gentle-charming Sleep, thou easer of all woes,
Brother to Death, sweetly thyself dispose
On this afflicted prince; fall like a cloud,
In gentle showers; give nothing that is loud
Or painful to his slumbers; — easy, light,
And as a purling stream, thou son of Night,
Pass by his troubled senses; sing his pain
Like hollow murmuring wind or silver rain;
Into this prince gently, oh, gently slide,
And kiss him into slumbers like a bride!

### ASPATIA'S SONG
(From *The Maid's Tragedy*)

Lay a garland on my hearse
Of the dismal yew;
Maidens, willow branches bear;
Say, I died true.

My love was false, but I was firm
From my hour of birth.
Upon my buried body lie
Lightly, gentle earth!

### SONG TO BACCHUS
(From *Valentinian*)

God Lyæus [1] ever young,
Ever honored, ever sung;
Stained with blood of lusty grapes,
In a thousand lusty shapes,
Dance upon the mazer's [2] brim,
In the crimson liquor swim;
From thy plenteous hand divine
Let a river run with wine;
God of youth, let this day here
Enter neither care nor fear!

### DRINK TO-DAY
(From *The Bloody Brother*)

Drink to-day, and drown all sorrow;
You shall perhaps not do it to-morrow:
Best, while you have it, use your breath;
There is no drinking after death.

Wine works the heart up, wakes the wit,
There is no cure 'gainst age but it:
It helps the headache, cough, and phthisic,
And is for all diseases physic.

Then let us swill, boys, for our health;
Who drinks well, loves the commonwealth.
And he that will to bed go sober
Falls with the leaf still in October.

### AWAY, DELIGHTS!
(From *The Captain*)

Away, delights! go seek some other dwelling,
For I must die.
Farewell, false love! thy tongue is ever telling
Lie after lie.

1 Bacchus. 2 cup's.

Forever let me rest now from thy smarts;
Alas, for pity go
And fire their hearts
That have been hard to thee! Mine was not so.

Never again deluding love shall know me,
For I will die;
And all those griefs that think to overgrow me
Shall be as I.
Forever will I sleep, while poor maids cry:
"Alas, for pity stay,
And let us die
With thee! Men cannot mock us in the clay."

## WEEP NO MORE

(From *The Queen of Corinth*)

Weep no more, nor sigh, nor groan,
Sorrow calls no time that's gone;
Violets plucked the sweetest rain
Makes not fresh nor grow again;
Trim thy locks, look cheerfully;
Fate's hid ends eyes cannot see;
Joys as winged dreams fly fast,
Why should sadness longer last?
Grief is but a wound to woe;
Gentlest fair, mourn, mourn no mo.

## LOVE'S EMBLEMS

(From *Valentinian*)

Now the lusty spring is seen;
Golden yellow, gaudy blue,
Daintily invite the view;
Everywhere on every green,
Roses blushing as they blow,[1]
And enticing men to pull
Lilies whiter than the snow,
Woodbines of sweet honey full:
All love's emblems, and all cry,
"Ladies, if not plucked, we die."

Yet the lusty spring hath stayed;
Blushing red and purest white
Daintily to love invite
Every woman, every maid.
Cherries kissing as they grow,
And inviting men to taste,
Apples even ripe below,
Winding gently to the waist:
All love's emblems, and all cry,
"Ladies, if not plucked, we die."

1 bloom.

# FRANCIS BEAUMONT
## (1584?–1616)

Beaumont, the son of a knight, was a student for a while at Oxford. He left the university upon his father's death and soon thereafter was admitted to the Inner Temple. After four or five years in London he entered upon the splendid collaboration with Fletcher, in which each seemed to supplement the other in fashioning effective poetic plays. This partnership lasted about eight years, when Beaumont retired from the theater, possibly because of his marriage. He died in 1616, at thirty-two, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

## ON THE TOMBS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Mortality, behold and fear!
What a change of flesh is here!
Think how many royal bones
Sleep within this heap of stones;
Here they lie had realms and lands,
Who now want strength to stir their hands;
Where from their pulpits sealed with dust
They preach, "In greatness is no trust."
Here's an acre sown indeed
With the richest royal'st seed
That the earth did e'er suck in,
Since the first man died for sin;
Here the bones of birth have cried,
"Though gods they were, as men they died."
Here are sands, ignoble things,
Dropt from the ruined sides of kings.
Here's a world of pomp and state,
Buried in dust, once dead by fate.

## MASTER FRANCIS BEAUMONT'S LETTER TO BEN JONSON

The sun (which doth the greatest comfort bring
To absent friends, because the selfsame thing
They know they see, however absent) is
Here our best haymaker! Forgive me this;
It is our country's style! In this warm shine
I lie and dream of your full Mermaid Wine
Oh, we have water mixed with claret lees,
Drink apt to bring in drier heresies
Than beer, good only for the sonnet's strain
With fustian metaphors to stuff the brain;
So mixed, that, given to the thirstiest one,
'Twill not prove alms, unless he have the stone.

think that with one draught man's invention fades,
Two cups had quite spoiled Homer's Iliades.
'Tis liquor that will find out Sutcliff's wit,
Lie where he will, and make him write worse yet.
Filled with such moisture, in most grievous qualms,
Did Robert Wisdom write his singing psalms;
And so must I do this: And yet I think
It is a potion sent us down to drink,
By special Providence, keeps us from fights,
Makes us not laugh when we make legs[1] to knights.
'Tis this that keeps our minds fit for our states,
A medicine to obey our magistrates:
For we do live more free than you; no hate,
No envy at one another's happy state,
Moves us; we are all equal; every whit
Of land that God gives men here is their wit,
If we consider fully; for our best
And gravest man will with his main housejest,
Scarce please you; we want subtlety to do
The city-tricks, lie, hate, and flatter too.
Here are none that can bear a painted show,
Strike when you wink, and then lament the blow;
Who, like mills set the right way for to grind,
Can make their gains alike with every wind:
Only some fellows, with the subtlest pate
Amongst us, may perchance equivocate
At selling of a horse, and that's the most.
Methinks the little wit I had is lost
Since I saw you! For wit is like a rest
Held up at tennis, which men do the best
With the best gamesters. What things have we seen
Done at the Mermaid! heard words that have been
So nimble and so full of subtle flame,
As if that every one from whence they came
Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest
And had resolved to live a fool the rest
Of his dull life! Then, when there hath been thrown
Wit able enough to justify the town
For three days past! Wit, that might warrant be
For the whole city to talk foolishly
Till that were cancelled! And, when we were gone,
We left an air behind us, which alone
Was able to make the two next companies
Right witty! though but downright fools, more wise!
When I remember this, and see that now
The country gentlemen begin to allow
My wit for dry bobs;[1] then I needs must cry,
"I see my days of ballading grow nigh!"
I can already riddle; and can sing
Catches, sell bargains; and I fear shall bring
Myself to speak the hardest words I find
Over as oft as any, with one wind,
That takes no medicines! But one thought of thee
Makes me remember all these things to be
The wit of our young men, fellows that show
No part of good, yet utter all they know!
Who, like trees of the guard, have growing souls.
Only strong Destiny, which all controls,
I hope hath left a better fate in store
For me, thy friend, than to live ever poor,
Banished unto this home! Fate, once again,
Bring me to thee, who canst make smooth and plain
The way of knowledge for me; and then I,
Who have no good but in thy company,
Protest it will my greatest comfort be
To acknowledge all I have to flow from thee!
Ben, when these scenes are perfect, we'll taste wine!
I'll drink thy Muse's health! thou shalt quaff mine!

1 bow.

1 jests.

## JOHN WEBSTER
## (1580?–1625?)

Scarcely anything is known with certainty of Webster's life. The few plays that are definitely his, and his collaboration with other playwrights, give him a well-merited place among the great Elizabethan dramatists. His famous play, *The Duchess of Malfi*, published in 1623, is considered by many the greatest tragedy since Shakespeare. Assuredly it is a worthy successor, among blood-and-thunder plays, to *The Spanish Tragedy* and to *Hamlet*. Webster had genuine dramatic insight. He was also endowed with a rare gift for lyrical expression, which he used in his tragedies as well as in his poems.

### VANITAS VANITATUM

All the flowers of the spring
Meet to perfume our burying;
These have but their growing prime,
And man does flourish but his time:

Survey our progress from our birth, —
We are set, we grow, we turn to earth.
Courts adieu, and all delights,
All bewitching appetites!
Sweetest breath and clearest eye
Like perfumes go out and die;
And consequently this is done
As shadows wait upon the sun.
Vain the ambition of kings
Who seek by trophies and dead things
To leave a living name behind,
And weave but nets to catch the wind.

## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564–1616)

The known facts in Shakespeare's life may be briefly summarized. He was born in Stratford-on-Avon, and was baptized in the village church there, on April 26, 1564. The assumption is that he was born a few days before. It is assumed, too, that he attended the free grammar school in Stratford. The next fact is the record of the marriage license issued to the future dramatist and Anne Hathaway on November 28, 1582. Shakespeare was eighteen years old, Anne, twenty-six. Of the marriage there is no record. Their first child, Susanna, was baptized in May, 1583. In February, 1585, their only other children, Hamnet and Judith, twins, were baptized. During the next year, 1586, Shakespeare, it is assumed, went to London. What his first employment was is not known. From remarks by Greene in his *Groatsworth of Wit*, we know that by 1592 he had made a reputation as a dramatist. In 1593, *Venus and Adonis*, and in 1594, *Lucrece*, were entered at Stationers' Hall. By 1594, Shakespeare had won recognition as an actor. (Acting, it should be remembered, was more remunerative in Elizabethan times than playwriting.) In that year, as a member of the Lord Chamberlain's Company, he acted before the Queen. In 1596, his son Hamnet died. In 1597, he bought the largest place in Stratford. In 1598, he acted in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*, along with Heminge, Condell, Kempe, and Burbage; and in the same year his first published plays, *Richard II* and *Love's Labour's Lost*, appeared in quarto editions. In 1599, he was granted a coat of arms by the College of Heralds. About this time he was made a shareholder in the Lord Chamberlain's Company. From now on, Shakespeare's name appears in numerous business agreements, dealing mainly with the acquisition of real estate in London. In 1609, his *Sonnets* were published; and in the same year he evidently gave up acting. About 1611, it seems, he retired to Stratford, disposing of his shares in the theater. With the exception of his probable collaboration with Fletcher in *Henry VIII* and in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, he wrote no more. He died on April 23, 1616, and was buried in the church at Stratford.

Such are the main facts, few enough, that we have concerning Shakespeare's life. More important, however, is the legacy of plays he has left us: the richest single contribution to any drama. The plays are of unequal value, but the best have never been surpassed. They may be roughly divided into four groups, or periods: his apprenticeship (1590–93); the comedies (1594–1600); the great tragedies (1600–09), and the period of his "dramatic romances" (1610–12). A table, based on that in Neilson and Thorndike's *The Facts about Shakespeare*, with the dates which are commonly accepted, follows:

| | COMEDIES | HISTORIES | TRAGEDIES |
|---|---|---|---|
| I. | *Love's Labour's Lost* (1591)<br>*Comedy of Errors* (1591)<br>*Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1591–92) | **1 Henry VI* (1590–91)<br>**2 Henry VI* (1590–92)<br>**3 Henry VI* (1590–92)<br>*Richard III* (1593)<br>*John* (1593) | **Titus Andronicus* (1593–94) |
| II. | *Midsummer-Night's Dream* (1594–95)<br>*Merchant of Venice* (1595–96)<br>**Taming of the Shrew* (1596–97)<br>*Merry Wives of Windsor* (1598)<br>*Much Ado about Nothing* (1599)<br>*As You Like It* (1599–1600) | *Richard II* (1595)<br>*1 Henry IV* (1597)<br>*2 Henry IV* (1598)<br>*Henry V* (1599) | *Romeo and Juliet* (1594–95) |
| III. | *Twelfth Night* (1601)<br>*Troilus and Cressida* (1601–02)<br>*All's Well that Ends Well* (1602)<br>*Measure for Measure* (1603)<br>**Pericles* (1607–08) | | *Julius Cæsar* (1599–1601)<br>*Hamlet* (1602–03)<br>*Othello* (1604)<br>*King Lear* (1605–06)<br>*Macbeth* (1606)<br>**Timon of Athens* (1607)<br>*Antony and Cleopatra* (1607–08)<br>*Coriolanus* (1609) |
| IV. | *Cymbeline* (1610)<br>*The Winter's Tale* (1611)<br>*The Tempest* (1611)<br>**The Two Noble Kinsmen* (1613) | **Henry VIII* (1613) | |

* Written (it is supposed) in collaboration with others.

The selections given below illustrate only Shakespeare the poet, the greatest lyric poet of his
y.

The most convenient and trustworthy handbook about Shakespeare is Neilson and Thorndike's
*he Facts about Shakespeare* (Macmillan). Among the many books about Shakespeare's life and
t, the reader should consult those by G. P. Baker, A. C. Bradley, G. Brandes, E. Dowden,
Lee, B. Matthews, and B. Wendell. Coleridge, Hazlitt, and Lamb wrote stimulating and
ppreciative essays on various phases of Shakespeare's plays. The most recent biography is by
Quincy Adams (Houghton Mifflin Company).

## SONNETS

Shakespeare's sonnets circulated in manuript at least ten years before they were ought together for publication, probably thout Shakespeare's consent, in 1609. To om they were written has never been ascerined. They may have been addressed to no al person — a convention in sonnet-writing nich was common in Elizabethan times. me of them may have been written to a ung man, some to a certain dark lady. How r the material in the sonnets is autobiographi-l or based on personal experience is also batable. Note, in this connection, the obvi-s similarity between Sonnet 66 and Hamlet's ell-known soliloquy. One thing is sure: they e worthy products of Shakespeare's genius, autiful expressions of thought and feeling, hatever their source may be.

### 15

When I consider every thing that grows
Holds in perfection but a little moment,
That this huge stage presenteth naught but shows
Whereon the stars in secret influence comment;
When I perceive that men as plants increase,
Cheered and checked even by the self-same sky,
Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease,
And wear their brave state out of memory;
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay
Sets you most rich in youth, before my sight,
Where wasteful Time debateth with Decay,
To change your day of youth to sullied night;
And, all in war with Time for love of you,
As he takes from you, I engraft[1] you new.

### 18

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;
And every fair[1] from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course untrimmed;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

[1] inoculate.

### 23

As an unperfect actor on the stage,
Who with his fear is put besides his part,
Or some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart,
So I, for fear of trust, forget to say
The perfect ceremony of love's rite,
And in mine own love's strength seem to decay,
O'ercharged with burden of mine own love's might.
O, let my books be then the eloquence
And dumb presagers of my speaking breast,
Who plead for love and look for recompense,
More than that tongue that more hath more expressed.
O, learn to read what silent love hath writ:
To hear with eyes belongs to love's fine wit.

### 25

Let those who are in favor with their stars
Of public honor and proud titles boast,
Whilst I, whom fortune of such triumph bars,
Unlooked for joy in that I honor most.
Great princes' favorites their fair leaves spread
But as the marigold at the sun's eye,
And in themselves their pride lies buried,
For at a frown they in their glory die.
The painful warrior famoused for fight,
After a thousand victories once foiled,
Is from the book of honor razed quite,

[1] beauty.

And all the rest forgot for which he toiled:
Then happy I, that love and am beloved,
Where I may not remove nor be removed.

29

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries
And look upon myself and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, — and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

30

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless [1] night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancelled woe,
And moan the expense [2] of many a vanished sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

32

If thou survive my well-contented day,
When that churl Death my bones with dust shall cover,
And shalt by fortune once more re-survey
These poor rude lines of thy deceased lover,
Compare them with the bettering of the time,
And though they be outstripped by every pen,
Reserve them for my love, not for their rime,
Exceeded by the height of happier men.
O, then vouchsafe me but this loving thought:
"Had my friend's Muse grown with this growing age,
A dearer birth than this his love had brought
To march in ranks of better equipage:
But since he died and poets better prove,
Theirs for their style I'll read, his for his love."

33

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack [1] on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my sun one early morn did shine
With all-triumphant splendor on my brow;
But out! alack! he was but one hour mine;
The region cloud hath masked him from me now.
Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun staineth.

54

O, how much more doth beauty beauteous seem
By that sweet ornament which truth doth give!
The rose looks fair, but fairer we it deem
For that sweet odor which doth in it live.
The canker-blooms have full as deep a dye
As the perfumed tincture of the roses,
Hang on such thorns, and play as wantonly
When summer's breath their masked buds discloses;
But, for [2] their virtue only is their show,
They live unwooed and unrespected fade,
Die to themselves. Sweet roses do not so;
Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odors made:
And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,
When that shall fade, my verse distills your truth.

55

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rime;
But you shall shine more bright in these contents

1 endless. 2 loss.

1 framework. 2 since.

than unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So, till the judgment that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

60

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end;
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crowned,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
And Time that gave doth now his gift confound.
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow,
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow:
And yet to times in hope my verse shall stand,
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

64

When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced
The rich-proud cost of outworn buried age;
When sometime lofty towers I see down-razed,
And brass eternal slave to mortal rage;
When I have seen the hungry ocean gain
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,
And the firm soil win of the watery main,
Increasing store with loss, and loss with store;
When I have seen such interchange of state,
Or state itself confounded to decay;
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminate, —
That Time will come and take my love away.
This thought is as a death, which cannot choose
But weep to have that which it fears to lose.

65

Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea,
But sad mortality o'er-sways their power,
How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,
Whose action is no stronger than a flower?
O, how shall summer's honey breath hold out
Against the wrackful siege of battering days,
When rocks impregnable are not so stout,
Nor gates of steel so strong, but Time decays?
O fearful meditation! where, alack,
Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid?
Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back?
Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid?
O, none, unless this miracle have might,
That in black ink my love may still shine bright.

66

Tired with all these, for restful death I cry,
As,[1] to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimmed in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,
And gilded honor shamefully misplaced,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
And strength by limping sway disabled,
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,
And simple truth miscalled simplicity,
And captive good attending captain ill:
Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
Save that, to die, I leave my love alone.

70

That thou art blamed shall not be thy defect,
For slander's mark was ever yet the fair;
The ornament of beauty is suspect,
A crow that flies in heaven's sweetest air.
So thou be good, slander doth but approve
Thy worth the greater, being wooed of time;
For canker vice the sweetest buds doth love,
And thou present'st a pure unstained prime.
Thou hast passed by the ambush of young days,
Either not assailed, or victor being charged;
Yet this thy praise cannot be so thy praise,
To tie up envy evermore enlarged:
If some suspect of ill masked not thy show,
Then thou alone kingdoms of hearts shouldst owe.

71

No longer mourn for me when I am dead
Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled

[1] "Such things as the following: to see merit treated as a beggar," etc.

From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell:
Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it; for I love you so,
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe.
O, if, I say, you look upon this verse,
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,
But let your love even with my life decay;
Lest the wise world should look into your moan
And mock you with me after I am gone.

73.

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourished by.
This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

90

Then hate me when thou wilt; if ever, now;
Now, while the world is bent my deeds to cross,
Join with the spite of fortune, make me bow,
And do not drop in for an after-loss:
Ah, do not, when my heart hath scaped this sorrow,
Come in the rearward of a conquered woe,
Give not a windy night a rainy morrow,
To linger out a purposed overthrow.
If thou wilt leave me, do not leave me last,
When other petty griefs have done their spite,
But in the onset come; so shall I taste
At first the very worst of fortune's might;
And other strains of woe, which now seem woe,
Compared with loss of thee will not seem so.

97

How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!
What old December's bareness every where!
And yet this time removed was summer's time,
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,
Bearing the wanton burden of the prime,
Like widowed wombs after their lords' decease:
Yet this abundant issue seemed to me
But hope of orphans and unfathered fruit;
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,
And, thou away, the very birds are mute;
Or, if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer,
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

98

From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April dressed in all his trim
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,
That heavy Saturn laughed and leaped with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odor and in hue
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew;
Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
Yet seemed it winter still, and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play.

104

To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,
Such seems your beauty still. Three winters cold
Have from the forests shook three summers' pride,
Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turned
In process of the seasons have I seen,
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burned
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.
Ah! yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,
Steal from his figure and no pace perceived;
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
Hath motion and mine eye may be deceived:
For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred:
Ere you were born was beauty's summer dead.

106

When in the chronicle of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rime
In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights,
Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have expressed
Even such a beauty as you master now.
So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all you prefiguring;
And, for they looked but with divining eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:
For we, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

107

Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the lease of my true love control,
Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom.
The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured,
And the sad augurs mock their own presage;
Incertainties now crown themselves assured,
And peace proclaims olives of endless age.
Now with the drops of this most balmy time
My love looks fresh, and Death to me subscribes,
Since, spite of him, I'll live in this poor rime,
While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes:
And thou in this shalt find thy monument,
When tyrants' crests and tombs of brass are spent.

109

O, never say that I was false of heart,
Though absence seemed my flame to qualify.
As easy might I from myself depart
As from my soul, which in thy breast doth lie:
That is my home of love: if I have ranged,
Like him that travels I return again,
Just to the time, not with the time exchanged,
So that myself bring water for my stain.
Never believe, though in my nature reigned
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
That it could so preposterously be stained,
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good;
For nothing this wide universe I call,
Save thou, my rose; in it thou art my all.

110

Alas, 'tis true I have gone here and there
And made myself a motley to the view,
Gored mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear,
Made old offences of affections new;
Most true it is that I have looked on truth
Askance and strangely; but, by all above,
These blenches[1] gave my heart another youth,
And worse essays proved thee my best of love.
Now all is done, have what shall have no end:
Mine appetite I never more will grind
On newer proof, to try an older friend,
A god in love, to whom I am confined.
Then give me welcome, next my heaven the best,
Even to thy pure and most most loving breast.

111

O, for my sake do you with Fortune chide,
The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
That did not better for my life provide
Than public means which public manners breeds.
Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,
And almost thence my nature is subdued
To what it works in, like the dyer's hand:
Pity me then and wish I were renewed;
Whilst, like a willing patient, I will drink
Potions of eisel[2] 'gainst my strong infection;
No bitterness that I will bitter think,
Nor double penance, to correct correction.
Pity me then, dear friend, and I assure ye
Even that your pity is enough to cure me.

116

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

1 side-looks. 2 vinegar.

119

What potions have I drunk of Siren tears,
Distilled from limbecks foul as hell within,
Applying fears to hopes and hopes to fears,
Still losing when I saw myself to win!
What wretched errors hath my heart committed,
Whilst it hath thought itself so blessed never!
How have mine eyes out of their spheres been fitted,
In the distraction of this madding fever!
O benefit of ill! now I find true
That better is by evil still made better;
And ruined love, when it is built anew,
Grows fairer than at first, more strong, far greater.
So I return rebuked to my content,
And gain by ill thrice more than I have spent.

130

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damasked,[1] red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound;
I grant I never saw a goddess go;
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
As any she belied with false compare.

146

Poor soul, the center of my sinful earth,
Thrall to these rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? Is this thy body's end?
Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more:
So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men,
And Death once dead, there's no more dying then.

1 with mingled colors.

## SONGS FROM THE PLAYS

(From *Love's Labour's Lost*)

When icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipped and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-who;
Tu-whit, tu-who! — a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel[1] the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-who;
Tu-whit, tu-who! — a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

(From *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*)

Who is Silvia? what is she,
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heaven such grace did lend her,
That she might admired be.

Is she kind as she is fair?
For beauty lives with kindness:
Love doth to her eyes repair
To help him of his blindness,
And, being helped, inhabits there.

Then to Silvia let us sing,
That Silvia is excelling;
She excels each mortal thing
Upon the dull earth dwelling:
To her let us garlands bring.

(From *The Merchant of Venice*)

Tell me, where is fancy[2] bred,
Or in the heart, or in the head?
How begot, how nourished?
Reply, reply.

It is engendered in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.

1 cool by skimming or stirring. 2 love.

Let us all ring fancy's knell;
I'll begin it, — Ding, dong, bell.
Ding, dong, bell.

(From *As You Like It*)

Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun,
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats
And pleased with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

(From *As You Like It*)

Blow, blow, thou winter wind!
Thou are not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.

Heigh ho! sing, heigh ho! unto the green holly;
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.
Then, heigh ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky!
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot;
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.

Heigh ho! sing, heigh ho! etc.

(From *As You Like It*)

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
That o'er the green corn-field did pass,
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Between the acres of the rye,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
These pretty country folks would lie,
In the spring time, etc.

This carol they began that hour,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
How that a life was but a flower
In the spring time, etc.

And therefore take the present time,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
For love is crowned with the prime
In the spring time, etc.

(From *Much Ado about Nothing*)

Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more!
Men were deceivers ever,
One foot in sea and one on shore,
To one thing constant never:
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny!

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe
Of dumps so dull and heavy!
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leavy:
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny!

(From *Twelfth Night*)

O, mistress mine, where are you roaming?
O, stay and hear; your true love's coming,
That can sing both high and low.
Trip no further, pretty sweeting,
Journeys end in lovers meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure.
In delay there lies no plenty;
Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

(From *Twelfth Night*)

Come away, come away, death,
And in sad cypress let me be laid;
Fly away, fly away, breath;
I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,
O, prepare it!
My part of death, no one so true
Did share it.

Not a flower, not a flower sweet,
On my black coffin let there be strown;
Not a friend, not a friend greet

My poor corpse, where my bones shall be thrown.
A thousand thousand sighs to save,
Lay me, O, where
Sad true lover never find my grave,
To weep there!

(From *Measure for Measure*)

Take, O, take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn:
But my kisses bring again,
Bring again;
Seals of love, but sealed in vain,
Sealed in vain!

(From *Cymbeline*)

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;[1]
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes:
With every thing that pretty is,
My lady sweet, arise:
Arise, arise!

(From *Cymbeline*)

Fear no more the heat o' th' sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages:
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' th' great;
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;
Care no more to clothe and eat;
To thee the reed is as the oak:
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

Fear no more the lightning-flash,
Nor th' all-dreaded thunder-stone;[1]
Fear not slander, censure rash;
Thou hast finished joy and moan:
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

No exorciser harm thee!
Nor no witchcraft charm thee!
Ghost unlaid forbear thee!
Nothing ill come near thee!
Quiet consummation have;
And renowned be thy grave!

(From *The Tempest*)

Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes;
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:
Ding-dong!
Hark! now I hear them, — Ding-dong, bell!

(From *The Tempest*)

Where the bee sucks, there suck I,
In a cowslip's bell I lie;
There I couch when owls do cry.
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily.
Merrily, merrily, shall I live now
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

[1] A singular verb with a plural subject is not uncommon in Elizabethan poetry.

[1] bolt.

## BEN JONSON (1573–1637)

Jonson was born in poverty at Westminster in 1573. He was admitted to Westminster School through the liberality of its master, William Camden, the antiquary. He may have attended St. John's College, Cambridge. After an unhappy marriage, he served with the army in Flanders. Then he became an actor and playwright in London. In 1598 he was imprisoned for killing another actor in a duel, and during the same year he won instantaneous success with his *Every Man in his Humour*. He followed this with *Sejanus*, *Eastward Ho!*, *Volpone*, *Epicœne*, *The Alchemist*, *Catiline*, *Bartholomew Fair*, among other plays; and in 1616 he published a collected edition of his works in folio.

In his plays, Jonson followed classical rules. In his poems, collected under the titles *Underwoods* and *The Forest*, he is graceful and delicate, the idol of younger poets who rejoiced in the name of "the sons of Ben." In his critical writings, *Timber, or Discoveries*, he shows himself a critic who, with all his rigid classicism, was liberal in his literary views.

The last few years of Jonson's life were unsuccessful. He died in 1637, and was buried in Westminster Abbey — in a vertical position, to save precious space.

Jonson's best plays may be found in the Mermaid Series. The completest and most recent study of Jonson is by C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson, 2 volumes (Oxford Press).

## SONG TO CELIA

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honoring thee,
As giving it a hope that there
It could not withered be.
But thou thereon didst only breathe,
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself, but thee.

## HYMN TO DIANA[1]

(From *Cynthia's Revels*)

Queen and Huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair,
State in wonted manner keep:
Hesperus[2] entreats thy light,
Goddess excellently bright.

Earth, let not thy envious shade
Dare itself to interpose;
Cynthia's shining orb was made
Heaven to clear when day did close:
Bless us then with wished sight,
Goddess excellently bright.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
And thy crystal-shining quiver;
Give unto the flying hart
Space to breathe, how short soever:
Thou that mak'st a day of night,
Goddess excellently bright.

## SIMPLEX MUNDITIIS

(From *Epicœne*)

The title, added later, is from Horace, Book I, Ode 5. It means "in simple elegance."

Still[3] to be neat, still to be drest,
As you were going to a feast;
Still to be powdered, still perfumed:
Lady, it is to be presumed,
Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Give me a look, give me a face
That makes simplicity a grace;
Robes loosely flowing, hair as free:
Such sweet neglect more taketh me
Than all th' adulteries of art;
They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

## TO THE MEMORY OF MY BELOVED MASTER, WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

To draw no envy, Shakespeare, on thy name,
Am I thus ample to thy book and fame;
While I confess thy writings to be such
As neither man, nor muse, can praise too much.
'Tis true, and all men's suffrage. But these ways
Were not the paths I meant unto thy praise;
For silliest ignorance on these may light,
Which, when it sounds at best, but echoes right;
Or blind affection, which doth ne'er advance
The truth, but gropes, and urgeth all by chance;
Or crafty malice might pretend this praise,
And think to ruin, where it seemed to raise.
These are, as[1] some infamous bawd or whore
Should praise a matron. What could hurt her more?
But thou art proof against them, and, indeed,
Above the ill fortune of them, or the need.
I therefore will begin. Soul of the age!
The applause, delight, the wonder of our stage!
My Shakespeare, rise! I will not lodge thee by
Chaucer, or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lie
A little farther off, to make thee a room:
Thou art a monument without a tomb,
And art alive still while thy book doth live
And we have wits to read and praise to give.
That I not mix thee so, my brain excuses,
I mean with great, but disproportioned Muses;
For if I thought my judgment were of years,
I should commit thee surely with thy peers,
And tell how far thou didst our Lyly outshine,
Or sporting Kyd, or Marlowe's mighty line.
And though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek,
From thence to honor thee, I would not seek

1 Here, the moon-goddess.
2 The character in *Cynthia's Revels* who sings this song.
3 always.

1 as if.

For names; but call forth thundering
Æschylus,[1]
Euripides, and Sophocles to us;
Pacuvius,[2] Accius,[2] him of Cordova [3] dead,
To life again, to hear thy buskin tread,
And shake a stage; or, when thy socks were on,
Leave thee alone for the comparison
Of all that insolent Greece or haughty Rome
Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come.
Triumph, my Britain, thou hast one to show
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.
He was not of an age, but for all time!
And all the Muses still were in their prime,
When, like Apollo, he came forth to warm
Our ears, or like a Mercury to charm!
Nature herself was proud of his designs,
And joyed to wear the dressing of his lines!
Which were so richly spun, and woven so fit,
As, since, she will vouchsafe no other wit.
The merry Greek, tart Aristophanes,[4]
Neat Terence,[5] witty Plautus, now not please;
But antiquated and deserted lie,
As they were not of Nature's family.
Yet must I not give Nature all; thy art,
My gentle Shakespeare, must enjoy a part.
For though the poet's matter nature be,
His art doth give the fashion; and, that he
Who casts to write a living line, must sweat,
(Such as thine are) and strike the second heat
Upon the Muses' anvil; turn the same
(And himself with it) that he thinks to frame,
Or, for the laurel, he may gain a scorn;
For a good poet's made, as well as born.
And such wert thou! Look how the father's face
Lives in his issue, even so the race
Of Shakespeare's mind and manners brightly shines
In his well turned, and true filed lines;
In each of which he seems to shake a lance,
As brandished at the eyes of ignorance.
Sweet Swan of Avon! what a sight it were
To see thee in our water yet appear,
And make those flights upon the banks of Thames,
That so did take Eliza,[6] and our James!
But stay, I see thee in the hemisphere
Advanced, and made a constellation there!
Shine forth, thou star of poets, and with rage
Or influence, chide or cheer the drooping stage,
Which, since thy flight from hence, hath mourned like night,
And despairs day, but for thy volume's light.

1 Eldest of the three great Greek dramatists: Æschylus, 525–456 B.C., Sophocles, 496–406 B.C., Euripides, 480–406 B.C.

2 Minor Roman tragic poets of the second century, B.C.

3 Seneca, the famous Roman philosopher and writer of tragedies, 4 B.C.–65 A.D., was born in Spain.

4 The greatest Greek comic dramatist, 448?–380? B.C.

5 Terence, 190?–159? B.C., and Plautus, 254?–184 B.C., the two foremost writers of Roman comedy.

6 Queen Elizabeth.

## A PINDARIC ODE[1]

### ON THE DEATH OF SIR H. MORISON

TO THE IMMORTAL MEMORY AND FRIENDSHIP OF THAT NOBLE PAIR, SIR LUCIUS CARY AND SIR H. MORISON.

I

*The Strophe, or Turn*

Brave infant of Saguntum,[2] clear
Thy coming forth in that great year,
When the prodigious Hannibal did crown
His rage with razing your immortal town.
Thou looking then about,
Ere thou wert half got out,
Wise child, didst hastily return,
And mad'st thy mother's womb thine urn.
How summed [3] a circle didst thou leave mankind
Of deepest lore, could we the center find!

*The Antistrophe, or Counter-Turn*

Did wiser nature draw thee back,
From out the horror of that sack;
Where shame, faith, honor, and regard of right,
Lay trampled on? the deeds of death and night
Urged, hurried forth, and hurled
Upon the affrighted world;
Fire and famine with fell fury met,
And all on utmost ruin set:
As, could they but life's miseries foresee,
No doubt all infants would return like thee.

*The Epode, or Stand*

For what is life, if measured by the space,
Not by the act?
Or masked man, if valued by his face,
Above his fact?
Here's one outlived his peers

1 The Greek ode, perfected by Pindar, 522–448? B.C., was written to be chanted by a chorus. It consisted of one or more sections, each composed of a strophe, an antistrophe, and an epode or after-song. The antistrophe had to be the exact counterpart of the strophe, in order to bring the chorus, which moved across the stage in rhythm with the music, back to its starting place.

2 The incident mentioned here was supposed to have happened during the capture of Saguntum in Spain by Hannibal.

3 complete.

And told forth fourscore years:
He vexed time, and busied the whole state;
Troubled both foes and friends;
But ever to no ends:
What did this stirrer but die late?
How well at twenty had he fallen or stood!
For three of his four score he did no good.

2

*The Strophe, or Turn*

He entered well by virtuous parts,
Got up, and thrived with honest arts,
He purchased friends, and fame, and honors then,
And had his noble name advanced with men;
But weary of that flight,
He stooped in all men's sight
To sordid flatteries, acts of strife,
And sunk in that dead sea of life,
So deep, as he did then death's waters sup,
But that the cork of title buoyed him up.

*The Antistrophe, or Counter-Turn*

Alas! but Morison fell young!
He never fell, — thou fall'st, my tongue.
He stood a soldier to the last right end,
A perfect patriot and a noble friend;
But most, a virtuous son.
All offices were done
By him, so ample, full, and round,
In weight, in measure, number, sound,
As, though his age imperfect might appear,
His life was of humanity the sphere.

*The Epode, or Stand*

Go now, and tell our days summed up with fears,
And make them years;
Produce thy mass of miseries on the stage,
To swell thine age;
Repeat of things a throng,
To show thou hast been long,
Not lived; for life doth her great actions spell,
By what was done and wrought
In season, and so brought
To light: her measures are, how well
Each syllabe answered, and was formed, how fair;
These make the lines of life, and that's her air!

3

*The Strophe, or Turn*

It is not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make men better be;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sear:
A lily of a day,
Is fairer far, in May,
Although it fall and die that night;
It was the plant and flower of light.
In small proportions we just beauties see;
And in short measures life may perfect be.

*The Antistrophe, or Counter-Turn*

Call, noble Lucius, then, for wine,
And let thy looks with gladness shine;
Accept this garland, plant it on thy head,
And think, nay know, thy Morison's not dead.
He leaped the present age,
Possessed with holy rage,
To see that bright eternal day;
Of which we priests and poets say
Such truths as we expect for happy men;
And there he lives with memory, and Ben ——

*The Epode, or Stand*

Jonson, who sung this of him, ere he went,
Himself, to rest,
Or taste a part of that full joy he meant
To have expressed,
In this bright asterism; [1] —
Where it were friendship's schism,
Were not his Lucius long with us to tarry,
To separate these twi-
Lights, the Dioscuri; [2]
And keep the one half from his Harry.
But fate doth so alternate the design,
Whilst that in heaven, this light on earth must shine, —

4

*The Strophe, or Turn*

And shine as you exalted are;
Two names of friendship, but one star:
Of hearts the union, and those not by chance
Made, or indenture, or leased out t' advance
The profits for a time.
No pleasures vain did chime,
Of rhymes, or riots, at your feasts,
Orgies of drink, or feigned protests;
But simple love of greatness and of good,
That knits brave minds and manners more than blood.

*The Antistrophe, or Counter-Turn*

This made you first to know the why
You liked, then after, to apply

1 constellation.
2 The twins, Castor and Pollux, whom Zeus allowed to live on alternate days after their death.

That liking; and approach so one the t' other,
Till either grew a portion of the other;
Each styled by his end,
The copy of his friend.
You lived to be the great sir-names
And titles by which all made claims
Unto the Virtue: nothing perfect done,
But as a Cary or a Morison.

*The Epode, or Stand*

And such a force the fair example had,
As they that saw
The good and durst not practise it, were glad
That such a law
Was left yet to mankind;
Where they might read and find
Friendship, indeed, was written not in words;
And with the heart, not pen,
Of two so early men,
Whose lines her rolls were, and records;
Who, ere the first down bloomed on the chin,
Had sowed these fruits, and got the harvest in.

## EPITAPH ON ELIZABETH L. H.

Would'st thou hear what man can say
In a little? Reader, stay.

Underneath this stone doth lie
As much beauty as could die:
Which in life did harbor give
To more virtue than doth live.

If at all she had a fault,
Leave it buried in this vault.
One name was Elizabeth,
The other, let it sleep with death!
Fitter, where it died, to tell,
Than that it lived at all. Farewell!

## A FAREWELL TO THE WORLD

False world, good night! since thou hast brought
That hour upon my morn of age;
Henceforth I quit thee for my thought,
My part is ended on thy stage.

Yes, threaten, do. Alas! I fear
As little as I hope from thee:
I know thou canst not show nor bear
More hatred than thou hast to me.

My tender, first, and simple years
Thou didst abuse and then betray;
Since stirred'st up jealousies and fears,
When all the causes were away.

Then in a soil hast planted me
Where breathe the basest of thy fools;
Where envious arts professed be,
And pride and ignorance the schools;

Where nothing is examined, weighed,
But as 'tis rumored, so believed;
Where every freedom is betrayed,
And every goodness taxed or grieved.

But what we're born for, we must bear:
Our frail condition it is such
That what to all may happen here,
If 't chance to me, I must not grutch.[1]

Else I my state should much mistake
To harbor a divided thought
From all my kind — that, for my sake,
There should a miracle be wrought.

No, I do know that I was born
To age, misfortune, sickness, grief:
But I will bear these with that scorn
As shall not need thy false relief.

Nor for my peace will I go far,
As wanderers do, that still do roam;
But make my strengths, such as they are,
Here in my bosom, and at home.

1 murmur, complain.

# THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

# THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The seventeenth century is a many-sided period in the history of English literature. It is the entury of Shakespeare's greatest plays, of the King James version of the Bible, of Bacon, Milton, nd Dryden. It saw the colonization of America, the Civil War and the execution of Charles I, the estoration of the Stuarts, and, toward its close, the introduction of genuine parliamentary gov-rnment through the Declaration of Rights, with William of Orange as king. Ushered in when the magination of the glorious Elizabethan age was at its height, it closed with reason and rules dom-nating literature.

The political life of the century may be briefly summarized. In 1603 Queen Elizabeth died. he was succeeded by the son of Mary, Queen of Scots, James VI of Scotland, who as James I of ngland began the line of English Stuarts. His reign was marked by the rise of the Puritans. In 625 he was succeeded by his son Charles, who followed his father's belief in the divine right of ings. In 1628 Charles I was forced, as a result of his independent acts, to agree to the Petition of ight, which strengthened the power of Parliament and asserted the rights of the people. In spite f this, he continued to rule as he pleased and antagonized the Puritans to such a degree that many f them emigrated to America. In 1642 he refused to obey Parliament, and Civil War broke out. nder Cromwell Parliament was victorious in battle, and in 1649 King Charles I, declared guilty of reason, was beheaded. From 1649 to 1653 Parliament governed the country. This government as called the Commonwealth. In 1653 Parliament relinquished its power to Cromwell, who was ade Lord Protector under the Protectorate. Upon his death in 1658, the power of the Puritans roke up, and in 1660 King Charles II was invited to return to his father's throne. During these ears the Puritans were severe in banishing simple pleasures and making life less colorful, but it ust not be forgotten that they were idealists who deserve endless credit for furthering the cause of eligious toleration, freedom of speech and of the press, and justice in open court.

After 1660 English life and society changed with the return of the Royalists from exile. The way of the Puritan yielded to that of the Cavalier. Somber London of the previous generation gave ay to the "gala day of wit and pleasure, of gallantry and Charles II." Refinement, elegance, and it became gods of the courtiers. Hazlitt's brilliant picture is probably not too far from the truth.

Happy, thoughtless age, when kings and nobles led purely ornamental lives; when the utmost tretch of a morning's study went no farther than the choice of a sword-knot, or the adjustment of side-curl; when the soul spoke out in all the pleasing eloquence of dress; and beaux and belles, namored of themselves in one another's follies, fluttered like gilded butterflies, in giddy mazes, hrough the walks of St. James's Park!"

In the drama, the century saw a rise and fall. At the beginning, Shakespeare was at his best. fter 1611 he apparently retired from the stage, probably in favor of the great collaborators, Beau-ont and Fletcher, who throughout the century were by far the most popular dramatists in Eng-and. Their plays were acted during the Restoration, says Dryden, twice as often as Shake-peare's. Among other playwrights up to 1642, Jonson, Chapman, Heywood, Middleton, Web-ter, Ford, Shirley, and Massinger are the best. Among their many plays stand several undoubted masterpieces, most prominent, Heywood's *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*, and Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*. In general, the theater was passing from he patronage of the common people to a more sophisticated audience composed largely of the ourt. Plots became more licentious, the desire to shock and to be shocked increased, with the re-ult that Puritan antagonism grew rapidly. With the outbreak of the Civil War the theaters were fficially closed by Parliament, and remained so until 1660. Theatrical performances, however, ere given surreptitiously during this period. The old tradition carried on; but, when the theaters ere reopened in 1660, a new type of play quickly developed, largely under the influence of the rench stage with which the Royalists had become acquainted during their exile in France. This as the so-called "heroic drama." Its characteristics were the use of the heroic couplet instead of lank verse; the strict or partial observance of the three unities of time, place, and action; the em-loyment (for the first time on the English stage) of women actors; the preference for gigantic hemes involving love and honor, particularly in an Eastern setting; the elaborate use of scenery, usic, and whatever else would heighten the spectacle — all in a large rectangular auditorium, hich supplanted the much smaller, almost circular theater of Elizabethan days. In heroic tragedy Dryden was the prominent figure. A "minor" writer, Otway, however, produced the ablest ragedy, *Venice Preserved*, 1682, the best tragedy in verse since Webster, or possibly since Shake-peare. But it was in comedy that the Restoration made its great contribution to English drama. arly in the 1660's Etherege won the town with his sprightly, satirical comedies in prose, soon to be ollowed by the splendid prose plays of Wycherley, Vanbrugh, Farquhar, and Congreve, the four

supreme wits of Restoration comedy. Their spirit pervades the best of English comedy, through Fielding, Sheridan, and Goldsmith, down to Wilde and Shaw.

In poetry the century witnessed the change from the imaginative Elizabethan manner to the more artificial formalism of Dryden and Pope. Different in temper as these two poles seem to be, they have, nevertheless, a direct connection in the person of Ben Jonson. He of all the Elizabethans was most classical, most precise in workmanship. Around him gathered a number of rising poets, the "sons of Ben." Those who followed him directly or indirectly in his admiration for Anacreon, Catullus, and Horace, and composed variations on the theme of *carpe diem*, are the Cavalier poets, like Carew, Suckling, Lovelace, and particularly Herrick, most of whom were attached to the court. Those who developed still more intricately his use of "conceits," or far-fetched figures of speech, are the "metaphysical poets." Their leader was Donne, who was exactly the same age as Jonson. Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, and Vaughan produced some of the finest religious and mystical poetry in the language. Another group of writers, who also owed something to Jonson, developed the heroic couplet, the medium of poetic expression for the Restoration period that blank verse had been for the Elizabethan. Chief among them were Edmund Waller and Sir Charles Denham. Cowley, who also wrote couplets, did much to perfect the ode in English. The glory of the period was Milton, a majestic figure in English literature. In him are combined the vigorous imagination of the Elizabethan and the nobility, even the austerity, of the Puritan. In an age when poets were favoring the heroic couplet, he produced the greatest blank verse since Shakespeare. In an age which was becoming more and more rigidly neo-classic, his imagination conceived the sublime *Paradise Lost*.

The Elizabethan era was essentially the age of poetry. The seventeenth century is often called the "age of prose." During the century, especially in the latter half, reason supplanted imagination, and the language of reason is prose. The scientific speculation and philosophizing of Bacon were continued in Burton, Sir Thomas Browne, Thomas Hobbes, and Milton. Thomas Fuller, Richard Baxter, and Jeremy Taylor discussed religion. Izaak Walton wrote his inimitable descriptions of nature and the lives of the poets. The prose fashioned by these writers was worthy of the high standard set by the translators of the King James version of the Bible. It was direct and exact, yet not totally devoid of imagination, and, above all, it had beautiful cadence. Before the close of the century, Dryden, by many considered the father of modern English prose, wrote his critical essays and prefaces, Bunyan his *Pilgrim's Progress*, 1678, 1684, Pepys and Evelyn their diaries, Isaac Newton, *Principia*, 1687, and John Locke, *Essay Concerning the Human Understanding*, 1690. As the century turned, Defoe, Swift, Addison, and Steele were beginning their contributions to the history of English prose.

Good summaries of seventeenth-century literature may be found in J. H. B. Masterman, *The Age of Milton* (Bell), and R. Garnett, *The Age of Dryden* (Bell). For appreciative criticism, see B. Wendell, *The Temper of the Seventeenth Century in English Literature* (Scribners), and E. Gosse, *Seventeenth-Century Studies* (Dodd, Mead & Co.).

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## FRANCIS BACON (1561–1626)

Francis Bacon was born at London January 22, 1561. He was the son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, who occupied the position of Lord Keeper of the Great Seal to Queen Elizabeth. Francis entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1573, where he began his scientific studies. He went on to Gray's Inn, London, where he studied law, and was admitted as barrister. He sought long and earnestly for court patronage under Queen Elizabeth, but though he was supported by the Queen's favorite, the Earl of Essex, he failed of preferment. When the Earl of Essex fell out with the Queen and entered into treasonable designs against her, Bacon deserted him, and at his trial acted as one of the prosecutors. This began his career of court favor, which was continued under James I. He was a member of Parliament. He became Attorney-General in 1613, and five years later Lord Chancellor and Baron Verulam. In 1620, however, he was accused in Parliament of having taken presents from persons whose cases were pending before him, and confessed his guilt. He was sentenced to lose his offices, and pay a heavy fine, which was remitted by the king. He lived in retirement until his death in 1626.

Bacon was a literary man primarily because he used literature as a means to forward his attempt to bring about a new experimental attitude toward knowledge. To this end he wrote his chief work, the *Instauratio Magna*, in Latin, the language of the learned. Part of this forms the English work on *The Advancement of Learning*. Bacon's place in English literature belongs to him by his authorship of the Essays. These appeared in their first form as a "set of dispersed meditations" in 1597. They were only ten in number. They were expanded in style and increased in number to the final edition of fifty-eight in 1625. They are brief comments on life, couched in a style sometimes pithy and sententious, sometimes gorgeous and ornate. They represent the realistic

terest of the age in human life, and reflect its habit of distinction and originality in expression. Bacon's works are collected in the large edition of Ellis, Spedding, and Heath. The Essays have ssed through many modern editions, among which those by E. A. Abbott and Miss Mary Augusta ott may be mentioned. The standard life is by J. Spedding. A brief biography by R. W. urch appears in the English Men of Letters Series. See also Macaulay's essay.

# ESSAYS OR COUNSELS CIVIL AND MORAL

## I

## OF TRUTH

*What is truth?* said jesting Pilate;[1] and ould not stay for an answer. Certainly ere be[2] that delight in giddiness,[3] and count a bondage to fix a belief; affecting free-will thinking, as well as in acting. And though e sects of philosophers of that kind[4] be ne, yet there remain certain discoursing[5] its which are of the same veins, though ere be not so much blood in them as was in ose of the ancients. But it is not only fficulty and labor which men take in finding t of truth; nor again that when it is found imposeth upon men's thoughts; that doth ring lies in favor; but a natural though cor- pt love of the lie itself. One of the later hool[6] of the Grecians examineth the matter d is at a stand to think what should be in , that men should love lies, where neither ey make for pleasure, as with poets, nor for dvantage, as with the merchant; but for the e's sake. But I cannot tell; this same truth a naked and open day-light, that doth not ow the masks and mummeries and tri- mphs of the world, half so stately and aintily as candle-lights. Truth may per- aps come to the price of a pearl, that show- h best by day; but it will not rise to the rice of a diamond or carbuncle, that showeth est in varied lights. A mixture of a lie doth ver add pleasure. Doth any man doubt, hat if there were taken out of men's minds ain opinions, flattering hopes, false valua- ons, imaginations as one would,[7] and the ke, but it would leave the minds of a number f men poor shrunken things, full of melan- oly and indisposition, and unpleasing to emselves? One of the fathers,[8] in great verity, called poesy *vinum dæmonum*,[9] ecause it filleth the imagination; and yet it is but with the shadow of a lie. But it is not the lie that passeth through the mind, but the lie that sinketh in and settleth in it, that doth the hurt; such as we spake of before. But howsoever[1] these things are thus in men's depraved judgments and affections, yet truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth that the inquiry of truth, which is the love-making or wooing of it, the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it, and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it, is the sovereign good of human nature. The first creature of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the sense; the last was the light of reason; and his sabbath work ever since is the illumination of his Spirit. First he breathed light upon the face of the matter or chaos; then he breathed light into the face of man; and still he breatheth and inspireth light into the face of his chosen. The poet[2] that beautified the sect[3] that was otherwise inferior to the rest, saith yet excellently well: *It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore and to see ships tossed upon the sea; a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle and to see a battle and the adventures thereof below: but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of truth* (a hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene), *and to see the errors and wanderings and mists and tempests in the vale below;* so[4] always that this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling or pride. Certainly, it is heaven upon earth, to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn[5] upon the poles of truth.

To pass from theological and philosophical truth to the truth of civil business; it will be acknowledged even by those that practise it not, that clear and round dealing is the honor of man's nature; and that mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth it. For these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the serpent; which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet. There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious. And therefore Mon-

1 John XVIII, 38. 2 there are those.
3 i.e., of thought.
4 The skeptics, who believed that only relative truth as possible.
5 rambling.
6 Lucian, born about 120 A.D., who attacked with satire l the shams of his day.
7 wished. 8 St. Augustine, 354–430 A.D.
9 devil's wine.

1 notwithstanding. 2 Lucretius, 99–55 B.C.
3 The Epicureans 4 provided.
5 The terms are taken from Ptolemaic astronomy.

taigne [1] saith prettily, when he inquired the reason why the word of the lie should be such a disgrace and such an odious charge. Saith he, *If it be well weighed, to say that a man lieth, is as much to say, as that he is brave towards God and a coward towards men.* For a lie faces God, and shrinks from man. Surely the wickedness of falsehood and breach of faith cannot possibly be so highly expressed, as in that it shall be the last peal to call the judgments of God upon the generations of men; it being foretold [2] that when Christ cometh, *he shall not find faith upon the earth.*

## 2

## OF DEATH

Men fear death, as children fear to go in the dark; and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales, so is the other. Certainly, the contemplation of death, as the wages of sin and passage to another world, is holy and religious; but the fear of it, as a tribute due unto nature, is weak. Yet in religious meditations there is sometimes mixture of vanity and of superstition. You shall read in some of the friars' books of mortification,[3] that a man should think with himself what the pain is if he have but his finger's end pressed or tortured, and thereby imagine what the pains of death are, when the whole body is corrupted and dissolved; when many times death passeth with less pain than the torture of a limb; for the most vital parts are not the quickest of sense. And by him [4] that spake only as a philosopher and natural man, it was well said, *Pompa mortis magis terret, quam mors ipsa.*[5] Groans and convulsions, and a discolored face, and friends weeping, and blacks,[6] and obsequies, and the like, show death terrible. It is worthy the observing, that there is no passion in the mind of man so weak, but it mates [7] and masters the fear of death; and therefore death is no such terrible enemy when a man hath so many attendants about him that can win the combat of him. Revenge triumphs over death; love slights it; honor aspireth to it; grief flieth to it; fear pre-occupateth [8] it; nay, we read, after Otho the emperor [9] had slain himself, pity (which is the tenderest of affections) provoked many to die, out of mere compassion to their sovereign, and as the truest sort of followers. Nay, Seneca adds niceness and satiety: *Cogita quamdiu eadem feceris; mori velle, non tantum fortis, aut miser, sed etiam fastidiosus potest.*[1] A man would die, though he were neither valiant nor miserable, only upon a weariness to do the same thing so oft over and over. It is no less worthy to observe, how little alteration in good spirits the approaches of death make; for they appear to be the same men till the last instant. Augustus Cæsar died in a compliment: *Livia, conjugii nostri memor, vive et vale.*[2] Tiberius in dissimulation; as Tacitus saith of him, *Jam Tiberium vires et corpus non dissimulatio, deserebant.*[4] Vespasian in a jest, sitting upon the stool; *Ut puto deus fio.* Galba with a sentence; *Feri, si ex re sit populi Romani;* [6] holding forth his neck. Septimius Severus in despatch; *Adeste si quid mihi restat agendum.*[7] And the like. Certainly the Stoics [8] bestowed too much cost upon death, and by their great preparations made it appear more fearful. Better saith he,[9] *qui finem vitæ extremum inter munera ponat naturæ.*[10] It is as natural to die as to be born; and to a little infant, perhaps, the one is as painful as the other. He that dies in an earnest pursuit, is like one that is wounded in hot blood; who, for the time, scarce feels the hurt; and therefore a mind fixed and bent upon somewhat that is good doth avert the dolors of death. But, above all, believe it, the sweetest canticle is, *Nunc dimittis;* [11] when a man hath obtained worthy ends and expectations. Death hath this also; that it openeth the gate to good fame, and extinguisheth envy. *Extinctus amabitur idem.*[12]

## 5

## OF ADVERSITY

It was an high speech of Seneca (after the manner of the Stoics), *that the good things*

1 The great French essayist and skeptic, 1533–92.
2 St. Luke XVIII, 8. 3 penance.
4 Seneca, Stoic philosopher and dramatist, 4–65 A.D., in his *Epistles.*
5 The surroundings of death are more terrifying than death itself.
6 black clothing. 7 overcomes. 8 anticipates.
9 Marcus Salvius Otho, Roman emperor, 32–69 A.D.

1 Think how long you have done the same things; a man may wish to die, not so much because he is brave or wretched, but because he is tired of living.
2 Livia, remember our marriage, live on, and farewell.
3 The Roman historian, c. 54–C. 116 A.D.
4 Strength and vigor left Tiberius, but not his ability to dissimulate.
5 As I see it, I am becoming a god.
6 Strike, if it be for the good of the Roman people.
7 Be at hand, in case there is anything more for me to do.
8 The Stoics taught resignation.
9 Juvenal, the Roman satirist, of the first century, A.D.
10 Who considers the cessation of life as one of nature's blessings.
11 St. Luke II, 29: Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.
12 The same man who was hated when alive will be loved when he is dead.

*hich belong to prosperity are to be wished; but ie good things that belong to adversity are to be dmired.*[1] *Bona rerum secundarum optabilia; dversarum mirabilia.* Certainly if miracles e the command over nature, they appear nost in adversity. It is yet a higher speech f his than the other (much too high for a eathen), *It is true greatness to have in one the ailty of a man, and the security of a God. ere magnum habere fragilitatem hominis, ecuritatem Dei.* This would have done etter in poesy, where transcendences are nore allowed. And the poets indeed have een busy with it; for it is in effect the thing hich is figured in that strange fiction of the ncient poets, which seemeth not to be with- ut mystery;[2] nay, and to have some ap- roach to the state of a Christian; that *Her- ules, when he went to unbind Prometheus* (by hom human nature is represented), *sailed e length of the great ocean in an earthen pot r pitcher;* lively describing Christian reso- ution, that saileth in the frail bark of the esh through the waves of the world. But speak in a mean.[3] The virtue of prosper- y is temperance; the virtue of adversity is ortitude; which in morals is the more heroi- l virtue. Prosperity is the blessing of the ld Testament; adversity is the blessing of he New; which carrieth the greater benedic- ion, and the clearer revelation of God's avor. Yet even in the Old Testament, if you isten to David's harp,[4] you shall hear as any hearse-like airs as carols; and the encil of the Holy Ghost hath labored more n describing the afflictions of Job than the licities of Solomon. Prosperity is not with- ut many fears and distastes; and adversity not without comforts and hopes. We see needle-works and embroideries, it is more easing to have a lively work upon a sad[5] nd solemn ground, than to have a dark and elancholy work upon a lightsome ground: dge therefore of the pleasure of the heart by he pleasure of the eye. Certainly virtue is ke precious odors, most fragrant when they e incensed or crushed: for prosperity doth est discover vice, but adversity doth best iscover virtue.

## 7

### OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN

The joys of parents are secret; and so are heir griefs and fears. They cannot utter the he; nor they will not utter the other. Chil- dren sweeten labors; but they make misfortunes more bitter. They increase the cares of life; but they mitigate the remembrance of death. The perpetuity by generation is common to beasts; but memory, merit, and noble works are proper to men. And surely a man shall see the noblest works and foundations have proceeded from childless men; which have sought to express the images of their minds, where those of their bodies have failed. So the care of posterity is most in them that have no posterity. They that are the first raisers of their houses are most indulgent towards their children; beholding them as the continuance not only of their kind but of their work; and so both children and creatures.

The difference in affection of parents towards their several children is many times unequal; and sometimes unworthy; especially in the mother; as Solomon saith, *A wise son rejoiceth the father, but an ungracious son shames the mother.* A man shall see, where there is a house full of children, one or two of the eldest respected, and the youngest made wantons;[2] but in the midst some that are as it were forgotten, who many times nevertheless prove the best. The illiberality of parents in allowance towards their children is an harmful error; makes them base; acquaints them with shifts; makes them sort with mean company; and makes them surfeit more when they come to plenty. And therefore the proof is best, when men keep their authority towards their children, but not their purse. Men have a foolish manner (both parents and schoolmasters and servants) in creating and breeding an emulation between brothers during childhood, which many times sorteth to discord when they are men, and disturbeth families. The Italians make little difference between children and nephews or near kinsfolks; but so they be of the lump, they care not though they pass not through their own body. And, to say truth, in nature it is much a like matter; insomuch that we see a nephew sometimes resembleth an uncle or a kinsman more than his own parent; as the blood happens. Let parents choose betimes the vocations and courses they mean their children should take; for then they are most flexible; and let them not too much apply themselves to the disposition of their children, as thinking they will take best to that which they have most

1 wondered at. 2 underlying meaning.
3 directly, simply. 4 The Psalms. 5 dark.

1 Proverbs, x, 1.
2 spoiled children; etymologically, *wanton* is the equivalent of modern German *ungezogen* (*untrained*).

mind to. It is true, that if the affection [1] or aptness of the children be extraordinary, then it is good not to cross it; but generally the precept is good, *optimum elige, suave et facile illud faciet consuetudo.*[2] Younger brothers are commonly fortunate, but seldom or never where the elder are disinherited.

## 8

### OF MARRIAGE AND SINGLE LIFE

He that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune; for they are impediments to great enterprises, either of virtue or mischief. Certainly the best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men; which both in affection and means have married and endowed the public. Yet it were great reason that those that have children should have greatest care of future times; unto which they know they must transmit their dearest pledges. Some there are, who though they lead a single life, yet their thoughts do end with themselves, and account future times impertinences. Nay, there are some other that account wife and children but as bills of charges. Nay more, there are some foolish rich covetous men, that take a pride in having no children, because they may be thought so much the richer. For perhaps they have heard some talk, *Such an one is a great rich man*, and another except to it, *Yea, but he hath a great charge of children;* as if it were an abatement to his riches. But the most ordinary cause of a single life is liberty, especially in certain self-pleasing and humorous [3] minds, which are so sensible of every restraint, as they will go near to think their girdles and garters to be bonds and shackles. Unmarried men are best friends, best masters, best servants; but not always best subjects; for they are light to run away; and almost all fugitives are of that condition. A single life doth well with churchmen; for charity will hardly water the ground where it must first fill a pool. It is indifferent for judges and magistrates; for if they be facile and corrupt, you shall have a servant five times worse than a wife. For soldiers, I find the generals commonly in their hortatives put men in mind of their wives and children; and I think the despising of marriage amongst the Turks maketh the vulgar soldier more base. Certainly wife and children are a kind of discipline of humanity; and single men though they may be many times more charitable, because their means are less exhaust, yet, on the other side, they are more cruel and hardhearted (good to make severe inquisitors), because their tenderness is not so often called upon. Grave natures, led by custom, and therefore constant, are commonly loving husbands, as was said of Ulysses, *vetulam suam prætulit immortalitati.*[1] Chaste women are often proud and froward, as presuming upon the merit of their chastity. It is one of the best bonds both of chastity and obedience in the wife, if she think her husband wise; which she will never do if she find him jealous. Wives are young men's mistresses, companions for middle age, and old men's nurses. So as a man may have a quarrel [2] to marry when he will. But yet he [3] was reputed one of the wise men, that made answer to the question, when a man should marry — *A young man not yet, an elder man not at all.* It is often seen that bad husbands have very good wives; whether it be that it raiseth the price of their husband's kindness when it comes; or that the wives take a pride in their patience. But this never fails, if the bad husbands were of their own choosing, against their friends' consent; for then they will be sure to make good their own folly.

1 tendency.
2 Choose the best; custom will make it pleasant and easy.
3 capricious.

1 He preferred his aged wife to immortality.
2 reason.
3 Thales, the Greek philosopher, 640–546 B.C.

## 10

### OF LOVE

The stage is more beholding to love, than the life of man. For as to the stage, love is ever matter of comedies, and now and then of tragedies; but in life it doth much mischief; sometimes like a siren, sometimes like a fury. You may observe that amongst all the great and worthy persons (whereof the memory remaineth, either ancient or recent) there is not one that hath been transported to the mad degree of love: which shows that great spirits and great business do keep out this weak passion. You must except nevertheless Marcus Antonius,[4] the half partner of the empire of Rome, and Appius Claudius,[5] the decemvir and lawgiver; whereof the former was indeed a voluptuous man, and inordinate; but the latter was an austere and wise man: and therefore it seems (though rarely) that love can find entrance not only into an open heart, but also into a heart well

4 The lover of Cleopatra.
5 Who was in love with Virginia, a plebeian.

ortified, if watch be not well kept. It is a oor saying of Epicurus,[1] *Satis magnum alter lteri theatrum sumus;*[2] as if man, made for he contemplation of heaven and all noble bjects, should do nothing but kneel before little idol, and make himself a subject, hough not of the mouth (as beasts are), yet f the eye; which was given him for higher urposes. It is a strange thing to note the xcess of this passion, and how it braves the ature and value of things, by this; that the peaking in a perpetual hyperbole is comely n nothing but in love. Neither is it merely n the phrase; for whereas it hath been well aid that the arch-flatterer, with whom all he petty flatterers have intelligence, is a an's self; certainly the lover is more. For here was never proud man thought so aburdly well of himself as the lover doth of erson loved; and therefore it was well said, *hat it is impossible to love and to be wise.* Neither doth this weakness appear to others nly, and not to the party loved; but to the oved most of all, except the love be recipoque.[3] For it is a true rule, that love is ever ewarded either with the reciproque or with n inward and secret contempt. By how uch the more men ought to beware of this assion, which loseth not only other things, ut itself! As for the other losses, the poet's elation doth well figure them: that he[4] that referred Helena quitted the gifts of Juno nd Pallas. For whosoever esteemeth too uch of amorous affection quitteth both iches and wisdom. This passion hath his oods in the very times of weakness; which re great prosperity and great adversity; hough this latter hath been less observed: oth which times kindle love, and make it ore fervent, and therefore show it to be the hild of folly. They do best, who if they annot but admit love, yet make it keep uarter;[5] and sever it wholly from their erious affairs and actions of life; for if it heck[6] once with business, it troubleth men's ortunes, and maketh men that they can no ays be true to their own ends. I know not ow, but martial men are given to love: I hink it is but as they are given to wine; for erils commonly ask to be paid in pleasures. here is in man's nature a secret inclination nd motion towards love of others, which if be not spent upon some one or a few, doth aturally spread itself towards many, and maketh men become humane and charitable; as it is seen sometime in friars. Nuptial love maketh mankind; friendly love perfecteth it; but wanton love corrupteth and embaseth it.

1 The Greek philosopher, 342–270 B.C., who believed hat the greatest good is pleasure.
2 We are a big enough show to one another.
3 reciprocal. 4 Paris.
5 keep its place. 6 interfere.

## II

## OF GREAT PLACE

Men in great place are thrice servants: servants of the sovereign or state; servants of fame; and servants of business. So as they have no freedom; neither in their persons, nor in their actions, nor in their times. It is a strange desire, to seek power and to lose liberty: or to seek power over others and to lose power over a man's self. The rising unto place is laborious; and by pains men come to greater pains; and it is sometimes base; and by indignities men come to dignities. The standing is slippery, and the regress is either a downfall, or at least an eclipse, which is a melancholy thing. *Cum non sis qui fueris, non esse cur velis vivere.*[1] Nay, retire men cannot when they would, neither will they when it were reason; but are impatient of privateness, even in age and sickness, which require the shadow; like old townsmen, that will be still sitting at their street door, though thereby they offer age to scorn. Certainly great persons had need to borrow other men's opinions, to think themselves happy; for if they judge by their own feeling, they cannot find it: but if they think with themselves what other men think of them, and that other men would fain be as they are, then they are happy as it were by report; when perhaps they find the contrary within. For they are the first that find their own griefs, though they be the last that find their own faults. Certainly men in great fortunes are strangers to themselves, and while they are in the puzzle of business they have no time to tend their health either of body or mind. *Illi mors gravis incubat, qui notus nimis omnibus, ignotus moritur sibi.*[2] In place there is license to do good and evil; whereof the latter is a curse: for in evil the best condition is not to will; the second, not to can.[3] But power to do good is the true and lawful end of aspiring. For good thoughts (though God accept them) yet towards men are little better than good dreams, except they be put in act; and that cannot be

1 Since you are not what you were, there is no reason why you should desire to live.
2 Death is a sad misfortune to him who dies too well known to everybody, but unknown to himself.
3 know, know how.

without power and place, as the vantage and commanding ground. Merit and good works is the end of man's motion; and conscience [1] of the same is the accomplishment of man's rest. For if a man can be partaker of God's theatre, he shall likewise be partaker of God's rest. *Et conversus Deus, ut aspiceret opera quæ fecerunt manus suæ, vidit quod omnia essent bona nimis;* [2] and then the sabbath. In the discharge of thy place set before thee the best examples; for imitation is a globe of precepts. And after a time set before thee thine own example; and examine thyself strictly whether thou didst not best at first. Neglect not also the examples of those that have carried themselves ill in the same place; not to set off thyself by taxing their memory, but to direct thyself what to avoid. Reform therefore, without bravery [3] or scandal of former times and persons; but yet set it down to thyself as well to create good precedents as to follow them. Reduce things to the first institution, and observe wherein and how they have degenerate; but yet ask counsel of both times; of the ancient time, what is best; and of the latter time, what is fittest. Seek to make thy course regular, that men may know beforehand what they may expect; but be not too positive and peremptory; and express thyself well when thou digressest from thy rule. Preserve the right of thy place; but stir not questions of jurisdiction: and rather assume thy right in silence and *de facto*,[4] than voice it with claims and challenges. Preserve likewise the rights of inferior places; and think it more honor to direct in chief than to be busy in all. Embrace and invite helps and advices touching the execution of thy place; and do not drive away such as bring thee information, as meddlers; but accept of them in good part. The vices of authority are chiefly four: delays, corruption, roughness, and facility.[5] For delays: give easy access; keep times appointed; go through with that which is in hand, and interlace not business but of necessity. For corruption: do not only bind thine own hands or thy servants' hands from taking, but bind the hands of suitors also from offering. For integrity used doth the one; but integrity professed, and with a manifest detestation of bribery, doth the other. And avoid not only the fault, but the suspicion. Whosoever is found variable, and changeth manifestly without manifest cause, giveth suspicion of corruption. Therefore always when thou changest thine opinion or course profess it plainly, and declare it, together with the reasons that move thee to change; and do not think to steal [1] it. A servant or a favorite, if he be inward, and no other apparent cause of esteem, is commonly thought but a by-way to close [2] corruption. For roughness: it is a needless cause of discontent: severity breedeth fear, but roughness breedeth hate. Even reproofs from authority ought to be grave, and not taunting. As for facility: it is worse than bribery. For bribes come but now and then; but if importunity or idle respects lead a man, he shall never be without. As Solomon saith,[3] *To respect persons is not good; for such a man will transgress for a piece of bread.* It is most true that was anciently spoken, *A place showeth the man.* And it showeth some to the better, and some to the worse. *Omnium consensu capax imperii, nisi imperasset,*[4] saith Tacitus of Galba; but of Vespasian he saith, *Solus imperantium, Vespasianus mutatus in melius;* [5] though the one was meant of sufficiency,[6] the other of manners and affection. It is an assured sign of a worthy and generous spirit, whom honor amends. For honor is, or should be, the place of virtue; and as in nature things move violently to their place and calmly in their place, so virtue in ambition is violent, in authority settled and calm. All rising to great place is by a winding stair; and if there be factions, it is good to side a man's self whilst he is in the rising, and to balance himself when he is placed. Use the memory of thy predecessor fairly and tenderly; for if thou dost not, it is a debt will sure be paid when thou art gone. If thou have colleagues, respect them, and rather call them when they look not for it, than exclude them when they have reason to look to be called. Be not too sensible or too remembering of thy place in conversation and private answers to suitors; but let it rather be said, *When he sits in place he is another man.*

1 consciousness.
2 And God turned to gaze upon the works which his hands had made, and he saw that they were all very good.
3 bravado. 4 as a matter of course.
5 softness, lack of backbone.

## 12

## OF BOLDNESS

It is a trivial grammar-school text, but yet worthy a wise man's consideration.

1 hide. 2 secret. 3 Proverbs, XXVIII, 21.
4 A man whom everybody would have considered as able to govern, if he had not been an emperor.
5 Vespasian was the only emperor who changed for the better.
6 capacity, ability.

uestion was asked of Demosthenes,[1] *what as the chief part of an orator?* he answered, *tion;* what next? *action;* what next again? *tion.* He said it that knew it best, and had y nature himself no advantage in that he mmended. A strange thing, that that part an orator which is but superficial, and ther the virtue of a player, should be laced so high, above those other noble parts invention, elocution, and the rest; nay most alone, as if it were all in all. But the ason is plain. There is in human nature enerally more of the fool than of the wise; nd therefore those faculties by which the olish part of men's minds is taken are most otent. Wonderful like is the case of bold- ess, in civil business: what first? boldness; hat second and third? boldness. And yet oldness is a child of ignorance and baseness, r inferior to other parts. But nevertheless doth fascinate and bind hand and foot hose that are either shallow in judgment or eak in courage, which are the greatest art; yea and prevaileth with wise men at eak times. Therefore we see it hath done onders in popular states; but with senates nd princes less; and more ever upon the rst entrance of bold persons into action than on after; for boldness is an ill keeper of romise. Surely as there are mountebanks r the natural body, so are there mounte- anks for the politic body; men that under- ake great cures, and perhaps have been cky in two or three experiments, but want he grounds of science, and therefore cannot old out. Nay, you shall see a bold fellow any times do Mahomet's miracle. Ma- omet made the people believe that he would all an hill to him, and from the top of it ffer up his prayers for the observers of his aw. The people assembled; Mahomet alled the hill to come to him, again and gain; and when the hill stood still, he was ever a whit abashed, but said, *If the hill will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet will go o the hill.* So these men, when they have romised great matters and failed most hamefully, yet (if they have the perfection f boldness) they will but slight it over, and make a turn, and no more ado. Certainly o men of great judgment, bold persons are sport to behold; nay and to the vulgar lso, boldness has somewhat of the ridicu- ous. For if absurdity be the subject of aughter, doubt you not but great boldness s seldom without some absurdity. Es- ecially it is a sport to see, when a bold fellow is out of countenance; for that puts his face into a most shrunken and wooden posture; as needs it must; for in bashfulness the spirits do a little go and come; but with bold men, upon like occasion, they stand at a stay; like a stale[1] at chess, where it is no mate, but yet the game cannot stir. But this last were fitter for a satire than for a serious observation. This is well to be weighed; that boldness is ever blind; for it seeth not dangers and inconveniences. Therefore it is ill in counsel, good in execution; so that the right use of bold persons is, that they never command in chief, but be seconds, and under the direction of others. For in counsel it is good to see dangers; and in execution not to see them, except they be very great.

1 The great Greek orator, 384–322 B.C.

## 17

### OF SUPERSTITION

It were better to have no opinion of God at all, than such an opinion as is unworthy of him. For the one is unbelief, the other is contumely; and certainly superstition is the reproach of the Deity. Plutarch[2] saith well to that purpose: *Surely* (saith he) *I had rather a great deal men should say there was no such man at all as Plutarch, than that they should say that there was one Plutarch that would eat his children as soon as they were born;* as the poets speak of Saturn. And as the contumely is greater towards God, so the danger is greater towards men. Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation; all which may be guides to an outward moral virtue, though religion were not; but superstition dismounts all these, and erecteth an absolute monarchy in the minds of men. Therefore atheism did never perturb states; for it makes men wary of themselves, as looking no further: and we see the times inclined to atheism (as the time of Augustus Cæsar) were civil[3] times. But superstition hath been the confusion of many states, and bringeth in a new *primum mobile,*[4] that ravisheth all the spheres of government. The master of superstition is the people; and in all superstition wise men follow fools; and arguments are fitted to practice, in a reversed order. It was gravely said by some of the prelates

1 stalemate, a situation in chess where the king is unable to move without moving into check.

2 Greek historian of the first century A.D., author of the famous *Lives* and the *Morals*, essays from which Bacon derived much.

3 peaceful.

4 In Ptolemaic astronomy, the outermost revolving sphere which enclosed the universe.

in the Council of Trent,[1] where the doctrine of the Schoolmen bare great sway, *that the Schoolmen were like astronomers, which did feign eccentrics and epicycles, and such engines [2] of orbs, to save the phenomena;* [3] *though they knew there were no such things;* and in like manner, that the Schoolmen had framed a number of subtle and intricate axioms and theorems, to save the practice of the church. The causes of superstition are: pleasing and sensual rites and ceremonies; excess of outward and pharisaical holiness; over-great reverence of traditions, which cannot but load the church; the stratagems of prelates for their own ambition and lucre; the favoring too much of good intentions, which openeth the gate to conceits and novelties; the taking an aim at divine matters by human, which cannot but breed mixture of imaginations: and, lastly, barbarous times, especially joined with calamities and disasters. Superstition, without a veil, is a deformed thing; for as it addeth deformity to an ape to be so like a man, so the similitude of superstition to religion makes it the more deformed. And as wholesome meat corrupteth to little worms, so good forms and orders corrupt into a number of petty observances. There is a superstition in avoiding superstition, when men think to do best if they go furthest from the superstition formerly received; therefore care would be had that (as it fareth in ill purgings) the good be not taken away with the bad; which commonly is done when the people is the reformer.

## 18

### OF TRAVEL

Travel, in the younger sort, is a part of education, in the elder, a part of experience. He that travelleth into a country before he hath some entrance into the language, goeth to school, and not to travel. That young men travel under some tutor, or grave servant, I allow [4] well; so that he be such a one that hath the language, and hath been in the country before; whereby he may be able to tell them what things are worthy to be seen in the country where they go; what acquaintances they are to seek; what exercises or discipline the place yieldeth. For else young men shall go hooded, and look abroad little. It is a strange thing, that in sea voyages where there is nothing to be seen but sky and sea, men should make diaries; but in land travel, wherein so much is to be observed, for the most part they omit it; as if chance were fitter to be registered than observation. Let diaries therefore be brought in use. The things to be seen and observed are: the courts of princes, specially when they give audience to ambassadors; the courts of justice, while they sit and hear causes; and so of consistories ecclesiastic; the churches and monasteries, with the monuments which are therein extant; the walls and fortifications of cities and towns, and so the havens and harbors; antiquities and ruins; libraries; colleges, disputations, and lectures, where any are; shipping and navies; houses and gardens of state and pleasure, near great cities; armories; arsenals; magazines; exchanges; burses; warehouses; exercises of horsemanship, fencing, training of soldiers, and the like; comedies, such whereunto the better sort of persons do resort; treasuries of jewels and robes; cabinets and rarities; and, to conclude, whatsoever is memorable in the places where they go. After all which the tutors or servants ought to make diligent inquiry. As for triumphs, masks, feasts, weddings, funerals, capital executions, and such shows, men need not to be put in mind of them; yet are they not to be neglected. If you will have a young man to put his travel into a little room, and in short time to gather much, this you must do. First, as was said, he must have some entrance into the language before he goeth. Then he must have such a servant or tutor as knoweth the country, as was likewise said. Let him carry with him also some card [1] or book describing the country where he travelleth; which will be a good key to his inquiry. Let him keep also a diary. Let him not stay long in one city or town; more or less as the place deserveth, but not long; nay, when he stayeth in one city or town, let him change his lodging from one end and part of the town to another; which is a great adamant [2] of acquaintance. Let him sequester himself from the company of his countrymen, and diet in such places where there is good company of the nation where he travelleth. Let him, upon his removes from one place to another, procure recommendation to some person of quality residing in the place whither he removeth; that he may use his favor in those things he desireth to see or know. Thus he may abridge his travel with much profit.

1 This council, 1545–63, decided against the reforms of the Protestants.
2 devices.
3 That is, medieval philosophers simply invented theories to explain the causes of natural phenomena which they did not understand.
4 approve.

1 chart. 2 lodestone.

As for the acquaintance which is to be sought in travel; that which is most of all profitable is acquaintance with the secretaries and employed men of ambassadors: for so in travelling in one country he shall suck the experience of many. Let him also see and visit eminent persons in all kinds, which are of great name abroad; that he may be able to tell how the life agreeth with the fame. For quarrels, they are with care and discretion to be avoided. They are commonly for mistresses, healths,[1] place, and words. And let a man beware how he keepeth company with choleric and quarrelsome persons; for they will engage him into their own quarrels. When a traveller returneth home, let him not leave the countries where he hath travelled altogether behind him; but maintain a correspondence by letters with those of his acquaintance which are of most worth. And let his travel appear rather in his discourse than in his apparel or gesture; and in his discourse let him be rather advised in his answers, than forwards to tell stories; and let it appear that he doth not change his country manners for those of foreign parts; but only prick in some flowers of that he hath learned abroad into the customs of his own country.

## 23

## OF WISDOM FOR A MAN'S SELF

An ant is a wise creature for itself, but it is a shrewd[2] thing in an orchard or garden. And certainly men that are great lovers of themselves waste the public. Divide with reason between self-love and society; and be so true to thyself, as thou be not false to others; specially to thy king and country. It is a poor centre of a man's actions, *himself*. It is right earth. For that only stands fast upon his own centre;[3] whereas all things that have affinity with the heavens move upon the centre of another, which they benefit. The referring of all to a man's self is more tolerable in a sovereign prince; because themselves are not only themselves, but their good and evil is at the peril of the public fortune. But it is a desperate evil in a servant to a prince, or a citizen in a republic. For whatsoever affairs pass such a man's hands, he crooketh them to his own ends; which must needs be often eccentric to the ends of his master or state. Therefore let princes, or states, choose such servants as have not this mark; except they mean their service should be made but the accessory. That which maketh the effect more pernicious is that all proportion is lost. It were disproportion enough for the servant's good to be preferred before the master's; but yet it is a greater extreme, when a little good of the servant shall carry things against a great good of the master's. And yet that is the case of bad officers, treasurers, ambassadors, generals, and other false and corrupt servants; which set a bias[1] upon their bowl, of their own petty ends and envies, to the overthrow of their master's great and important affairs. And for the most part, the good such servants receive is after the model of their own fortune; but the hurt they sell for that good is after the model of their master's fortune. And certainly it is the nature of extreme self-lovers, as they will set an house on fire, and it were but to roast their eggs; and yet these men many times hold credit with their masters, because their study is but to please them and profit themselves; and for either respect they will abandon the good of their affairs.

Wisdom for a man's self is, in many branches thereof, a depraved thing. It is the wisdom of rats, that will be sure to leave a house somewhat before it fall. It is the wisdom of the fox, that thrusts out the badger, who digged and made room for him. It is the wisdom of crocodiles, that shed tears when they would devour. But that which is specially to be noted is, that those which (as Cicero says of Pompey) are *sui amantes, sine rivali*[2] are many times unfortunate. And whereas they have all their times sacrificed to themselves, they become in the end themselves sacrifices to the inconstancy of fortune, whose wings they thought by their self-wisdom to have pinioned.

## 27

## OF FRIENDSHIP

It had been hard for him[3] that spake it to have put more truth and untruth together in few words, than in that speech, *Whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a god.* For it is most true that a natural and secret hatred and aversation towards[4] society in any man, hath somewhat of the savage beast; but it is most untrue that it should have any character at all of the divine na-

1 drinking of healths. 2 injurious.
3 Bacon follows the Ptolemaic system of astronomy: i.e., that the earth was the center of the universe.

1 Lead put in the side of a bowling ball to prevent its rolling true.
2 lovers of themselves, without a rival.
3 Aristotle, in his *Politics*. 4 aversion to.

ture; except it proceed, not out of a pleasure in solitude, but out of a love and desire to sequester a man's self for a higher conversation: such as is found to have been falsely and feignedly in some of the heathen; as Epimenides the Candian, Numa the Roman, Empedocles the Sicilian, and Apollonius [1] of Tyana; and truly and really in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the church. But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth. For a crowd is not company; and faces are but a gallery of pictures; and talk but a tinkling cymbal,[2] where there is no love. The Latin adage meeteth with it a little: *Magna civitas, magna solitudo;* [3] because in a great town friends are scattered; so that there is not that fellowship, for the most part, which is in less neighborhoods. But we may go further, and affirm most truly that it is a mere [4] and miserable solitude to want true friends; without which the world is but a wilderness; and even in this sense also of solitude, whosoever in the frame of his nature and affections is unfit for friendship, he taketh it of the beast, and not from humanity.

A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fulness and swellings of the heart, which fashions of all kinds do cause and induce. We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous in the body; and it is not much otherwise in the mind; you may take sarza [5] to open the liver, steel to open the spleen, flowers of sulphur for the lungs, castoreum for the brain; but no receipt openeth the heart, but a true friend; to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession.

It is a strange thing to observe how high a rate great kings and monarchs do set upon this fruit of friendship whereof we speak: so great, as they purchase it many times at the hazard of their own safety and greatness. For princes, in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants, cannot gather this fruit, except (to make themselves capable thereof) they raise some persons to be as it were companions and almost equals to themselves, which many times sorteth to inconvenience. The modern languages give unto such persons the name of favorites, or privadoes; [1] as if it were matter of grace, or conversation. But the Roman name attaineth the true use and cause thereof, naming them *participes curarum;* [2] for it is that which tieth the knot. And we see plainly that this hath been done, not by weak and passionate princes only, but by the wisest and most politic that ever reigned; who have oftentimes joined to themselves some of their servants; whom both themselves have called friends, and allowed others likewise to call them in the same manner; using the word which is received between private men.

L. Sylla, when he commanded Rome, raised Pompey (after surnamed the Great) to that height, that Pompey vaunted himself for Sylla's over-match. For when he had carried the consulship for a friend of his, against the pursuit of Sylla, and that Sylla did a little resent thereat, and began to speak great, Pompey turned upon him again, and in effect bade him be quiet; *for that more men adored the sun rising than the sun setting.* With Julius Cæsar, Decimus Brutus had obtained that interest, as he set him down in his testament for heir in remainder after his nephew. And this was the man that had power with him to draw him forth to his death. For when Cæsar would have discharged the senate, in regard of some ill presages, and specially a dream of Calpurnia; this man lifted him gently by the arm out of his chair, telling him he hoped he would not dismiss the senate till his wife had dreamt a better dream. And it seemeth his favor was so great, as Antonius, in a letter which is recited *verbatim* in one of Cicero's Philippics, calleth him *venefica, witch;* as if he had enchanted Cæsar. Augustus raised Agrippa (though of mean birth) to that height, as when he consulted with Mæcenas [3] about the marriage of his daughter Julia, Mæcenas took the liberty to tell him, *that he must either marry his daughter to Agrippa, or take away his life; there was no third way, he had made him so great.* With Tiberius Cæsar, Sejanus had ascended to that height, as they two were termed and reckoned as a pair of friends. Tiberius in a letter to him saith, *Hæc pro amicitiâ nostrâ non occultavi;* [4] and the whole senate dedicated an altar to Friendship, as to a goddess, in respect of the great dearness of friendship between them

1 All of these ancient philosophers and poets professed to love solitude. Numa was the second king of Rome; for Empedocles, the Greek philosopher and poet of Sicily (490–430 B.C.), see Matthew Arnold's poem.

2 I Corinthians, XIII, 1.

3 A great city is great solitude.

4 absolute. 5 sarsaparilla.

1 confidants, comrades. 2 partners in cares.

3 The Roman statesman of the first century B.C., immortal as the patron of Virgil and Horace.

4 On account of our friendship, I have not concealed these matters (from you).

two. The like or more was between Septimius Severus and Plautianus. For he forced his eldest son to marry the daughter of Plautianus; and would often maintain Plautianus in doing affronts to his son; and did write also in a letter to the senate, by these words: *I love the man so well, as I wish he may over-live*[1] *me.* Now if these princes had been as a Trajan or a Marcus Aurelius, a man might have thought that this had proceeded of an abundant goodness of nature; but being men so wise, of such strength and severity of mind, and so extreme lovers of themselves, as all these were, it proveth most plainly that they found their own felicity though as great as ever happened to mortal men) but as an half piece, except they mought have a friend to make it entire; and yet, which is more, they were princes that had wives, sons, nephews; and yet all these could not supply the comfort of friendship.

It is not to be forgotten what Comineus[2] observeth of his first master, Duke Charles[3] the Hardy; namely, that he would communicate his secrets with none; and least of all, those secrets which troubled him most. Whereupon he goeth on and saith that towards his latter time *that closeness did impair and a little perish his understanding.* Surely Comineus mought have made the same judgment also, if it had pleased him, of his second master, Lewis the Eleventh,[4] whose closeness was indeed his tormentor. The parable of Pythagoras[5] is dark, but true; *Cor ne edito: Eat not the heart.* Certainly, if a man would give it a hard phrase, those that want friends to open themselves unto are cannibals of their own hearts. But one thing is most admirable (wherewith I will conclude this first fruit of friendship), which is, that this communicating of a man's self to his friend works two contrary effects; for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves. For there is no man that imparteth his joys to his friend, but he joyeth the more; and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less. So that it is in truth of operation upon a man's mind, of like virtue as the alchemists use to attribute to their stone[6] for man's body; that it worketh all contrary effects, but still to the good and benefit of nature. But yet without praying in aid of alchemists, there is a manifest image of this in the ordinary course of nature. For in bodies, union strengtheneth and cherisheth any natural action; and on the other side weakeneth and dulleth any violent impression: and even so it is of minds.

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections. For friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections, from storm and tempests; but it maketh daylight in the understanding, out of darkness and confusion of thoughts. Neither is this to be understood only of faithful counsel, which a man receiveth from his friend; but before you come to that, certain it is that whosoever hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up, in the communicating and discoursing with another; he tosseth his thoughts more easily; he marshalleth them more orderly; he seeth how they look when they are turned into words: finally, he waxeth wiser than himself; and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation. It was well said by Themistocles to the king of Persia, *That speech was like cloth of Arras, opened and put abroad; whereby the imagery doth appear in figure; whereas in thoughts they lie but as in packs.*[1] Neither is this second fruit of friendship, in opening the understanding, restrained only to such friends as are able to give a man counsel; (they indeed are best;) but even without that, a man learneth of himself, and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not. In a word, a man were better relate himself to a statua or picture, than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother.

Add now, to make this second fruit of friendship complete, that other point which lieth more open and falleth within vulgar[2] observation; which is faithful counsel from a friend. Heraclitus[3] saith well in one of his enigmas, *Dry light is ever the best.* And certain it is, that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from another is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment; which is ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. So as there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer. For there is no such flatterer as is a man's self; and

1 outlive.
2 The French historian, Philippe de Comines, d. 1519.
3 Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, 1433–77.
4 King of France, 1461–83. (He appears in Scott's *Quentin Durward.*)
5 The Greek mathematician of the sixth century B.C.
6 The philosopher's stone.

1 i.e., when the cloth is not spread out.
2 common.
3 The Greek philosopher, c. 535–475 B.C.

there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend. Counsel is of two sorts: the one concerning manners, the other concerning business. For the first, the best preservative to keep the mind in health is the faithful admonition of a friend. The calling of a man's self to a strict account is a medicine, sometime, too piercing and corrosive. Reading good books of morality is a little flat and dead. Observing our faults in others is sometimes improper for our case. But the best receipt (best, I say, to work, and best to take) is the admonition of a friend. It is a strange thing to behold what gross errors and extreme absurdities many (especially of the greater sort) do commit, for want of a friend to tell them of them; to the great damage both of their fame and fortune: for, as St. James saith,[1] they are as men *that look sometimes into a glass, and presently forget their own shape and favor.* As for business, a man may think, if he will, that two eyes see no more than one; or that a gamester seeth always more than a looker-on; or that a man in anger is as wise as he that hath said over the four and twenty[2] letters; or that a musket may be shot off as well upon the arm as upon a rest; and such other fond[3] and high imaginations, to think himself all in all. But when all is done, the help of good counsel is that which setteth business straight. And if any man think that he will take counsel, but it shall be by pieces; asking counsel in one business of one man, and in another business of another man; it is well (that is to say, better perhaps than if he asked none at all); but he runneth two dangers: one, that he shall not be faithfully counselled; for it is a rare thing, except it be from a perfect and entire friend, to have counsel given, but such as shall be bowed and crooked to some ends which he hath that giveth it. The other, that he shall have counsel given, hurtful and unsafe (though with good meaning), and mixed partly of mischief and partly of remedy; even as if you would call a physician that is thought good for the cure of the disease you complain of, but is unacquainted with your body; and therefore may put you in way for a present cure, but overthroweth your health in some other kind; and so cure the disease and kill the patient. But a friend that is wholly acquainted with a man's estate will beware, by furthering any present business, how he dasheth upon other inconvenience. And therefore rest not upon scattered counsels; they will rather distract and mislead, than settle and direct.

After these two noble fruits of friendship (peace in the affections, and support of the judgment), followeth the last fruit; which is like the pomegranate, full of many kernels; I mean aid and bearing a part in all actions and occasions. Here the best way to represent to life the manifold use of friendship is to cast and see how many things there are which a man cannot do himself; and then it will appear that it was a sparing speech of the ancients, to say, *that a friend is another himself;* for that a friend is far more than himself. Men have their time, and die many times in desire of some things which they principally take to heart; the bestowing of a child, the finishing of a work, or the like. If a man have a true friend, he may rest almost secure that the care of those things will continue after him. So that a man hath, as it were, two lives in his desires. A man hath a body, and that body is confined to a place; but where friendship is, all offices of life are as it were granted to him and his deputy. For he may exercise them by his friend. How many things are there which a man cannot, with any face or comeliness, say or do himself? A man can scarce allege his own merits with modesty, much less extol them; a man cannot sometimes brook to supplicate or beg; and a number of the like. But all these things are graceful in a friend's mouth, which are blushing in a man's own. So again, a man's person hath many proper relations which he cannot put off. A man cannot speak to his son but as a father; to his wife but as a husband; to his enemy but upon terms: whereas a friend may speak as the case requires, and not as it sorteth with the person. But to enumerate these things were endless; I have given the rule, where a man cannot fitly play his own part; if he have not a friend, he may quit the stage.

## 28

### OF EXPENSE

Riches are for spending, and spending for honor and good actions. Therefore extraordinary expense must be limited by the worth of the occasion; for voluntary undoing may be as well for a man's country as for the kingdom of heaven. But ordinary expense ought to be limited by a man's estate; and governed with such regard, as it be within his compass; and not subject to deceit and

1 James, I, 23, 24.
2 In Bacon's day I and V were used for J and U.
3 foolish.

ouse of servants; and ordered to the best how, that the bills may be less than the esti- ation abroad. Certainly, if a man will keep ut of even hand,[1] his ordinary expenses ught to be but to the half of his receipts; nd if he think to wax rich, but to the third art. It is no baseness for the greatest to escend and look into their own estate. ome forbear it, not upon negligence alone, ut doubting[2] to bring themselves into mel- ncholy, in respect they shall find it broken. ut wounds cannot be cured without search- g. He that cannot look into his own estate all, had need both choose well those whom employeth, and change them often; for w are more timorous and less subtle. He at can look into his estate but seldom, it hooveth him to turn all to certainties.[3] man had need, if he be plentiful in some nd of expense, to be as saving again in some her. As if he be plentiful in diet, to be sav- g in apparel; if he be plentiful in the hall, to saving in the stable; and the like. For he at is plentiful in expenses of all kinds will rdly be preserved from decay. In clearing a man's estate, he may as well hurt him- lf in being too sudden, as in letting it run too long. For hasty selling is commonly disadvantageable as interest. Besides, he at clears at once will relapse; for finding mself out of straits, he will revert to his stoms: but he that cleareth by degrees in- ceth a habit of frugality, and gaineth as ell upon his mind as upon his estate. Cer- inly, who hath a state to repair, may not spise small things; and commonly it is less shonorable to abridge petty charges, than stoop to petty gettings. A man ought arily to begin charges which once begun ill continue; but in matters that return not e may be more magnificent.

## 32

## OF DISCOURSE

Some in their discourse desire rather com- endation of wit, in being able to hold all ar- uments, than of judgment, in discerning hat is true; as if it were a praise to know hat might be said, and not what should be ought. Some have certain common places nd themes wherein they are good, and want ariety; which kind of poverty is for the most art tedious, and when it is once perceived, diculous. The honorablest part of talk is give the occasion; and again to moderate and pass to somewhat else; for then a man leads the dance. It is good, in discourse and speech of conversation, to vary and intermingle speech of the present occasion with arguments, tales with reasons, asking of questions with telling of opinions, and jest with earnest: for it is a dull thing to tire, and, as we say now, to jade, any thing too far. As for jest, there be certain things which ought to be privileged from it; namely, religion, matters of state, great persons, any man's present business of importance, and any case that deserveth pity. Yet there be some that think their wits have been asleep, except they dart out somewhat that is piquant, and to the quick. That is a vein which would be bridled;

Parce, puer, stimulis, et fortius utere loris.[1]

And generally, men ought to find the difference between saltness and bitterness. Certainly, he that hath a satirical vein, as he maketh others afraid of his wit, so he had need be afraid of others' memory. He that questioneth much shall learn much, and content much; but especially if he apply his questions to the skill of the persons whom he asketh; for he shall give them occasion to please themselves in speaking, and himself shall continually gather knowledge. But let his questions not be troublesome; for that is fit for a poser.[2] And let him be sure to leave other men their turns to speak. Nay, if there be any that would reign and take up all the time, let him find means to take them off, and to bring others on; as musicians use to do with those that dance too long galliards.[3] If you dissemble sometimes your knowledge of that you are thought to know, you shall be thought another time to know that you know not. Speech of a man's self ought to be seldom, and well chosen. I knew one was wont to say in scorn, *He must needs be a wise man, he speaks so much of himself:* and there is but one case wherein a man may commend himself with good grace; and that is in commending virtue in another; especially if it be such a virtue whereunto himself pretendeth. Speech of touch[4] towards others should be sparingly used; for discourse ought to be as a field, without coming home to any man. I knew two noblemen, of the west part of England, whereof the one was given to scoff, but kept ever royal cheer in his house; the other would ask of those that had been at

1 balance his accounts. 2 fearing.
3 fixed incomes and expenditures.

1 From Ovid: "spare the whip, boy, and hold the reins more tightly."
2 examiner. 3 vigorous French dances.
4 personal remarks.

the other's table, *Tell truly, was there never a flout*[1] *or dry blow given?* To which the guest would answer, *Such and such a thing passed.* The lord would say, *I thought he would mar a good dinner.* Discretion of speech is more than eloquence; and to speak agreeably to him with whom we deal, is more than to speak in good words or in good order. A good continued speech, without a good speech of interlocution, shows slowness: and a good reply or second speech, without a good settled speech, showeth shallowness and weakness. As we see in beasts, that those that are weakest in the course are yet nimblest in the turn; as it is betwixt the greyhound and the hare. To use too many circumstances[2] ere one come to the matter, is wearisome; to use none at all, is blunt.

## 39

### OF CUSTOM AND EDUCATION

Men's thoughts are much according to their inclination; their discourse and speeches according to their learning and infused opinions; but their deeds are after as they have been accustomed. And therefore, as Machiavel[3] well noteth (though in an evil-favored instance), there is no trusting to the force of nature nor to the bravery of words, except it be corroborate by custom. His instance is, that for the achieving of a desperate conspiracy, a man should not rest upon the fierceness of any man's nature, or his resolute undertakings; but take such an one as hath had his hands formerly in blood. But Machiavel knew not of a Friar Clement,[4] nor a Ravillac,[5] nor a Jaureguy,[6] nor a Baltazar Gerard; yet his rule holdeth still that nature, nor the engagement of words, are not so forcible as custom. Only superstition is now so well advanced, that men of the first blood are as firm as butchers by occupation; and votary[7] resolution is made equipollent[8] to custom even in matter of blood. In other things the predominancy of custom is everywhere visible; insomuch as a man would wonder to hear men profess, protest, engage, give great words, and then do just as they have done before; as if they were dead images, and engines moved only by the wheels of custom. We see also the reign or tyranny of custom what it is. The Indians[1] (I mean the sect of their wise men) lay themselves quietly upon a stack of wood, and so sacrifice themselves by fire. Nay the wives strive to be burned with the corpses of their husbands. The ladies of Sparta, of ancient time, were wont to be scourged upon the altar of Diana, without so much as quecking.[2] I remember, in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's time of England, an Irish rebel condemned, put up a petition to the deputy that he might be hanged in a withe, and not in an halter; because it had been so used with former rebels. There be monks in Russia, for penance, that will sit a whole night in a vessel of water, till they be engaged with hard ice. Many examples may be put of the force of custom, both upon mind and body. Therefore, since custom is the principal magistrate of man's life, let men by all means endeavor to obtain good customs. Certainly custom is most perfect when it beginneth in young years: this we call education; which is, in effect, but an early custom. So we see, in languages the tongue is more pliant to all expressions and sounds, the joints are more supple to all feats of activity and motions, in youth than afterwards. For it is true that late learners cannot so well take the ply;[3] except it be in some minds that have not suffered themselves to fix, but have kept themselves open and prepared to receive continual amendment, which is exceeding rare. But if the force of custom simple and separate be great, the force of custom copulate and conjoined and collegiate is far greater. For there example teacheth, company comforteth, emulation quickeneth, glory raiseth: so as in such places the force of custom is in his exaltation.[4] Certainly the great multiplication of virtues upon human nature resteth upon societies well ordained and disciplined. For commonwealths and good governments do nourish virtue grown, but do not much mend the seeds. But the misery is, that the most effectual means are now applied to the ends least to be desired.

1 insult. 2 details.
3 Machiavelli, the celebrated Italian politician, 1469–1527, author of *The Prince* and *Discourses.*
4 Jacques Clément assassinated Henry III of France.
5 François Ravaillac assassinated Henry IV of France in 1610.
6 Jaureguy attempted to assassinate William the Silent, Prince of Orange; Gérard succeeded, in 1584.
7 vowed. 8 equivalent.

## 42

### OF YOUTH AND AGE

A man that is young in years may be old in hours, if he have lost no time. But that happeneth rarely. Generally, youth is like the first cogitations, not so wise as the second. For there is a youth in thoughts, as well as in

1 i.e., Hindus. 2 flinching. 3 be directed.
4 Astrological term; here, "at its greatest power."

nges. And yet the invention of young men is more lively than that of old; and imaginations stream into their minds better, and as it were more divinely. Natures that have much heat and great and violent desires and perturbations are not ripe for action till they have passed the meridian of their years; as it was with Julius Cæsar and Septimius Severus. Of the latter of whom it is said, *Juventutem egit erroribus, imo furoribus, plenam.*[1] And yet he was the ablest emperor, almost, of all the list. But reposed natures may do well in youth. As it is seen in Augustus Cæsar, Cosmus Duke of Florence, Gaston de Foix,[2] and others. On the other side, heat and vivacity in age is an excellent composition for business. Young men are fitter to invent than to judge; fitter for execution than for counsel; and fitter for new projects than for settled business. For the experience of age, in things that fall within the compass of it, directeth them; but in new things, abuseth[3] them. The errors of young men are the ruin of business; but the errors of aged men amount but to this, that more might have been done, or sooner. Young men, in the conduct and manage of actions, embrace more than they can hold; stir more than they can quiet; fly to the end, without consideration of the means and degrees; pursue some few principles which they have chanced upon absurdly; care not to innovate,[4] which draws unknown inconveniences; use extreme remedies at first; and that which doubleth all errors will not acknowledge or retract them; like an unready horse, that will neither stop nor turn. Men of age object too much, consult too long, adventure too little, repent too soon, and seldom drive business home to the full period, but content themselves with a mediocrity of success. Certainly it is good to compound employments of both; for that will be good for the present, because the virtues of either age may correct the defects of both; and good for succession, that young men may be learners, while men in age are actors; and, lastly, good for extern[5] accidents, because authority followeth old men, and favor and popularity youth. But for the moral part, perhaps youth will have the pre-eminence, as age hath for the politic. A certain rabbin,[6] upon the text, *Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams,*[1] inferreth that young men are admitted nearer to God than old, because vision is a clearer revelation than a dream. And certainly, the more a man drinketh of the world, the more it intoxicateth; and age doth profit rather in the powers of understanding, than in the virtues of the will and affections. There be some have an overearly ripeness in their years, which fadeth betimes. These are, first, such as have brittle wits, the edge whereof is soon turned; such as was Hermogenes[2] the rhetorician, whose books are exceeding subtle; who afterwards waxed stupid. A second sort is of those that have some natural dispositions which have better grace in youth than in age; such as is a fluent and luxuriant speech; which becomes youth well, but not age: so Tully[3] saith of Hortensius,[4] *Idem manebat, neque idem decebat.*[5] The third is of such as take too high a strain at the first, and are magnanimous more than tract of years can uphold. As was Scipio Africanus, of whom Livy[6] saith in effect, *Ultima primis cedebant.*[7]

1 He passed his entire youth in errors, or rather, mad acts.
2 Duc de Nemours, an able French general, killed in battle at Ravenna in 1512.
3 misleads.
4 i.e., they are not careful how they innovate.
5 outside.
6 rabbi

1 Joel, II, 28.
2 A Greek prodigy of the second century A.D.
3 Cicero.
4 A Roman orator, Cicero's contemporary.
5 He remained the same, when the same was no longer becoming to him.
6 The excellent Roman historian, 59 B.C.–17 A.D.
7 His last acts were not up to his first.

## 47

### OF NEGOTIATING

It is generally better to deal by speech than by letter; and by the mediation of a third than by a man's self. Letters are good, when a man would draw an answer by letter back again; or when it may serve for a man's justification afterwards to produce his own letter; or where it may be danger to be interrupted, or heard by pieces. To deal in person is good, when a man's face breedeth regard, as commonly with inferiors; or in tender cases, where a man's eye upon the countenance of him with whom he speaketh may give him a direction how far to go; and generally, where a man will reserve to himself liberty either to disavow or to expound. In choice of instruments, it is better to choose men of a plainer sort, that are like to do that is committed to them, and to report back again faithfully the success, than those that are cunning to contrive out of other men's business somewhat to grace themselves, and will help the matter in report for satisfaction' sake. Use also such persons as affect the business wherein they are em-

ployed; for that quickeneth much; and such as are fit for the matter; as bold men for expostulation, fair-spoken men for persuasion, crafty men for inquiry and observation, froward and absurd [1] men for business that doth not well bear out itself.[2] Use also such as have been lucky, and prevailed before in things wherein you have employed them; for that breeds confidence, and they will strive to maintain their prescription.[3] It is better to sound a person with whom one deals afar off, than to fall upon the point at first; except you mean to surprise him by some short question. It is better dealing with men in appetite,[4] than with those that are where they would be. If a man deal with another upon conditions, the start or first performance [5] is all; which a man cannot reasonably demand, except either the nature of the thing be such, which must go before; or else a man can persuade the other party that he shall still need him in some other thing; or else that he be counted the honester man. All practice [6] is to discover, or to work. Men discover themselves in trust, in passion, at unawares, and of necessity, when they would have somewhat done and cannot find an apt pretext. If you would work any man, you must either know his nature and fashions, and so lead him; or his ends, and so persuade him; or his weakness and disadvantages, and so awe him; or those that have interest in him, and so govern him. In dealing with cunning persons, we must ever consider their ends, to interpret their speeches; and it is good to say little to them, and that which they least look for. In all negotiations of difficulty, a man may not look to sow and reap at once; but must prepare business, and so ripen it by degrees.

## 50

### OF STUDIES

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humor of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need proyning,[1] by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously;[2] and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy[3] things. Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit: and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that[4] he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets witty;[5] the mathematics subtile; natural philosophy deep; moral grave; logic and rhetoric able to contend. *Abeunt studia in mores.*[6] Nay, there is no stond [7] or impediment in the wit but may be wrought out by fit studies; like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins;[8] shooting for the lungs and breast; gentle walking for the stomach; riding for the head; and the like. So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again. If his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the Schoolmen; for they are *cymini sectores.*[9] If he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases. So every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

1 unreasonable. 2 justify itself.
3 reputation, i.e., of being lucky.
4 eager, ambitious.
5 i.e., which of the two men shall carry out his agreement first.
6 dealing.

1 pruning, cultivating. 2 carefully.
3 tasteless. 4 what.
5 Poets make men witty, i.e., full of fancy, imaginative.
6 Studies develop into manners (Ovid).
7 obstruction. 8 kidneys. 9 hair-splitters.

# SEVENTEENTH CENTURY LYRICS

## GEORGE WITHER
## (1588–1667)

Wither was a militant Puritan, but far from mber or bigoted. His steadily increasing putation as a poet is based upon his keen tire, *Abuses Stript and Whipt*, 1613; his storals, *The Shepherd's Hunting*, 1615, and *ir Virtue*, 1622; and his religious lyrics, pub- hed under the title of *Hallelujah* in 1641. s a poet he displays genuine lyrical feeling. ne poems here given display his lighter mood.

### HALL I, WASTING IN DESPAIR

Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die, because a woman's fair?
Or make pale my cheeks with care,
'Cause another's rosy are?
Be she fairer than the day,
Or the flowery meads in May!
If she be not so to me,
What care I how fair she be?

Should my heart be grieved or pined,
'Cause I see a woman kind?
Or a well disposed nature
Joined with a lovely feature?
Be she meeker, kinder than
Turtle dove, or pelican!
If she be not so to me,
What care I how kind she be?

Shall a woman's virtues move
Me to perish for her love?
Or her well deserving known,
Make me quite forget mine own?
Be she with that goodness blest
Which may gain her, name of best!
If she be not such to me,
What care I how good she be?

'Cause her fortune seems too high,
Shall I play the fool, and die?
Those that bear a noble mind,
Where they want of riches find,
Think "What, with them, they would do
That, without them, dare to woo!"
And unless that mind I see,
What care I though great she be?

Great, or good, or kind, or fair,
I will ne'er the more despair!
If she love me (this believe!)
I will die, ere she shall grieve!
If she slight me, when I woo,
I can scorn, and let her go!
For if she be not for me,
What care I for whom she be?

### I LOVED A LASS

I loved a lass, a fair one,
As fair as e'er was seen;
She was indeed a rare one,
Another Sheba Queen.
But, fool as then I was,
I thought she loved me too;
But now, alas! she's left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

Her hair like gold did glister,
Each eye was like a star,
She did surpass her sister,
Which passed all others far.
She would me honey call,
She'd — O she'd kiss me too!
But now, alas! she's left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

Many a merry meeting
My love and I have had;
She was my only sweeting,
She made my heart full glad.
The tears stood in her eyes
Like to the morning dew:
But now, alas! she's left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

Her cheeks were like the cherry,
Her skin was white as snow;
When she was blithe and merry
She angel-like did show;
Her waist exceeding small,
The fives did fit her shoe:
But now alas! she's left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

In summer time or winter
She had her heart's desire;
I still did scorn to stint her
From sugar, sack, or fire;
The world went round about,
No cares we ever knew:
But now, alas! she's left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

To maidens' vows and swearing
Henceforth no credit give;
You may give them the hearing,
But never them believe;
They are as false as fair,
Unconstant, frail, untrue:

For mine, alas! hath left me,
Falero, lero, loo!

## WILLIAM BROWNE
## (1591–1643)

Aside from a few pure lyrics, Browne is remembered for his long poem, *Britannia's Pastorals*, 1613, which describes the natural beauties of England. His spirit and temper foreshadow James Thomson of *The Seasons* and *The Castle of Indolence*.

### FOR HER GAIT, IF SHE BE WALKING

For her gait, if she be walking;
Be she sitting, I desire her
For her state's sake; and admire her
For her wit if she be talking;
Gait and state and wit approve her;
For which all and each I love her.

Be she sullen, I commend her
For a modest. Be she merry,
For a kind one her prefer I.
Briefly, everything doth lend her
So much grace, and so approve her,
That for everything I love her.

### ON THE COUNTESS DOWAGER OF PEMBROKE[1]

Underneath this sable hearse [2]
Lies the subject of all verse:
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother.
Death, ere thou hast slain another
Fair and learned and good as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee.

Marble piles let no man raise
To her name; for after days
Some kind woman, born as she,
Reading this, like Niobe [3]
Shall turn marble, and become
Both her mourner and her tomb.

## THOMAS CAREW
## (1598?–1639?)

Among the Cavalier poets, who, like Herrick, sang melodiously of the less serious side of life, Carew holds a deservedly high place. His lyrics are musical and delicately beautiful. Most of them were published in a collected edition after his death.

1 Sir Philip Sidney's sister, to whom he dedicated his *Arcadia*.
2 tomb.
3 When Niobe was mourning the death of her children, Zeus changed her to stone.

### SONG

Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
When June is past, the fading rose;
For in your beauty's orient [1] deep
These flowers, as in their causes, sleep.

Ask me no more whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day;
For, in pure love, heaven did prepare
Those powders to enrich your hair.

Ask me no more whither doth haste
The nightingale when May is past;
For in your sweet dividing [2] throat
She winters and keeps warm her note.

Ask me no more where those stars light
That downwards fall in dead of night;
For in your eyes they sit, and there
Fixed become as in their sphere.

Ask me no more if east or west
The Phœnix [3] builds her spicy nest;
For unto you at last she flies,
And in your fragrant bosom dies.

### PERSUASIONS TO JOY: A SONG

If the quick spirits in your eye
Now languish and anon must die;
If every sweet and every grace
Must fly from that forsaken face:
Then, Celia, let us reap our joys
Ere Time such goodly fruit destroys.

Or, if that golden fleece must grow
For ever free from aged snow;
If those bright suns must know no shade
Nor your fresh beauties ever fade:
Then fear not, Celia, to bestow
What, still being gathered, still must grow.

Thus either Time his sickle brings
In vain, or else in vain his wings.

### INGRATEFUL BEAUTY THREATENED

Know, Celia, since thou art so proud,
'Twas I that gave thee thy renown.

1 bright. 2 singing. 3 see footnote, p. 329.

Thou hadst in the forgotten crowd
Of common beauties lived unknown,
Had not my verse extolled thy name,
And with it imped [1] the wings of Fame.

That killing power is none of thine;
I gave it to thy voice and eyes;
Thy sweets, thy graces, all are mine;
Thou art my star, shinest in my skies;
Then dart not from thy borrowed sphere
Lightning on him that fixed thee there.

Tempt me with such affrights no more,
Lest what I made I uncreate;
Let fools thy mystic form adore,
I know thee in thy mortal state.
Wise poets, that wrapt Truth in tales,
Knew her themselves through all her veils.

## THE UNFADING BEAUTY

He that loves a rosy cheek,
Or a coral lip admires,
Or from star-like eyes doth seek
Fuel to maintain his fires:
As old Time makes these decay,
So his flames must waste away.

But a smooth and steadfast mind,
Gentle thoughts and calm desires,
Hearts with equal love combined,
Kindle never-dying fires.
Where these are not, I despise
Lovely cheeks or lips or eyes.

## EPITAPH

This little vault, this narrow room,
Of love and beauty is the tomb;
The dawning beam, that 'gan to clear
Our clouded sky, lies darkened here,
For ever set to us: by death
Sent to enflame the world beneath.
'Twas but a bud, yet did contain
More sweetness than shall spring again;
A budding star, that might have grown
Into a sun when it had blown.
This hopeful beauty did create
New life in love's declining state;
But now his empire ends, and we
From fire and wounding darts are free.
His brand, his bow, let no man fear:
The flames, the arrows, all lie here.

[1] To imp, in falconry, was to mend a wing by fastening on additional feathers.

# SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT
## (1606–1668)

Davenant, who boasted that he was a son of Shakespeare, is chiefly important as a link between the theater of 1642 and the new theater of 1660, with its actresses, elaborate, movable scenery, music, heroic couplets, three unities, and gigantic themes of love and honor. While imprisoned in the Tower, he wrote his ponderous heroic poem, *Gondibert*, 1652, after the French manner. In 1656, before the theaters were legally opened, he produced *The Siege of Rhodes*, the first English opera. Thereafter he managed a theater, staging more than a score of his own plays among others; collaborating with Dryden in a new version of *The Tempest* (in which, to add to the spectacle, they had two islands); and guiding the fortunes of the new heroic drama generally. His lyrics alone have lasted, although in his life Davenant enjoyed great popularity as a writer.

## SONG

The lark now leaves his wat'ry nest,
And climbing shakes his dewy wings,
He takes this window for the East,
And to implore your light he sings:
Awake, awake! the morn will never rise
Till she can dress her beauty at your eyes.

The merchant bows unto the seaman's star,
The ploughman from the sun his season takes;
But still the lover wonders what they are
Who look for day before his mistress wakes.
Awake, awake! break through your veils of lawn!
Then draw your curtains, and begin the dawn!

## TO A MISTRESS DYING

*Lover.* Your beauty, ripe and calm and fresh
As eastern summers are,
Must now, forsaking time and flesh,
Add light to some small star.

*Philosopher.* Whilst she yet lives, were stars decayed,
Their light by hers relief might find;
But Death will lead her to a shade
Where Love is cold and Beauty blind.

*Lover.* Lovers, whose priests all poets are,
Think every mistress, when she dies,

Is changed at least into a star:
And who dares doubt the poets wise?

*Philosopher.* But ask not bodies doomed to die
To what abode they go;
Since Knowledge is but Sorrow's spy,
It is not safe to know.

## EDMUND WALLER
## (1606–1687)

Waller has written some of the best artificial poems of the Restoration period, most of them addressed to "Sacharissa," his first wife. They are notable for their wit and delicate fancy. Though of a prominent Royalist family, a graduate of Cambridge, Waller served Cromwell. Later he took the side of King Charles and was forced into exile in France. After 1660 he usually managed to keep a seat in Parliament or a position at court, frequently at the expense of turning against a friend or making himself abjectly servile.

### GO, LOVELY ROSE!

Go, lovely Rose!
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired;
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die! that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee:
How small a part of time they share,
That are so wondrous sweet and fair!

### ON A GIRDLE

That which her slender waist confined,
Shall now my joyful temples bind;
No monarch but would give his crown,
His arms might do what this has done.

It was my heaven's extremest sphere,
The pale which held that lovely deer;
My joy, my grief, my hope, my love,
Did all within this circle move!

A narrow compass! and yet there
Dwelt all that's good, and all that's fair;
Give me but what this ribband bound,
Take all the rest the sun goes round!

### TO PHYLLIS

Phyllis, why should we delay
Pleasures shorter than the day?
Could we (which we never can)
Stretch our lives beyond their span,
Beauty like a shadow flies,
And our youth before us dies;
Or would youth and beauty stay,
Love hath wings, and will away.
Love hath swifter wings than Time;
Change in love to heaven does climb;
Gods that never change their state,
Vary oft their love and hate.
Phyllis, to this truth we owe
All the love betwixt us two.
Let not you and I inquire
What has been our past desire;
On what shepherds you have smiled,
Or what nymphs I have beguiled;
Leave it to the planets too,
What we shall hereafter do;
For the joys we now may prove,
Take advice of present love.

### OLD AGE

The seas are quiet when the winds give o'er;
So calm are we when passions are no more.
For then we know how vain it was to boast
Of fleeting things, so certain to be lost.
Clouds of affection from our younger eyes
Conceal that emptiness which age descries.

The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
Lets in new light through chinks that Time hath made.
Stronger by weakness, wiser men become
As they draw near to their eternal home.
Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view
That stand upon the threshold of the new.

## SIR JOHN SUCKLING
(1609–1642)

Suckling, a knight and son of a knight, well-to-do, happy-go-lucky favorite of the king, author of four forgotten plays, lives in English literature for his carefree, witty, graceful songs.

### A DOUBT OF MARTYRDOM

O for some honest lover's ghost,
Some kind unbodied post
Sent from the shades below!
I strangely long to know
Whether the noble chaplets wear,
Those that their mistress' scorn did bear
Or those that were used kindly.

For whatsoe'er they tell us here
To make those sufferings dear,
'Twill there, I fear, be found
That to the being crowned
T' have loved alone will not suffice,
Unless we also have been wise
And have our loves enjoyed.

What posture can we think him in
That, here unloved, again
Departs, and 's thither gone
Where each sits by his own?
Or how can that Elysium be
Where I my mistress still must see
Circled in other's arms?

For there the judges all are just,
And Sophonisba [1] must
Be his whom she held dear,
Not his who loved her here.
The sweet Philoclea,[2] since she died,
Lies by her Pirocles [2] his side,
Not by Amphialus.[2]

Some bays, perchance, or myrtle bough
For difference crowns the brow
Of those kind souls that were
The noble martyrs here;
And if that be the only odds
(As who can tell?), ye kinder gods,
Give me the woman here!

### THE CONSTANT LOVER

Out upon it, I have loved
Three whole days together!
And am like to love three more,
If it prove fair weather.

Time shall moult away his wings,
Ere he shall discover
In the whole wide world again
Such a constant lover.

But the spite on't is, no praise
Is due at all to me:
Love with me had made no stays,[1]
Had it any been but she.

Had it any been but she,
And that very face,
There had been at least ere this
A dozen dozen in her place.

### WHY SO PALE AND WAN?

Why so pale and wan, fond lover?
Prithee, why so pale?
Will, when looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail?
Prithee, why so pale?

Why so dull and mute, young sinner?
Prithee, why so mute?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do't?
Prithee, why so mute?

Quit, quit for shame! This will not move
This cannot take her.
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her:
The devil take her!

## RICHARD CRASHAW
(1613?–1649)

A Puritan by birth and a graduate of Cambridge, Crashaw became a Catholic, living in France and Italy, and dying a priest of the Church. Crashaw was both a scholar and a poet. As a poet he was usually mystical. In his fondness for involved imagery, he is like Donne; in his religious poetry, which forms the greater part of his verse, he resembles Herbert. His most important volume is *Steps to the Temple*, 1646.

### WISHES TO HIS SUPPOSED MISTRESS

Whoe'er she be —
That not impossible she
That shall command my heart and me:

1 Of Carthage, who married Masinissa after the latter had defeated her husband, Syphax.
2 Characters in Sidney's *Arcadia*.

1 stops.

Where'er she lie,
Locked up from mortal eye
In shady leaves of destiny:

Till that ripe birth
Of studied Fate stand forth,
And teach her fair steps to our earth:

Till that divine
Idea take a shrine
Of crystal flesh, through which to shine:

Meet you her, my wishes,
Bespeak her to my blisses,
And be ye called my absent kisses.

I wish her beauty,
That owes not all its duty
To gaudy tire, or glistering shoe-tie:

Something more than
Taffeta or tissue can,
Or rampant feather, or rich fan.

More than the spoil
Of shop, or silkworm's toil,
Or a bought blush, or a set smile.

A face, that's best
By its own beauty drest,
And can alone commend the rest.

A face, made up
Out of no other shop
Than what Nature's white hand sets ope.

A cheek, where youth
And blood, with pen of truth,
Write what the reader sweetly ru'th.

A cheek, where grows
More than a morning rose,
Which to no box his being owes.

Lips, where all day
A lover's kiss may play,
Yet carry nothing thence away:

Looks, that oppress
Their richest tires, but dress
And clothe their simplest nakedness.

Eyes, that displace
The neighbour diamond, and outface
That sunshine by their own sweet grace.

Tresses, that wear
Jewels but to declare
How much themselves more precious are:

Whose native ray
Can tame the wanton day
Of gems that in their bright shades play.

Each ruby there,
Or pearl that dare appear,
Be its own blush, be its own tear.

A well-tamed heart,
For whose more noble smart
Love may be long choosing a dart.

Eyes, that bestow
Full quivers on love's bow,
Yet pay less arrows than they owe.

Smiles, that can warm
The blood, yet teach a charm,
That chastity shall take no harm.

Blushes, that bin
The burnish of no sin,
Nor flames of aught too hot within.

Joys, that confess
Virtue their mistress,
And have no other head to dress.

Fears, fond [1] and flight [2]
As the coy bride's, when night
First does the longing lover right.

Tears, quickly fled,
And vain, as those are shed
For a dying maidenhead.

Days, that need borrow
No part of their good-morrow
From a fore-spent night of sorrow.

Days, that in spite
Of darkness, by the light
Of a clear mind, are day all night.

Nights, sweet as they,
Made short by lovers' play,
Yet long by th' absence of the day.

Life, that dares send
A challenge to his end,
And when it comes, say, "Welcome, friend!"

Sydneian [3] showers
Of sweet discourse, whose powers
Can crown old Winter's head with flowers.

1 foolish. 2 quickly disappearing.
3 Sir Philip Sidney's.

Soft silken hours,
Open suns, shady bowers;
'Bove all, nothing within that lowers.

Whate'er delight
Can make Day's forehead bright,
Or give down to the wings of Night.

In her whole frame
Have nature all the name,
Art and ornament the shame.

Her flattery,
Picture and poesy;
Her counsel her own virtue be.

I wish her store
Of worth may leave her poor
Of wishes; and I wish — no more.

Now, if Time knows
That her, whose radiant brows
Weave them a garland of my vows;

Her, whose just bays
My future hopes can raise,
A trophy to her present praise;

Her, that dares be
What these lines wish to see;
I seek no further, it is she.

'Tis she, and here,
Lo! I unclothe and clear
My wishes' cloudy character.

May she enjoy it
Whose merit dare apply it,
But modesty dares still deny it!

Such worth as this is
Shall fix my flying wishes,
And determine them to kisses.

Let her full glory,
My fancies, fly before ye;
Be ye my fictions — but her story.

## RICHARD LOVELACE
### (1618–1658)

Lovelace, an ardent Royalist, an Oxford graduate, spent his fortune, and much time in prison, for King Charles. He is the type of cavalier pictured by Browning in *Cavalier Lyrics* and by Sir Walter Scott in *Here's a Health to King Charles*. His best lyrics deal with loyalty in love and war.

### TO LUCASTA, ON GOING TO THE WARS

Tell me not, sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As thou too shalt adore:
I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honor more.

### TO ALTHEA, FROM PRISON

When Love with unconfined wings
Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair
And fettered to her eye,
The gods that wanton in the air
Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
With no allaying Thames,[1]
Our careless heads with roses bound,
Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free,
Fishes that tipple in the deep
Know no such liberty.

When, like committed[2] linnets, I
With shriller throat will sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
And glories of my king;
When I shall voice aloud how good
He is, how great should be,
Enlarged winds, that curl the flood,
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage:
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage:
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.

1 i.e., water. 2 caged.

## ANDREW MARVELL
## (1621–1678)

From the time of his graduation from Cambridge to his death Marvell gave his time mainly to politics: holding a seat in Parliament; assisting Milton when the latter was Latin Secretary; and writing articles, often bitter but always keen, in favor of representative government. It is a tribute to Marvell's integrity and sociability that in spite of his political opposition he remained a friend of Charles II, who offered him sinecures, which Marvell regularly refused. Marvell's prose far outweighs in bulk his verse, but good as it is, it does not approach in greatness the few poems that he wrote. The best of Marvell's lyrics are unsurpassed.

### HORATIAN ODE UPON CROMWELL'S RETURN FROM IRELAND

The forward youth that would appear,
Must now forsake his Muses dear,
Nor in the shadows sing
His numbers languishing.

'Tis time to leave the books in dust,
And oil the unused armor's rust,
Removing from the wall
The corslet of the hall.

So restless Cromwell could not cease
In the inglorious arts of peace,
But through adventurous war
Urged his active star;

And like the three-forked lightning, first
Breaking the clouds where it was nursed,
Did through his own side
His fiery way divide;

For 'tis all one to courage high,
The emulous, or enemy;
And with such, to enclose
Is more than to oppose;

Then burning through the air he went
And palaces and temples rent;
And Cæsar's head at last
Did through his laurels blast.

'Tis madness to resist or blame
The face of angry heaven's flame;
And if we would speak true,
Much to the man is due

Who, from his private gardens, where
He lived reserved and austere,
(As if his highest plot
To plant the bergamot,[1])

Could by industrious valor climb
To ruin the great work of time,
And cast the kingdoms old
Into another mould;

Though Justice against Fate complain,
And plead the ancient rights in vain —
But those do hold or break
As men are strong or weak;

Nature, that hateth emptiness,[2]
Allows of penetration[3] less,
And therefore must make room
Where greater spirits come.

What field of all the civil war
Where his were not the deepest scar?
And Hampton[4] shows what part
He had of wiser art,

Where, twining subtle fears with hope,
He wove a net of such a scope
That Charles himself might chase
To Carisbrook's narrow case,

That thence the Royal actor borne
The tragic scaffold might adorn:
While round the armed bands
Did clap their bloody hands.

He nothing common did or mean
Upon that memorable scene,
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try;

Nor called the Gods, with vulgar spite,
To vindicate his helpless right;
But bowed his comely head
Down, as upon a bed.

— This was that memorable hour
Which first assured the forced power:[5]
So when they did design
The Capitol's first line,[6]

A bleeding head,[7] where they begun,
Did fright the architects to run;
And yet in that the State
Foresaw its happy fate!

1 A kind of pear-tree. 2 a vacuum.
3 penetrability of matter.
4 Hampton Court, the royal residence near Richmond outside London, from which Charles fled to Carisbrook Castle.
5 The Commonwealth. 6 Foundations of Rome.
7 Found, according to tradition, during the digging.

And now the Irish are ashamed
To see themselves in one year tamed;
So much one man can do
That does both act and know.

They can affirm his praises best,
And have, though overcome, confessed
How good he is, how just
And fit for highest trust.

Nor yet grown stiffer with command,
But still in the republic's hand —
How fit he is to sway
That can so well obey!

He to the Commons' feet presents
A kingdom [1] for his first year's rents,
And (what he may) forbears
His fame, to make it theirs:

And has his sword and spoils ungirt
To lay them at the public's skirt.
So when the falcon high
Falls heavy from the sky,

She, having killed, no more doth search
But on the next green bough to perch,
Where, when he first does lure,
The falconer has her sure.

— What may not then our isle presume
While victory his crest does plume?
What may not others fear
If thus he crowns each year?

As Cæsar he, ere long, to Gaul,
To Italy an Hannibal,
And to all states not free
Shall climacteric [2] be.

The Pict [3] no shelter now shall find
Within his parti-colored [4] mind,
But from this valor sad
Shrink underneath the plaid —

Happy, if in the tufted brake
The English hunter him mistake,[5]
Nor lay [6] his hounds in near
The Caledonian deer.

But thou, the war's and Fortune's son,
March indefatigably on;
And for the last effect
Still keep the sword erect.

Besides the force it has to fright
The spirits of the shady night,
The same arts that did gain
A power, must it maintain.

1 Ireland. 2 dangerous, decisive. 3 Scot.
4 Variegated, as his plaid.
5 miss. 6 lay in = send in.

## TO HIS COY MISTRESS

Had we but world [1] enough, and time,
This coyness, Lady, were no crime.
We would sit down and think which way
To walk and pass our long love's day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find; I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the Flood,
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow;
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest;
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, Lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.
But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song; then worms shall try
That long preserved virginity,
And your quaint honor turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust:
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.
Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may,
And now, like amorous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour
Than languish in his slow-chapped [2] power.
Let us roll all our strength and all
Our sweetness up into one ball,
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Thorough the iron gates of life:
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

1 i.e., space. 2 slowly crushing.

## THE GARDEN

How vainly men themselves amaze,[1]
To win the palm, the oak, or bays,
And their incessant labors see
Crowned from some single herb or tree,
Whose short and narrow-verged [2] shade
Does prudently their toils upbraid,
While all the flowers and trees do close
To weave the garlands of repose!

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
And Innocence, thy sister dear?
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men.
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow;
Society is all but rude
To this delicious solitude.

No white nor red was ever seen
So amorous [3] as this lovely green.
Fond lovers, cruél as their flame,
Cut in these trees their mistress' name.
Little, alas! they know or heed
How far these beauties hers exceed!
Fair trees! wheres'e'r your barks I wound,
No name shall but your own be found.

When we have run our passion's heat,
Love hither makes his best retreat.
The gods, that mortal beauty chase,
Still in a tree did end their race;
Apollo hunted Daphne so,
Only that she might laurel grow;
And Pan did after Syrinx speed,
Not as a nymph, but for a reed.

What wondrous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarine and curious [4] peach
Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less,
Withdraws into its happiness;
The mind, that ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find;
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas,
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest [1] aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide;
There, like a bird, it sits and sings,
Then whets and combs its silver wings,
And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.

Such was that happy garden-state,
While man there walked without a mate;
After a place so pure and sweet,
What other help could yet be meet!
But 'twas beyond a mortal's share
To wander solitary there:
Two paradises 'twere in one,
To live in paradise alone.

How well the skilful gardener drew
Of flowers and herbs this dial [2] new!
Where, from above, the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run,
And, as it works, the industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we!
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckoned, but with herbs and flowers!

## AN EPITAPH

Enough; and leave the rest to Fame!
'Tis to commend her, but to name.
Courtship which, living, she declined,
When dead, to offer were unkind:
Nor can the truest wit, or friend,
Without detracting, her commend.

To say — she lived a virgin chaste
In this age loose and all unlaced;
Nor was, when vice is so allowed,
Of virtue or ashamed or proud;
That her soul was on Heaven so bent,
No minute but it came and went;
That, ready her last debt to pay,
She summed her life up every day;
Modest as morn, as mid-day bright,
Gentle as evening, cool as night:
— 'Tis true; but all too weakly said.
'Twas more significant, she's dead.

## HENRY VAUGHAN
## (1622–1695)

Vaughan is a follower of Herbert as a writer of religious lyrics, but with an imagination and

1 perplex, worry. 2 of a narrow margin
3 beautiful. 4 delicious.

1 vestment, covering.
2 i.e., a clock made of flowers.

yrical power that is all his own. Little is nown of his life. He attended Oxford, and later ettled down at Newton-by-Usk. He called imself "the Silurist," after the old name of he place in Wales where he was born. His est work is contained in *Silex Scintillans* Sparkling Flint), 1650, and *Olor Iscanus* (The wan of Usk), 1651. The best known of his oems is *The Retreat*, partly because of the narked similarity between it and Wordsworth's *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*.

## THE RETREAT

Happy those early days, when I
Shined in my angel-infancy!
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,[1]
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white, celestial thought;
When yet I had not walked above
A mile or two from my first love,
And looking back, at that short space,
Could see a glimpse of his bright face;
When on some gilded cloud or flower
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
And in those weaker glories spy
Some shadows of eternity;
Before I taught my tongue to wound
My conscience with a sinful sound,
Or had the black art to dispense,
A several sin to every sense,
But felt through all this fleshly dress
Bright shoots of everlastingness.
O, how I long to travel back,
And tread again that ancient track!
That I might once more reach that plain,
Where first I left my glorious train;
From whence th' enlightened spirit sees
That shady city[2] of palm trees.
But ah! my soul with too much stay
Is drunk, and staggers in the way!
Some men a forward motion love,
But I by backward steps would move;
And when this dust falls to the urn,
In that state I came, return.

## THE WORLD

I saw Eternity the other night,
Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
All calm, as it was bright;
And round beneath it, Time, in hours, days, years,
Driv'n by the spheres,
Like a vast shadow moved, in which the world
And all her train were hurled.
The doting lover in his quaintest strain
Did there complain;
Near him, his lute, his fancy, and his flights,
Wit's four delights,
With gloves, and knots, the silly snares of pleasure,
Yet his dear treasure,
All scattered lay, while he his eyes did pour
Upon a flower.

The darksome statesman, hung with weights and woe,
Like a thick midnight-fog, moved there so slow,
He did not stay, nor go;
Condemning thoughts, like sad eclipses, scowl
Upon his soul,
And clouds of crying witnesses without
Pursued him with one shout.
Yet digged the mole, and, lest his ways be found,
Worked under ground,
Where he did clutch his prey; but one did see
That policy;
Churches and altars fed him; perjuries
Were gnats and flies;
It rained about him blood and tears, but he
Drank them as free.

The fearful miser on a heap of rust
Sat pining all his life there, did scarce trust
His own hands with the dust,
Yet would not place one piece above, but lives
In fear of thieves.
Thousands there were as frantic as himself,
And hugged each one his pelf;
The downright epicure placed heaven in sense,
And scorned pretence;
While others, slipt into a wide excess,
Said little less;
The weaker sort, slight, trivial wares enslave,
Who think them brave;
And poor, despised Truth sat counting by
Their victory.

Yet some, who all this while did weep and sing,
And sing and weep, soared up into the ring;

1 existence. 2 Paradise.

But most would use no wing.
O fools, said I, thus to prefer dark night
Before true light!
To live in grots and caves, and hate the day
Because it shows the way,
The way, which from this dead and dark abode
Leads up to God;
A way there you might tread the sun, and be
More bright than he!
But, as I did their madness so discuss,
One whispered thus:
"This ring the Bridegroom did for none provide,
But for his bride."

## DEPARTED FRIENDS

They are all gone into the world of light!
And I alone sit lingering here;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is drest,
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days;
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy hope! and high humility,
High as the heavens above!
These are your walks, and you have showed them me,
To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous death! the jewel of the just
Shining nowhere, but in the dark,
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could man outlook that mark!

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know
At first sight if the bird be flown;
But what fair well or grove he sings in now
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul, when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep.

If a star were confined into a tomb,
The captive flames must needs burn there;
But when the hand that locked her up gives room,
She'll shine through all the sphere.

O Father of eternal life, and all
Created glories under Thee,
Resume Thy spirit from this world of thrall
Into true liberty!

Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill
My perspective still as they pass;
Or else remove me hence unto that hill,
Where I shall need no glass.

## JOHN DONNE (1573–1631)

John Donne became famous both as a vigorous, influential poet and as a stirring preacher. He was born a Roman Catholic. He studied at Oxford and Cambridge, and later read law at Lincoln's Inn. After a careful, analytical study of religious questions, he joined the Church of England. In 1610 he took orders, and in 1621 he was appointed Dean of St. Paul's in London. Here his sermons, which are still good reading, brought him a great reputation. The best of his poems appeared in *The Progress of the Soul*, 1601, *An Anatomy of the World*, 1611, *Epithalamium*, 1613, and *Divine Poems*. These were reprinted in numerous collected editions after his death.

Donne is a difficult, but interesting and original poet, who delighted in the use of "conceits" or intricate figures of speech. This practice, strong among the Elizabethan poets, he carried on to highly artificial, often ludicrous, conclusions. In his intellectuality, directness, and, at times, grotesqueness, Donne is much like Browning. Because of his definite accomplishment and wide influence he towers above British minor poets.

The definitive edition of Donne's poems is H. J. C. Grierson's, in two volumes (Oxford University Press).

## SONG

Go and catch a fa'ling star,
Get with child a mandrake [1] root,
Tell me where all times past are,
Or who cleft the Devil's foot;
Teach me to hear mermaids singing,
Or to keep off envy's stinging,
And find
What wind
Serves to advance an honest mind.

If thou be'st born to strange sights,
Things invisible go see,
Ride ten thousand days and nights
Till age snow white hairs on thee;
Thou, when thou return'st, wilt tell me
All strange wonders that befell thee,
And swear
No where
Lives a woman true and fair.

If thou find'st one let me know,
Such a pilgrimage were sweet;
Yet do not, I would not go,
Though at next door we might meet;
Though she were true when you met her,
And last till you write your letter,
Yet she
Will be
False, ere I come, to two or three.

## A VALEDICTION FORBIDDING MOURNING

As virtuous men pass mildly away,
And whisper to their souls to go,
Whilst some of their sad friends do say,
"Now his breath goes," and some say "No";

So let us meet and make no noise,
No tear-floods, nor sigh-tempests move,
'Twere profanation of our joys,
To tell the laity our love.

Moving of th' Earth brings harm and fears,
Men reckon what it did and meant;
But trepidation of the spheres,
Though greater far, is innocent.

Dull sublunary lovers' love,
(Whose soul is sense) cannot admit
Of absence, 'cause it doth remove
The thing which elemented [2] it.

But we by a love so far refined,
That ourselves know not what it is,
Inter-assured of the mind,
Careless eyes, lips, and hands, to miss;

Our two souls therefore, which are one,
Though I must go, endure not yet
A breach, but an expansion,
Like gold to airy thinness beat.

If they be two, they are two so
As stiff twin compasses are two,
Thy soul, the fixed foot, makes no show
To move, but doth, if th' other do.

And though it in the centre sit,
Yet when the other far doth roam,
It leans and hearkens after it,
And grows erect as that comes home.

Such wilt thou be to me, who must
Like th' other foot, obliquely run,
Thy firmness makes my circle just,
And makes me end where I begun.

## THE INDIFFERENT

I can love both fair and brown;
Her whom abundance melts, and her whom want betrays;
Her who loves loneness best, and her who masks and plays;
Her whom the country formed, and whom the town;
Her who believes, and her who tries;
Her who still weeps with spongy eyes,
And her who is dry cork and never cries.
I can love her, and her, and you, and you;
I can love any, so she be not true.

Will no other vice content you?
Will it not serve your turn to do as did your mothers?
Or have you all old vices spent and now would find out others?
Or doth a fear that men are true torment you?
O we are not, be not you so;
Let me — and do you — twenty know;
Rob me, but bind me not, and let me go.
Must I, who came to travel thorough you,
Grow your fixed subject, because you are true?

Venus heard me sigh this song;
And by love's sweetest part, variety, she swore,
She heard not this till now; it should be so no more.

[1] The mandragora, a root to which many superstitions were attached.
[2] formed, caused.

She went, examined, and returned ere long,
And said, "Alas! some two or three
Poor heretics in love there be,
Which think to stablish dangerous constancy.
But I have told them, 'Since you will be true,
You shall be true to them, who 're false to you.'"

## SONG

Sweetest love, I do not go
For weariness of thee,
Nor in hope the world can show
A fitter love for me;
But since that I
At the last must part, 'tis best
Thus to use myself in jest,
By feigned deaths to die.

Yesternight the sun went hence,
And yet is here to-day;
He hath no desire nor sense,
Nor half so short a way;
Then fear not me,
But believe that I shall make
Speedier journeys, since I take
More wings and spurs than he.

O how feeble is man's power,
That, if good fortune fall,
Cannot add another hour,
Nor a last hour recall;
But come bad chance,
And we join to it our strength,
And we teach it art and length,
Itself o'er us to advance.

When thou sigh'st, thou sigh'st not wind,
But sigh'st my soul away;
When thou weep'st, unkindly kind,
My life's blood doth decay:
It cannot be
That thou lovest me as thou say'st,
If in thine my life thou waste,
That art the best of me.

Let not thy divining heart
Forethink me any ill;
Destiny may take thy part
And may thy fears fulfil.
But think that we
Are but turned aside to sleep:
They who one another keep
Alive, ne'er parted be.

## DEATH

Death, be not proud, though some hav
called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dos
overthrow
Die not, poor Death; nor yet canst thou kil
me.
From Rest and Sleep, which but thy picture
be,
Much pleasure, then from thee much mor
must flow;
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones and souls' delivery!
Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and
desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness
dwell;
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as
well
And better than thy stroke. Why swell'st
thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And Death shall be no more: Death, thou
shalt die!

## THE FUNERAL

Whoever comes to shroud me, do not harm
Nor question much
That subtle wreath of hair about mine arm;
The mystery, the sign you must not touch,
For 'tis my outward soul,
Viceroy to that which, unto heav'n being
gone,
Will leave this to control
And keep these limbs, her provinces, from
dissolution.

For if the sinewy thread my brain lets fall
Through every part
Can tie those parts, and make me one of all;
Those hairs, which upward grew, and
strength and art
Have from a better brain,
Can better do't: except she meant that I
By this should know my pain,
As prisoners then are manacled, when they're
condemned to die.

Whate'er she meant by't, bury it with me,
For since I am
Love's martyr, it might breed idolatry,
If into others' hands these reliques came.
As 'twas humility
T' afford to it all that a soul can do,

So 'tis some bravery
That, since you would have none of me, I
bury some of you.

## THE CANONIZATION

For God's sake hold your tongue, and let me
love;
Or chide my palsy, or my gout;
My five gray hairs, or ruined fortune flout;
With wealth your state, your mind with arts
improve;
Take you a course, get you a place,
Observe his Honor, or his Grace;
Or the king's real, or his stamped face
Contemplate; what you will, approve,
So you will let me love.

Alas! alas! who's injured by my love?
What merchant's ships have my sighs
drowned?
Who says my tears have overflowed his
ground?
When did my colds a forward spring remove?
When did the heats which my veins fill
Add one more to the plaguy bill?
Soldiers find wars, and lawyers find out still
Litigious men, which quarrels move,
Though she and I do love.

Call 's what you will, we are made such by
love;
Call her one, me another fly;
We're tapers too, and at our own cost die,
And we in us find th' eagle and the dove.
The phœnix [1] riddle hath more wit
By us; we two being one, are it;
So, to one neutral thing both sexes fit.
We die and rise the same, and prove
Mysterious by this love.

We can die by it, if not live by love,
And if unfit for tomb or hearse,
Our legend be, it will be fit for verse;
And if no piece of chronicle we prove,
We'll build in sonnets pretty rooms;
As well a well-wrought urn becomes
The greatest ashes, as half-acre tombs,
And by these hymns all shall approve
Us canonized for love;

And thus invoke us: "You, whom reverend
love
Made one another's hermitage;
You, to whom love was peace, that now is
rage;
Who did the whole world's soul contract, and
drove
Into the glasses of your eyes;
So made such mirrors, and such spies,
That they did all to you epitomize,
Countries, towns, courts, beg from above
A pattern of your love."

1 The Phœnix, symbol of immortality, was supposed, after living centuries, to burn itself in a nest of spices, and then to rise from the ashes.

## LOVE'S DEITY

I long to talk with some old lover's ghost
Who died before the god of love was born.
I cannot think that he who then loved most
Sunk so low as to love one which did scorn.
But since this god produced a destiny,
And that vice-nature, custom, lets it be,
I must love her that loves not me.

Sure they which made him god, meant not so
much,
Nor he in his young godhead practised it.
But when an even flame two hearts did
touch,
His office was indulgently to fit
Actives to passives. Correspondency
Only his subject was; it cannot be
Love, till I love her who loves me.

But every modern god will now extend
His vast prerogative as far as Jove.
To rage, to lust, to write to, to commend,
All is the purlieu of the god of love.
O, were we wakened by this tyranny
To ungod this child again, it could not be
I should love her who loves not me.

Rebel and atheist too, why murmur I,
As though I felt the worst that love could
do?
Love may make me leave loving, or might try
A deeper plague, to make her love me
too;
Which, since she loves before, I'm loth to see.
Falsehood is worse than hate; and that must
be,
If she whom I love, should love me.

## A HYMN TO GOD THE FATHER

Wilt thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which was my sin, though it were done
before?
Wilt thou forgive that sin through which I
run,
And do run still, though still I do deplore?

When thou hast done, thou hast not done;
For I have more.

Wilt thou forgive that sin which I have won
Others to sin, and made my sins their door?
Wilt thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two, but wallowed in a score?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done;
For I have more.

I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
But swear by thyself that at my death thy son
Shall shine as he shines now and heretofore;
And having done that, thou hast done;
I fear no more.

## ROBERT HERRICK (1591–1674)

The life of Herrick, foremost of the so-called "sons of Ben," is a series of apparently antithetical sequences. Born in Cheapside, London, in August, 1591, the son of a goldsmith, he was apprenticed at sixteen to his uncle, Sir William Herrick, who was likewise a goldsmith. At twenty-one he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, taking his B.A. in 1616. A dozen years later, after a convivial, or at least carefree, life in London with Ben Jonson and other poets, he took orders and received from King Charles the parish of Dean Prior in Devonshire. With the coming of the Commonwealth in 1647 he lost this living and returned to London. In this year he published his first book of verse, *Noble Numbers, or Pious Pieces*. In 1648 there followed immediately *Hesperides, or Works both Human and Divine*, and a one-volume edition of both books. With the Restoration in 1660, Herrick was given Dean Prior again, where he spent the rest of his life. He died in 1674, and was buried in his church.

Herrick is a direct descendant in literature of Anacreon, Horace, and Catullus, and of their follower in verse, Ben Jonson. He treats light subjects with consummate lyrical skill and an originality that is inimitable.

An excellent edition of the *Hesperides*, edited by H. P. Horne, with a biography of Herrick by Ernest Rhys, may be found in The Canterbury Poets series, Walter Scott Publishing Company. The complete poems may be found in the Muses Library, two volumes, edited by A. Pollard, with a preface by Swinburne.

### THE ARGUMENT OF HIS BOOK

I sing of brooks, of blossoms, birds, and bowers,
Of April, May, of June, and July flowers;
I sing of May-poles, hock-carts,[1] wassails,[2] wakes,[3]
Of bridegrooms, brides, and of their bridal cakes.
I write of Youth, of Love, and have access
By these, to sing of cleanly wantonness;
I sing of dews, of rains, and, piece by piece,
Of balm, of oil, of spice, and ambergris;
I sing of times trans-shifting; and I write
How roses first came red, and lilies white;
I write of groves, of twilights, and I sing
The court of Mab, and of the Fairy King.
I write of Hell; I sing and ever shall,
Of Heaven, and hope to have it after all.

### WHEN HE WOULD HAVE HIS VERSES READ

In sober mornings do not thou rehearse
The holy incantation of a verse;
But when that men have both well drunk and fed,
Let my enchantments then be sung or read.
When laurel spirts i' th' fire, and when the hearth
Smiles to itself and gilds the roof with mirth;
When up the thyrse[1] is raised, and when the sound
Of sacred orgies flies, "a round, a round;"[2]
When the rose reigns, and locks with ointments shine,
Let rigid Cato read these lines of mine.

1 The last cart loaded at harvest time.
2 drinking-bouts. 3 parish holidays.

### UPON THE LOSS OF HIS MISTRESSES

I have lost, and lately, these
Many dainty mistresses:
Stately Julia, prime of all;
Sapho next, a principal;
Smooth Anthea, for a skin
White and heaven-like crystalline;
Sweet Electra, and the choice
Myrha, for the lute and voice.
Next, Corinna, for her wit,
And the graceful use of it;

1 A staff twined with ivy, — a symbol of Bacchus.
2 i.e., "let's dance."

With Perilla: all are gone,
Only Herrick's left alone,
For to number sorrow by
Their departures hence, and die.

## CHERRY-RIPE

Cherry-ripe, ripe, ripe, I cry,
Full and fair ones, come and buy;
If so be you ask me where
They do grow? I answer, There,
Where my Julia's lips do smile,
There's the land, or cherry isle,
Whose plantations fully show
All the year, where cherries grow.

## CORINNA'S GOING A-MAYING

Get up, get up for shame, the blooming morn
Upon her wings presents the god unshorn.
See how Aurora throws her fair
Fresh-quilted colors through the air:
Get up, sweet slug-a-bed, and see
The dew bespangling herb and tree.
Each flower has wept and bowed toward the east
Above an hour since; yet you not dressed;
Nay! not so much as out of bed?
When all the birds have matins said
And sung their thankful hymns, 'tis sin,
Nay, profanation, to keep in,
Whereas a thousand virgins on this day
Spring, sooner than the lark, to fetch in May.

Rise, and put on your foliage, and be seen
To come forth, like the spring-time, fresh and green,
And sweet as Flora. Take no care
For jewels for your gown or hair:
Fear not; the leaves will strew
Gems in abundance upon you:
Besides, the childhood of the day has kept,
Against you come,[1] some orient pearls unwept;
Come and receive them while the light
Hangs on the dew-locks of the night:
And Titan[2] on the eastern hill
Retires himself, or else stands still
Till you come forth. Wash, dress, be brief in praying:
Few beads[3] are best, when once we go a-Maying.

1 for your arrival. 2 The sun. 3 prayers.

Come, my Corinna, come; and, coming, mark
How each field turns a street,[1] each street a park
Made green and trimmed with trees; see how
Devotion gives each house a bough
Or branch: each porch, each door, ere this,
An ark, a tabernacle is,
Made up of white-thorn, neatly interwove;
As if here were those cooler shades of love.
Can such delights be in the street
And open fields and we not see 't?
Come, we'll abroad; and let's obey
The proclamation made for May:
And sin no more, as we have done, by staying;
But, my Corinna, come, let's go a-Maying.

There's not a budding boy or girl this day
But is got up, and gone to bring in May.
A deal of youth, ere this, is come
Back, and with white-thorn laden home.
Some have despatched their cakes and cream
Before that we have left[2] to dream;
And some have wept, and wooed, and plighted troth,
And chose their priest, ere we can cast off sloth:
Many a green-gown[3] has been given;
Many a kiss, both odd and even:
Many a glance, too, has been sent
From out the eye, love's firmament;
Many a jest told of the keys betraying
This night, and locks picked, yet we're not a-Maying.

Come, let us go while we are in our prime;
And take the harmless folly of the time!
We shall grow old apace, and die
Before we know our liberty.
Our life is short, and our days run
As fast away as does the sun;
And, as a vapor or a drop of rain,
Once lost, can ne'er be found again.
So when or you or I are made
A fable, song, or fleeting shade,
All love, all liking, all delight
Lies drowned with us in endless night.
Then while time serves, and we are but decaying,
Come, my Corinna, come, let's go a-Maying.

1 i.e., is crowded. 2 ceased.
3 i.e., many a maid has been thrown upon the grass.

## TO THE VIRGINS, TO MAKE MUCH OF TIME

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying;
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times, still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may, go marry;
For, having lost but once your prime,
You may forever tarry.

## TO ANTHEA, WHO MAY COMMAND HIM ANYTHING

Bid me to live, and I will live
Thy Protestant[1] to be:
Or bid me love, and I will give
A loving heart to thee.

A heart as soft, a heart as kind,
A heart as sound and free,
As in the whole world thou canst find,
That heart I'll give to thee.

Bid that heart stay, and it will stay,
To honor thy decree:
Or bid it languish quite away,
And 't shall do so for thee.

Bid me to weep, and I will weep,
While I have eyes to see:
And having none, yet will I keep
A heart to weep for thee.

Bid me despair, and I'll despair,
Under that cypress tree:
Or bid me die, and I will dare
E'en death, to die for thee.

Thou art my life, my love, my heart,
The very eyes of me;
And hast command of every part,
To live and die for thee.

1 confirmed admirer.

## HIS REQUEST TO JULIA

Julia, if I chance to die
Ere I print my poetry,
I most humbly thee desire
To commit it to the fire:
Better 'twere my book were dead,
Than to live not perfected.

## A LYRIC TO MIRTH

While the milder fates consent,
Let's enjoy our merriment;
Drink, and dance, and pipe, and play,
Kiss our dollies[1] night and day;
Crowned with clusters of the vine,
Let us sit and quaff our wine;
Call on Bacchus, chant his praise,
Shake the thyrse and bite the bays;
Rouse Anacreon from the dead,
And return him drunk to bed;
Sing o'er Horace; for ere long
Death will come and mar the song:
Then shall Wilson and Gotiere[2]
Never sing or play more here.

## UPON JULIA'S CLOTHES

Whenas in silks my Julia goes,
Then, then, methinks, how sweetly flows
The liquefaction of her clothes.
Next, when I cast mine eyes, and see
That brave vibration, each way free,
O, how that glittering taketh me!

## A BACCHANALIAN VERSE

Fill me a mighty bowl
Up to the brim;
That I may drink
Unto my Jonson's soul.

Crown it again, again;
And thrice repeat
That happy heat,
To drink to thee, my Ben.

Well I can quaff, I see,
To th' number five,
Or nine, but thrive
In frenzy ne'er like thee.

1 sweethearts.
2 Composers living in Herrick's day.

## TO SILVIA

Pardon my trespass, Silvia; I confess
My kiss outwent the bounds of shamefacedness:
None is discreet at all times; no, not Jove
Himself, at one time, can be wise and love.

## TO LIVE MERRILY, AND TO TRUST TO GOOD VERSES

Now is the time for mirth,
Nor cheek or tongue be dumb;
For with the flow'ry earth,
The golden pomp is come.

The golden pomp is come;
For now each tree does wear,
Made of her pap and gum,
Rich beads of amber here.

Now reigns the Rose, and now
Th' Arabian dew besmears
My uncontrolled brow,
And my retorted[1] hairs.

Homer,[2] this health to thee,
In sack of such a kind,
That it would make thee see,
Though thou wert ne'er so blind.

Next, Virgil I'll call forth,
To pledge this second health
In wine whose each cup's worth
An Indian commonwealth.

A goblet next I'll drink
To Ovid; and suppose
Made he the pledge, he'd think
The world had all *one nose*.[3]

Then this immensive cup
Of aromatic wine,
Catullus, I quaff up
To that terse muse of thine.

Wild I am now with heat;
O Bacchus, cool thy rays!
Or frantic I shall eat
Thy thyrse, and bite the bays.

Round, round, the roof does run;
And being ravished thus,
Come, I will drink a tun
To my Propertius.

Now to Tibullus next,
This flood I drink to thee:
But stay, I see a text,
That this presents to me.

Behold! Tibullus lies
Here burnt, whose small return
Of ashes scarce suffice
To fill a little urn.

Trust to good verses then;
They only will aspire,
When pyramids, as men,
Are lost i' th' funeral fire;

And when all bodies meet
In Lethe, to be drowned;
Then only numbers sweet
With endless life are crowned.

1 disheveled.
2 This poem gives a good idea of Herrick's favorite classical poets. To the list should be added Anacreon and Horace.
3 A reference to Ovid's name, Naso.

## UPON MISTRESS SUSANNA SOUTHWELL HER FEET

Her pretty feet
Like snails did creep
A little out, and then,
As if they played at bo-peep,
Did soon draw in again.

## TO ELECTRA

I dare not ask a kiss;
I dare not beg a smile;
Lest having that or this,
I might grow proud the while.

No, no, the utmost share
Of my desire shall be
Only to kiss that air
That lately kissed thee.

## TO MUSIC, TO BECALM HIS FEVER

Charm me asleep, and melt me so
With thy delicious numbers,
That being ravished, hence I go
Away in easy slumbers.
Ease my sick head,
And make my bed,

Thou power that canst sever
From me this ill,
And quickly still,
Though thou not kill
My fever.

Thou sweetly canst convert the same
From a consuming fire
Into a gentle-licking flame,
And make it thus expire;
Then make me weep
My pains asleep,
And give me such reposes,
That I, poor I,
May think, thereby,
I live and die
'Mongst roses.

Fall on me like a silent dew,
Or like those maiden showers
Which, by the peep of day, do strew
A bapti'm o'er the flowers.
Melt, melt my pains,
With thy soft strains,
That having ease me given,
With full delight
I leave this light,
And take my flight
For Heaven.

## DELIGHT IN DISORDER

A sweet disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantonness:
A lawn about the shoulders thrown
Into a fine distraction;
An erring lace, which here and there
Enthrals the crimson stomacher;
A cuff neglectful, and thereby
Ribbons to flow confusedly;
A winning wave, deserving note,
In the tempestuous petticoat;
A careless shoe-string, in whose tie
I see a wild civility; [1]
Do more bewitch me, than when art
Is too precise in every part.

## THE BRACELET TO JULIA

Why I tie about thy wrist,
Julia, this my silken twist;
For what other reason is't,
But to show thee how in part
Thou my pretty captive art?
But thy bond-slave is my heart.

1 good breeding.

'Tis but silk that bindeth thee,
Knap the thread and thou art free:
But 'tis otherwise with me;
I am bound, and fast bound so,
That from thee I cannot go;
If I could, I would not so.

## THE PRIMROSE

Ask me why I send you here
This sweet Infanta of the year?
Ask me why I send to you
This Primrose, thus bepearled with dew?
I will whisper to your ears,
The sweets of love are mixed with tears.

Ask me why this flower does show
So yellow-green, and sickly too?
Ask me why the stalk is weak,
And bending, yet it doth not break?
I will answer, these discover
What fainting hopes are in a lover.

## HIS TEARS TO THAMESIS

I send, I send here my supremest kiss
To thee, my silver-footed Thamesis.[1]
No more shall I reiterate [2] thy strand,
Whereon so many stately structures stand,
Nor in the summer's sweeter evenings go
To bathe in thee, as thousand others do:
No more shall I along thy crystal glide
In barge, with boughs and rushes beautified,
With soft, smooth virgins for our chaste disport,
To Richmond, Kingston, and to Hampton Court: [3]
Never again shall I with finny oar
Put from or draw unto the faithful shore;
And landing here, or safely landing there,
Make way to my beloved Westminster,[4]
Or to the golden Cheapside,[5] where the earth
Of Julia Herrick gave to me my birth.
May all clean nymphs and curious water dames
With swan-like state, float up and down thy streams:
No drought upon thy wanton waters fall,
To make them lean and languishing at all:
No ruffling winds come hither to disease [6]
Thy pure and silver-wristed Naiades.

1 The Thames.
2 walk again. (Note the root: Lat. *iter* = road, journey.)
3 These are places on the Thames, not far from London.
4 The school that Herrick probably attended.
5 An old section of London.
6 make uncomfortable.

Keep up your state, ye streams, and as ye spring,
Never make sick your banks by surfeiting.
Grow young with tides, and though I see ye never,
Receive this vow; so fare ye well for ever.

## TO DAFFODILS

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early-rising sun
Has not attained his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having prayed together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or anything.
We die
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

## A GRACE FOR A CHILD

Here a little child I stand,
Heaving up my either hand;
Cold as paddocks [1] though they be.
Here I lift them up to Thee,
For a benison to fall
On our meat, and on us all. Amen.

## THE COUNTRY LIFE

TO THE HONORED MR. ENDYMION PORTER, GROOM OF THE BEDCHAMBER TO HIS MAJESTY

Sweet country life, to such unknown
Whose lives are others', not their own!
But, serving courts and cities, be
Less happy, less enjoying thee.
Thou never plough'st the ocean's foam
To seek and bring rough pepper home;
Nor to the Eastern Ind dost rove
To bring from thence the scorched clove;
Nor, with the loss of thy loved rest,
Bring'st home the ingot from the West.

No, thy ambition's masterpiece
Flies no thought higher than a fleece;
Or how to pay thy hinds, and clear
All scores, and so to end the year:
But walk'st about thine own dear bounds,
Not envying others' larger grounds,
For well thou know'st, 'tis not th' extent
Of land makes life, but sweet content.
When now the cock, the ploughman's horn,
Calls forth the lily-wristed morn,
Then to thy corn-fields thou dost go,
Which, though well soiled,[1] yet thou dost know
That the best compost for the lands
Is the wise master's feet and hands.
There at the plough thou find'st thy team
With a hind whistling there to them,
And cheer'st them up by singing how
The kingdom's portion is the plough.
This done, then to th' enamelled meads
Thou go'st; and as thy foot there treads,
Thou seest a present Godlike power
Imprinted in each herb and flower,
And smell'st the breath of great-eyed kine,
Sweet as the blossoms of the vine.
Here thou behold'st thy large sleek neat [2]
Unto the dewlaps [3] up in meat;
And as thou look'st, the wanton steer,
The heifer, cow, and ox draw near,
To make a pleasing pastime there.
These seen, thou go'st to view thy flocks
Of sheep, safe from the wolf and fox,
And find'st their bellies there as full
Of short sweet grass as backs with wool,
And leav'st them, as they feed and fill,
A shepherd piping on a hill.
For sports, for pageantry, and plays,
Thou hast thy eves and holidays,
On which the young men and maids meet
To exercise their dancing feet,
Tripping the comely country round,
With daffodils and daisies crowned.
Thy wakes, thy quintals,[4] here thou hast,
Thy Maypoles too with garlands graced;
Thy morris-dance, thy Whitsun-ale,
Thy shearing-feast, which never fail;
Thy harvest home,[5] thy wassail bowl,
That's tossed up after fox i' th' hole;[6]
Thy mummeries, thy Twelfthtide kings
And queens, thy Christmas revellings;
Thy nut-brown mirth, thy russet wit,
And no man pays too dear for it.
To these thou hast thy times to go
And trace the hare i' th' treacherous snow:

1 frogs.

1 fertilized. 2 oxen.
3 Folds of skin under an ox's neck.
4 tilting games.
5 Celebration at the end of harvest.
6 An old game.

Thy witty wiles to draw, and get
The lark into the trammel net:
Thou hast thy cockrood [1] and thy glade
To take the precious pheasant made;
Thy lime-twigs, snares, and pitfalls then,
To catch the pilf'ring birds, not men.
O happy life! if that their good
The husbandmen but understood,
Who all the day themselves do please,
And younglings, with such sports as these,
And, lying down, have nought t' affright
Sweet sleep, that makes more short the night.

*Cætera desunt* [2] ——

## HIS PRAYER TO BEN JONSON

When I a verse shall make,
Know I have prayed thee,
For old religion's sake,
Saint Ben, to aid me.

Make the way smooth for me,
When I, thy Herrick,
Honoring thee, on my knee
Offer my Lyric.

Candles I'll give to thee,
And a new altar;
And thou, Saint Ben, shalt be
Writ in my psalter.

## UPON A CHILD

Here a pretty baby lies
Sung asleep with lullabies:
Pray be silent, and not stir
Th' easy earth that covers her.

## THE MAD MAID'S SONG

Good morrow to the day so fair;
Good morning, sir, to you;
Good morrow to mine own torn hair,
Bedabbled with the dew.

Good morning to this primrose too;
Good morrow to each maid
That will with flowers the tomb bestrew
Wherein my love is laid.

Ah! woe is me, woe, woe is me,
Alack, and well-a-day!
For pity, sir, find out that bee
Which bore my love away.

I'll seek him in your bonnet brave;
I'll seek him in your eyes;
Nay, now I think they've made his grave
I'th' bed of strawberries.

I'll seek him there; I know, ere this,
The cold, cold earth doth shake him;
But I will go, or send a kiss
By you, sir, to awake him.

Pray hurt him not; though he be dead,
He knows well who do love him;
And who with green turfs rear his head,
And who do rudely move him.

He's soft and tender, pray take heed,
With bands of cowslips bind him,
And bring him home; but 'tis decreed,
That I shall never find him.

## THE NIGHT-PIECE, TO JULIA

Her eyes the glow-worm lend thee,
The shooting stars attend thee;
And the elves also,
Whose little eyes glow,
Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.

No Will-o'-th'-Wisp mislight thee,
Nor snake or slow-worm bite thee;
But on, on thy way,
Not making a stay,
Since ghost there's none to affright thee.

Let not the dark thee cumber;
What though the moon does slumber?
The stars of the night
Will lend thee their light,
Like tapers clear, without number.

Then, Julia, let me woo thee,
Thus, thus to come unto me;
And when I shall meet
Thy silv'ry feet,
My soul I'll pour into thee.

## THE HOCK CART; OR, HARVEST HOME

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE MILDMAY, EARL OF WESTMORLAND

Come, sons of summer, by whose toil,
We are the lords of wine and oil;
By whose tough labors and rough hands,
We rip up first, then reap our lands.
Crowned with the ears of corn, now come,
And to the pipe sing harvest home.

1 A net stretched across a glade, or artificially made clearing, to catch woodcock and similar birds.

2 "The rest is lacking." Herrick never finished the poem.

me forth, my lord, and see the cart
ressed up with all the country art.
e, here a malkin,[1] there a sheet,
spotless pure as it is sweet;
ie horses, mares, and frisking fillies,
ad all in linen white as lilies.
ie harvest swains and wenches bound
r joy, to see the hock cart crowned.
out the cart, hear how the rout
rural younglings raise the shout,
essing before, some coming after,
ose with a shout, and these with laughter.
me bless the cart, some kiss the sheaves,
me prank them up with oaken leaves;
me cross the fill-horse,[2] some with great
evotion stroke the home-borne wheat;
hile other rustics, less attent
prayers than to merriment,
in after with their breeches rent.
ell, on, brave boys, to your lord's hearth,
itt'ring with fire, where, for your mirth,
shall see first the large and chief
undation of your feast, fat beef;
ith upper stories, mutton, veal,
nd bacon, which makes full the meal,
ith sev'ral dishes standing by,
s, here a custard, there a pie,
nd here all-tempting frumenty.[3]
nd for to make the merry cheer,
smirking wine be wanting here,
here's that which drowns all care, stout beer,
hich freely drink to your lord's health,
hen to the plough (the commonwealth),
ext to your flails, your fans, your vats;
hen to the maids with wheaten hats;
the rough sickle, and the crook'd scythe,
rink, frolic boys, till all be blithe.
ed and grow fat; and as ye eat,
mindful that the lab'ring neat,
s you, may have their fill of meat.
nd know, besides, ye must revoke[4]
he patient ox unto the yoke,
nd all go back unto the plough
nd harrow, though they're hanged up now.
nd, you must know, your lord's word's true,
eed him ye must, whose food fills you.
nd that this pleasure is like rain,
ot sent ye for to drown your pain,
ut for to make it spring again.

## TO BLOSSOMS

Fair pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do ye fall so fast?
Your date is not so past,
But you may stay yet here a while,
To blush and gently smile,
And go at last.

What, were ye born to be
An hour or half's delight,
And so to bid good-night?
'Twas pity Nature brought ye forth,
Merely to show your worth,
And lose you quite.

But you are lovely leaves, where we
May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne'er so brave;
And after they have shown their pride
Like you a while, they glide
Into the grave.

## UPON BEN JONSON

Here lies Jonson with the rest
Of the poets, but the best.
Reader, wouldst thou more have known?
Ask his story, not this stone;
That will speak what this can't tell
Of his glory. So farewell.

## AN ODE FOR HIM

Ah, Ben!
Say how or when
Shall we, thy guests,
Meet at those lyric feasts
Made at the Sun,
The Dog, the Triple Tun?
Where we such clusters[1] had
As made us nobly wild, not mad;
And yet each verse of thine
Outdid the meat, outdid the frolic wine.

My Ben,
Or come again,
Or send to us
Thy wit's great overplus;
But teach us yet
Wisely to husband it,
Lest we that talent spend,
And having once brought to an end
That precious stock, the store
Of such a wit the world should have no more.

## DISSUASIONS FROM IDLENESS

Cynthius[2] pluck ye by the ear,
That ye may good doctrine hear.
Play not with the maiden hair,
For each ringlet there's a snare.

1 a cloth on a pole. 2 draught-horse.
3 boiled wheat. 4 recall.

1 of grapes; i.e., wine. 2 Apollo.

Cheek and eye, and lip and chin,
These are traps to take fools in;
Arms and hands, and all parts else,
Are but toils, or manacles,
Set on purpose to enthral
Men, but slothfuls most of all.
Live employed, and so live free
From these fetters, like to me,
Who have found, and still can prove
The lazy man the most doth love.

## THE HAG

The hag is astride
This night for to ride;
The devil and she together:
Through thick and through thin,
Now out and then in,
Though ne'er so foul be the weather.

A thorn or a burr
She takes for a spur;
With a lash of a bramble she rides now,
Through brakes and through briars,
O'er ditches and mires,
She follows the spirit that guides now.

No beast, for his food,
Dares now range the wood,
But hushed in his lair he lies lurking;
While mischiefs by these,
On land and on seas,
At noon of night are a-working.

The storm will arise
And trouble the skies
This night; and, more for the wonder,
The ghost from the tomb
Affrighted shall come,
Called out by the clap of the thunder.

## A THANKSGIVING TO GOD FOR HIS HOUSE

Lord, Thou hast given me a cell
Wherein to dwell;
A little house, whose humble roof
Is weatherproof,
Under the spars of which I lie
Both soft and dry;
Where Thou, my chamber for to ward,
Hast set a guard
Of harmless thoughts, to watch and keep
Me while I sleep.
Low is my porch, as is my fate,
Both void of state;
And yet the threshold of my door
Is worn by th' poor,
Who thither come and freely get
Good words or meat.
Like as my parlor, so my hall
And kitchen's small:
A little buttery, and therein
A little bin,
Which keeps my little loaf of bread
Unchipped, unflead;[1]
Some brittle sticks of thorn or briar
Make me a fire,
Close by whose living coal I sit,
And glow like it.
Lord, I confess too, when I dine,
The pulse is Thine,
And all those other bits that be
There placed by Thee;
The worts,[2] the purslane,[3] and the mess
Of water-cress,
Which of Thy kindness Thou hast sent;
And my content
Makes those, and my beloved beet,
To be more sweet.
'Tis Thou that crown'st my glittering hearth
With guiltless mirth,
And giv'st me wassail bowls to drink,
Spiced to the brink.
Lord, 'tis Thy plenty-dropping hand
That soils my land,
And giv'st me, for my bushel sown,
Twice ten for one:
Thou mak'st my teeming hen to lay
Her egg each day;
Besides my healthful ewes to bear
Me twins each year;
The while the conduits of my kine
Run cream, for wine.
All these, and better Thou dost send
Me, to this end,
That I should render, for my part,
A thankful heart,
Which, fired with incense, I resign,
As wholly Thine;
But the acceptance, that must be,
My Christ, by Thee.

## HIS WINDING-SHEET

Come thou, who art the wine and wit
Of all I've writ;
The grace, the glory, and the best
Piece of the rest.
Thou art of what I did intend
The all and end;
And what was made, was made to meet
Thee, thee my sheet;

1 unflayed. 2 cabbages.
3 A vegetable used for salads.

ome then, and be to my chaste side
Both bed and bride.
'e two, as relics left, will have
One rest, one grave;
nd, hugging close, we will not fear
Lust ent'ring here,
'here all desires are dead or cold,
As is the mould;
nd all affections are forgot,
Or trouble not.
ere, here the slaves and pris'ners be
From shackles free,
nd weeping widows, long oppressed,
Do here find rest.
he wronged client ends his laws
Here, and his cause.
ere those long suits of Chancery lie
Quiet, or die;
nd all Star Chamber bills do cease,
Or hold their peace.
ere needs no Court for our Request,
Where all are best,
ll wise, all equal, and all just
Alike i' th' dust.
or need we here to fear the frown
Of court or crown,
'here Fortune bears no sway o'er things,
There all are kings.
n this securer place we'll keep,
As lulled asleep;
r for a little time we'll lie,
As robes laid by,
o be another day re-worn,
Turned, but not torn,
r like old testaments engrossed,
Locked up, not lost;
nd for a while lie here concealed,
To be revealed
ext, at that great Platonic Year,[1]
And then meet here.

## HIS LITANY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the hour of my distress,
When temptations me oppress,
And when I my sins confess,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When I lie within my bed,
Sick in heart and sick in head,
And with doubts discomforted,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the house doth sigh and weep,
And the world is drowned in sleep,
Yet mine eyes the watch do keep,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the artless [1] doctor sees
No one hope, but of his fees,
And his skill runs on the lees,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When his potion and his pill,
His, or none, or little skill,
Meet for nothing but to kill,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the passing-bell doth toll,
And the furies in a shoal
Come to fright a parting soul,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the tapers now burn blue,
And the comforters are few,
And that number more than true,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the priest his last hath prayed,
And I nod to what is said,
'Cause my speech is now decayed,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When, God knows, I'm tossed about,
Either with despair or doubt,
Yet, before the glass be out,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the tempter me pursu'th
With the sins of all my youth,
And half damns me with untruth,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the flames and hellish cries
Fright mine ears and fright mine eyes,
And all terrors me surprise,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the Judgment is revealed,
And that opened which was sealed,
When to thee I have appealed,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

## HIS RETURN TO LONDON

From the dull confines of the drooping West,[2]
To see the day spring from the pregnant East,
Ravished in spirit I come, nay more, I fly
To thee, blessed place of my nativity!

1 The revolution of thousands of years which would bring all things back to the state in which they once were.

1 unskilful. 2 i.e., Devonshire.

Thus, thus with hallowed foot I touch the ground
With thousand blessings by thy fortune crowned.
O fruitful genius! that bestowest here
An everlasting plenty year by year;
O place! O people! manners, framed to please
All nations, customs, kindreds, languages!
I am a free-born Roman; suffer then
That I amongst you live a citizen.
London my home is, though by hard fate sent
Into a long and irksome banishment;
Yet since called back, henceforward let me be,
O native country! repossessed by thee;
For, rather than I'll to the West return,
I'll beg of thee first here to have mine urn.
Weak I am grown, and must in short time fall,
Give thou my sacred relics burial.

## ON HIMSELF

I will no longer kiss,
I can no longer stay;
The way of all flesh is,
That I must go this day.
Since longer I can't live,
My frolic youths, adieu;
My lamp to you I'll give,
And all my troubles too.

## TO HIS BOOK

Go thou forth, my book, though late,
Yet be timely fortunate.
It may chance good luck may send
Thee a kinsman or a friend,
That may harbor thee, when I
With my fates neglected lie.
If thou know'st not where to dwell,
See, the fire's by. Farewell.

# GEORGE HERBERT (1593–1633)

Herbert, the best writer of religious poetry in English literature, was a graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, for a while a pensioner at court, and during the last few years of his life the diligent, scholarly rector of a small country parish. While a follower of the style made popular by his friend Donne, Herbert has an originality and a very high degree of technical skill that is all his own. He wrote some prose, but is best in his religious lyrics, collected under the title *The Temple* and published the year after his death. Izaak Walton wrote an appreciative life of Herbert in 1670. The standard edition of his works is by Professor George Herbert Palmer (Houghton Mifflin Company.)

## VIRTUE

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky!
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night;
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue, angry and brave,
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie,
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

## LOVE

Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,
Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
If I lacked anything.

"A guest," I answered, "worthy to be here:"
Love said, "You shall be he."
"I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,
I cannot look on Thee!"
Love took my hand and smiling did reply,
"Who made the eyes but I?"

"Truth, Lord; but I have marred them; let my shame
Go where it doth deserve."

And know you not," says Love, "who bore
the blame?"
"My dear, then I will serve."
You must sit down," says Love, "and taste
my meat."
So I did sit and eat.

## THE PULLEY

As the title implies, the poem deals with God's means of drawing us to himself" almer).

When God at first made man,
aving a glass of blessings standing by,
"Let us," said he, "pour on him all we can.
t the world's riches, which dispersed lie,
Contract into a span."

So Strength first made a way;
hen Beauty flowed; then Wisdom, Honor, Pleasure.
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
erceiving that alone, of all his treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

"For if I should," said he,
Bestow this jewel also on my creature,
He would adore my gifts instead of me,
nd rest in Nature, not the God of Nature;
So both should losers be.

"Yet let him keep the rest,
ut keep them with repining restlessness;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to my breast."

## THE COLLAR[1]

truck the board, and cried, "No more;
I will abroad!
hat! shall I ever sigh and pine?
y lines and life are free; free as the road,
Loose as the wind, as large as store.[2]
Shall I be still in suit?[3]
Have I no harvest but a thorn
To let me blood, and not restore
hat I have lost with cordial fruit?
Sure there was wine
Before my sighs did dry it; there was corn
Before my tears did drown it.
Is the year only lost to me?
Have I no bays to crown it,
o flowers, no garlands gay? all blasted,
All wasted?

Not so, my heart, but there is fruit,
And thou hast hands.
Recover all thy sigh-blown age
On double pleasures; leave thy cold dispute
Of what is fit and not; forsake thy cage,
Thy rope of sands,
Which petty thoughts have made; and made to thee
Good cable, to enforce and draw,
And be thy law,
While thou didst wink and wouldst not see.
Away! take heed!
I will abroad.
Call in thy death's-head there, tie up thy fears.
He that forbears
To suit and serve his need
Deserves his load."
But as I raved, and grew more fierce and wild
At every word,
Methought I heard one calling, "Child";
And I replied, "My Lord."

## THE QUIP

The merry World did on a day
With his train-bands and mates agree
To meet together where I lay,
And all in sport to jeer at me.

First Beauty crept into a rose,
Which when I plucked not, "Sir," said she,
"Tell me, I pray, whose hands are those?"[1]
But thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

Then Money came, and chinking still,
"What tune is this, poor man?" said he;
"I heard in Music you had skill."
But thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

Then came brave Glory puffing by
In silks that whistled, who but he!
He scarce allowed me half an eye.
But thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

Then came quick Wit and Conversation,
And he would needs a comfort be,
And, to be short, make an oration.
But thou shalt answer, Lord, for me.

Yet when the hour of thy design
To answer these fine things shall come,
Speak not at large; say, "I am thine,"
And then they have their answer home.

[1] i.e., restraint. [2] abundance.
[3] i.e., always petitioning.

[1] i.e., why don't you use your hands?

## THE WORLD

Love[1] built a stately house,[2] where Fortune came;
And spinning fancies, she was heard to say
That her fine cobwebs did support the frame,
Whereas they were supported by the same.
But Wisdom quickly swept them all away.

Then Pleasure came, who, liking not the fashion,
Began to make balconies, terraces,
Till she had weakened all by alteration;
But reverend laws, and many a proclamation,
Reformed all at length with menaces.

1 i.e., divine love. 2 i.e., the world.

Then entered Sin, and with that sycamore
Whose leaves first sheltered man fro
drought and dew,
Working and winding slily evermore,
The inward walls and summers[1] cleft an
tore;
But Grace shored these, and cut that as i
grew.

Then Sin combined with Death in a firr
band
To raze the building to the very floor;
Which they effected, none could them with
stand.
But Love and Grace took Glory by the hand
And built a braver palace than before.

1 beams.

## IZAAK WALTON (1593–1683)

Izaak Walton was born in Stratford, August 9, 1593. He settled in London as an ironmonger but retired from business after the defeat of the royalists at Marston Moor, and lived in th country, cultivating the tastes which were most markedly his, for clergymen of the Establishe Church, and for fish. His Lives of such eminent divines as John Donne, George Herbert, an Richard Hooker are excellent examples of biography and portraiture. His most famous work *The Compleat Angler*, is a study of his favorite pastime and of his own gentle and amusing char acter. It was first published in 1653, and was expanded through many subsequent editions unti his death in 1683, when it was continued by his friend, Charles Cotton. Walton's style is simpl and homely compared with the splendors of Browne and Taylor; but it served as a vehicle for on of the best known masterpieces in the English tongue. An edition of *The Compleat Angler* by Andrew Lang appeared in 1896. It is found in Everyman's Library.

## FROM THE COMPLETE ANGLER

THE THIRD DAY — *continued*

### On the Nature and Breeding of the Trout, and how to fish for him

### CHAPTER IV

PISCATOR,[1] VENATOR,[2] MILK-WOMAN, MAUDLIN, HOSTESS

PISCATOR. The Trout is a fish highly valued, both in this and foreign nations. He may be justly said, as the old poet said of wine, and we English say of venison, to be a generous fish: a fish that is so like the buck, that he also has his seasons; for it is observed, that he comes in and goes out of season with the stag and buck. Gesner[3] says, his name is of a German offspring; and says he is a fish that feeds clean and purely, in the swiftest streams, and on the hardest gravel; and that he may justly contend with all fresh water fish, as the Mullet may with all sea fish, for precedency and daintiness of taste; and that being in right season, the most dainty palates have allowed precedency to him.

And before I go farther in my discourse, let me tell you, that you are to observe, that as there be some barren does that are good in summer, so there be some barren Trouts that are good in winter; but there are not many that are so; for usually they be in their perfection in the month of May, and decline with the buck. Now you are to take notice, that in several countries, as in Germany, and in other parts, compared to ours, fish do differ much in their bigness, and shape, and other ways; and so do Trouts. It is well known that in the Lake Leman, the Lake of Geneva, there are Trouts taken of three cubits long: as is affirmed by Gesner, a writer of good credit: and Mercator[1] says, the Trouts that are taken in the Lake of Geneva are a great part of the merchandize of that famous city. And you are further to know, that there be certain waters that breed Trouts remarkable, both for their number and smallness. I

1 angler. 2 huntsman.
3 Conrade Gesner, 1516–65, a lovable naturalist, called the "Pliny of Germany." Walton refers to him often.

1 Gerard Mercator (d. 1594), a Flemish mathematician and map-maker.

ow a little brook in Kent, that breeds them a number incredible, and you may take em twenty or forty in an hour, but none eater than about the size of a Gudgeon. here are also, in divers rivers, especially at relate to, or be near to the sea, as Winester, or the Thames about Windsor, a tle Trout called a Samlet, or Skegger out, in both which places I have caught enty or forty at a standing, that will bite fast and as freely as Minnows: these be by ne taken to be young Salmons; but in ose waters they never grow to be bigger an a Herring.

There is also in Kent, near to Canterbury, Trout called there a Fordidge Trout, a out that bears the name of the town where is usually caught, that is accounted the rest of fish; many of them near the bigness a Salmon, but known by their different our; and in their best season they cut very ite: and none of these have been known to caught with an angle, unless it were one at was caught by Sir George Hastings, an cellent angler, and now with God: and he th told me he thought that Trout bit not hunger but wantonness; and it is the her to be believed, because both he, then, d many others before him, have been rious to search into their bellies, what the od was by which they lived; and have ind out nothing by which they might isfy their curiosity.

Concerning which you are to take notice, at it is reported by good authors, that sshoppers and some fish have no mouths, t are nourished and take breath by the rousness of their gills, man knows not how: d this may be believed, if we consider that nen the raven hath hatched her eggs, she kes no further care, but leaves her young es to the care of the God of nature, who is d, in the Psalms, "to feed the young ravens at call upon him." And they be kept alive d fed by a dew; or worms that breed in eir nests; or some other ways that we morls know not. And this may be believed of e Fordidge Trout, which, as it is said of the rk, that he knows his season, so he knows s times, I think almost his day of coming to that river out of the sea; where he lives, d, it is like, feeds, nine months of the year, d fasts three in the river of Fordidge. And u are to note, that those townsmen are ry punctual in observing the time of beginng to fish for them; and boast much, that eir river affords a Trout that exceeds all hers. And just so does Sussex boast of several fish; as, namely, a Shelsey Cockle, a Chichester Lobster, an Arundel Mullet, and an Amerly Trout.

And, now, for some confirmation of the Fordidge Trout: you are to know that this Trout is thought to eat nothing in the fresh water; and it may be the better believed, because it is well known, that swallows, and bats, and wagtails, which are called half-year birds, and not seen to fly in England for six months in the year, but about Michaelmas leave us for a hotter climate, yet some of them that have been left behind their fellows, have been found, many thousands at a time, in hollow trees, or clay caves, where they have been observed to live, and sleep out the whole winter, without meat. And so Albertus[1] observes, That there is one kind of frog that hath her mouth naturally shut up about the end of August, and that she lives so all the winter: and though it be strange to some, yet it is known to too many among us to be doubted.

And so much for these Fordidge Trouts, which never afford an angler sport, but either live their time of being in the fresh water, by their meat formerly gotten in the sea, not unlike the swallow or frog, or, by the virtue of the fresh water only; or, as the birds of Paradise and the cameleon are said to live, by the sun and the air.

There is also in Northumberland a Trout called a Bull-trout, of a much greater length and bigness than any in these southern parts; and there are, in many rivers that relate to the sea, Salmon-trouts, as much different from others, both in shape and in their spots, as we see sheep in some countries differ one from another in their shape and bigness, and in the fineness of the wool: and, certainly, as some pastures breed larger sheep, so do some rivers, by reason of the ground over which they run, breed larger Trouts.

Now the next thing that I will commend to your consideration is, that the Trout is of a more sudden growth than other fish. Concerning which, you are also to take notice, that he lives not so long as the Pearch, and divers other fishes do, as Sir Francis Bacon hath observed in his History of Life and Death.

And next you are to take notice, that he is not like the Crocodile, which if he lives never so long, yet always thrives till his death: but 'tis not so with the Trout; for after he is come to his full growth, he declines in his body, and

1 Albertus Magnus, 1193–1280, a German scholastic philosopher.

keeps his bigness, or thrives only in his head till his death. And you are to know, that he will, about, especially before, the time of his spawning, get, almost miraculously, through weirs and flood-gates, against the stream; even through such high and swift places as is almost incredible. Next, that the Trout usually spawns about October or November, but in some rivers a little sooner or later; which is the more observable, because most other fish spawn in the spring or summer, when the sun hath warmed both the earth and water, and made it fit for generation. And you are to note, that he continues many months out of season; for it may be observed of the Trout, that he is like the Buck or the Ox, that will not be fat in many months, though he go in the very same pastures that horses do, which will be fat in one month: and so you may observe, That most other fishes recover strength, and grow sooner fat and in season than the Trout doth.

And next you are to note, That till the sun gets to such a height as to warm the earth and the water, the Trout is sick, and lean, and lousy, and unwholesome; for you shall, in winter, find him to have a big head, and, then, to be lank and thin and lean; at which time many of them have sticking on them Sugs, or Trout-lice; which is a kind of a worm, in shape like a clove, or pin with a big head, and sticks close to him, and sucks his moisture; those, I think, the Trout breeds himself: and never thrives till he free himself from them, which is when warm weather comes; and, then, as he grows stronger, he gets from the dead still water into the sharp streams and the gravel, and, there, rubs off these worms or lice; and then, as he grows stronger, so he gets him into swifter and swifter streams, and there lies at the watch for any fly or minnow that comes near to him; and he especially loves the May-fly, which is bred of the cod-worm, or cadis; and these make the Trout bold and lusty, and he is usually fatter and better meat at the end of that month than at any time of the year.

Now you are to know that it is observed, that usually the best Trouts are either red or yellow; though some, as the Fordidge Trout, be white and yet good; but that is not usual: and it is a note observable, that the female Trout hath usually a less head, and a deeper body than the male Trout, and is usually the better meat. And note, that a hog back and a little head, to either Trout, Salmon or any other fish, is a sign that that fish is in season.

But yet you are to note, that as you some willows or palm-trees bud and bloss sooner than others do, so some Trouts be rivers, sooner in season: and as some holl or oaks, are longer before they cast th leaves, so are some Trouts, in rivers, lon before they go out of season.

And you are to note, that there are seve kinds of Trouts: but these several kinds a not considered but by very few men; for th go under the general name of Trouts; just pigeons do, in most places; though it is c tain, there are tame and wild pigeons; a of the tame, there be helmits and runts, a carriers and cropers, and indeed too many name. Nay, the Royal Society have fou and published lately, that there be thirty a three kinds of spiders; and yet all, for aug I know, go under that one general name spider. And it is so with many kinds of fis and of Trouts especially; which differ in th bigness, and shape, and spots, and colou The great Kentish hens may be an instanc compared to other hens: and, doubtless, the is a kind of small Trout, which will nev thrive to be big; that breeds very many mo than others do, that be of a larger size: whi you may rather believe, if you consider th the little wren and titmouse will have twen young ones at a time, when, usually, t noble hawk, or the musical thrassel or blac bird, exceed not four or five.

And now you shall see me try my skill catch a Trout; and at my next walkin either this evening or to-morrow mornin I will give you direction how you yourse shall fish for him.

VENATOR. Trust me, master, I see now is a harder matter to catch a Trout than Chub; for I have put on patience, and fo lowed you these two hours, and not seen fish stir, neither at your minnow nor you worm.

PISCATOR. Well, scholar, you must endur worse luck sometime, or you will never mak a good angler. But what say you now there is a Trout now, and a good one too, if can but hold him; and two or three turn more will tire him. Now you see he lie still, and the sleight is to land him: reach m that landing-net. So, Sir, now he is min own: what say you now, is not this worth a my labour and your patience?

VENATOR. On my word, master, this is gallant Trout; what shall we do with him?

PISCATOR. Marry, e'en eat him to supper we'll go to my hostess from whence we came she told me, as I was going out of door, tha

y brother Peter, a good angler and a cheer-
l companion, had sent word he would
lge there to-night, and bring a friend with
n. My hostess has two beds, and I know
u and I may have the best: we'll rejoice with
y brother Peter and his friend, tell tales,
sing ballads, or make a catch, or find some
rmless sport to content us, and pass away
ittle time without offence to God or man.

VENATOR. A match, good master, let's go
that house, for the linen looks white, and
ells of lavender, and I long to lie in a pair
sheets that smell so. Let's be going, good
aster, for I am hungry again with fishing.

PISCATOR. Nay, stay a little, good scholar.
caught my last Trout with a worm; now I
ll put on a minnow, and try a quarter of an
ur about yonder trees for another; and, so,
lk towards our lodging. Look you,
holar, thereabout we shall have a bite
esently, or not at all. Have with you,
r: o' my word I have hold of him. Oh! it is
great logger-headed Chub; come, hang him
on that willow twig, and let's be going.
it turn out of the way a little, good scholar!
ward yonder high honeysuckle hedge;
ere we'll sit and sing, whilst this shower
ls so gently upon the teeming earth, and
ves yet a sweeter smell to the lovely flowers
at adorn these verdant meadows.
Look! under that broad beech-tree I sat
wn, when I was last this way a-fishing; and
e birds in the adjoining grove seemed to
ve a friendly contention with an echo,
hose dead voice seemed to live in a hollow
e near to the brow of that primrose-hill.
here I sat viewing the silver streams glide
ently towards their centre, the tempestu-
s sea; yet sometimes opposed by rugged
ots and pebble-stones, which broke their
aves, and turned them into foam; and some-
nes I beguiled time by viewing the harm-
ss lambs; some leaping securely in the cool
ade, whilst others sported themselves in
e cheerful sun; and saw others craving com-
rt from the swollen udders of their bleating
ms. As I thus sat, these and other sights
d so fully possest my soul with content, that
thought, as the poet has happily exprest it,

I was for that time lifted above earth;
And possest joys not promised in my birth.

As I left this place, and entered into the
xt field, a second pleasure entertained me;
was a handsome milk-maid, that had not
t attained so much age and wisdom as to
id her mind with any fears of many things
at will never be, as too many men too often
do; but she cast away all care, and sung like a nightingale. Her voice was good, and the ditty fitted for it; it was that smooth song which was made by Kit Marlow, now at least fifty years ago; and the milk-maid's mother sung an answer to it, which was made by Sir Walter Raleigh, in his younger days. They were old-fashioned poetry, but choicely good; I think much better than the strong lines that are now in fashion in this critical age. Look yonder! on my word, yonder, they both be a-milking again. I will give her the Chub, and persuade them to sing those two songs to us.

God speed you, good woman! I have been a-fishing; and am going to Bleak Hall to my bed; and having caught more fish than will sup myself and my friend, I will bestow this upon you and your daughter, for I use to sell none.

MILK-WOMAN. Marry! God requite you, Sir, and we'll eat it cheerfully. And if you come this way a-fishing two months hence, a grace of God! I'll give you a syllabub of new verjuice,[1] in a new-made hay-cock, for it. And my Maudlin shall sing you one of her best ballads; for she and I both love all anglers, they be such honest, civil, quiet men. In the meantime will you drink a draught of red cow's milk? you shall have it freely.

PISCATOR. No, I thank you; but, I pray, do us a courtesy that shall stand you and your daughter in nothing, and yet we will think ourselves still something in your debt: it is but to sing us a song that was sung by your daughter when I last passed over this meadow, about eight or nine days since.

MILK-WOMAN. What song was it, I pray? Was it, "Come, Shepherds, deck your herds"? or, "As at noon Dulcina rested"? or, "Phillida flouts me"? or, "Chevy Chace"? or, "Johnny Armstrong"? or, "Troy Town"?[2]

PISCATOR. No, it is none of those; it is a Song that your daughter sung the first part, and you sung the answer to it.

MILK-WOMAN. O, I know it now. I learned the first part in my golden age, when I was about the age of my poor daughter; and the latter part, which indeed fits me best now, but two or three years ago, when the cares of the world began to take hold of me: but you shall, God willing, hear them both; and sung as well as we can, for we both love anglers. Come Maudlin, sing the first part

1 fruit-juice.
2 Old English songs, most of which can be found in Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*.

to the gentlemen, with a merry heart; and I'll sing the second when you have done.

THE MILK-MAID'S SONG [1]

Come, live with me, and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove,
That valleys, groves, or hills, or fields,
Or woods, and steepy mountains yields;

Where we will sit upon the rocks,
And see the shepherds feed our flocks,
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses;
And, then, a thousand fragrant posies;
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle,
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Slippers, lined choicely for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy-buds,
With coral clasps, and amber studs.
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come, live with me, and be my love.

Thy silver dishes, for thy meat,
As precious as the Gods do eat,
Shall, on an ivy table, be
Prepared each day for thee and me.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight, each May morning.
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me, and be my love.

VENATOR. Trust me, master, it is a choice song, and sweetly sung by honest Maudlin. I now see it was not without cause that our good queen Elizabeth did so often wish herself a milk-maid all the month of May, because they are not troubled with fears and cares, but sing sweetly all the day, and sleep securely all the night: and without doubt, honest, innocent, pretty Maudlin does so. I'll bestow Sir Thomas Overbury's [2] milk-maid's wish upon her, "that she may die in the Spring; and, being dead, may have good store of flowers stuck round about her winding-sheet."

THE MILK-MAID'S MOTHER'S ANSWER.[3]

If all the world and love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee, and be thy love.

But Time drives flocks from field to fold;
When rivers rage, and rocks grow cold;
Then Philomel becometh dumb;
And age complains of cares to come.

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields
To wayward winter reckoning yields.
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is fancy's spring but sorrow's fall.

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies,
Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten;
In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

Thy belt of straw, and ivy buds,
Thy coral clasps, and amber studs,
All these in me no means can move
To come to thee, and be thy love.

What should we talk of dainties, then,
Of better meat than's fit for men?
These are but vain: that's only good
Which God hath blessed, and sent for food.

But could youth last, and love still breed;
Had joys no date, nor age no need;
Then those delights my mind might move
To live with thee, and be thy love.

MOTHER. Well! I have done my song. But stay, honest anglers; for I will make Maudlin sing you one short song more. Maudlin! sing that song that you sung last night, when young Coridon the shepherd played so purely on his oaten pipe to you and your cousin Betty.

MAUDLIN. I will, mother.

I married a wife of late,
The more's my unhappy fate:
I married her for love,
As my fancy did me move,
And not for a worldly estate:

But oh! the green sickness
Soon changed her likeness;
And all her beauty did fail.
But 'tis not so
With those that go
Thro' frost and snow,
As all men know,
And carry the milking-pail.

PISCATOR. Well sung, good woman; I thank you. I'll give you another dish of fish one of these days; and then beg another song of you. Come, scholar! let Maudlin alone; do not you offer to spoil her voice. Look; yonder comes mine hostess, to call us to supper. How now! is my brother Peter come?

HOSTESS. Yes, and a friend with him. They are both glad to hear that you are in these parts; and long to see you; and long to be at supper, for they be very hungry.

1 See the note on Marlowe, p. 276.

2 Overbury, 1581–1613, remembered for his *Characters*, essayistic descriptions of men and women.

3 Like Marlowe's song, taken from *England's Helicon*, 1600. In some copies the poem is signed S.W.R.; in others, the initials are covered by a slip marked *Ignoto*.

# SIR THOMAS BROWNE (1605–1682)

Thomas Browne, distinguished both as writer and physician, was born October 19, 1605. He s sent to Winchester School and Pembroke College, Oxford, where he graduated in 1626. He udied medicine, and spent some time in travel. After his return he settled in Norwich, where he ntinued to live quietly as physician and scholar, until his death in 1682. He was knighted by ng Charles II in 1671.

Browne's most famous work, the *Religio Medici*, written as "a private exercise directed to rself," was printed without his consent in 1642. This forced him to issue an authorized and rrected edition in 1643. It is a long meditation upon his own character and experience, reveal- ; a fascinating and baffling personality. As a physician and man of science Browne was end- sly curious and skeptical, but he was also a mystic. His other works are marked by the same xture of curiosity and enthusiasm. The longest of them, the *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* or *Vulgar rors* is a survey of folk superstitions; *Urn Burial* is an essay on burial customs inspired by the covery of sepulchral urns in Norfolk; *A Letter to a Friend* is a minute account of the phenomena nibited in the death of a young man, his patient.

In Sir Thomas Browne's writings the rich, elaborate, prose style for which the seventeenth ntury was noted reached its height. In gorgeous vocabulary and sustained rhythm it employed resources of poetry, and became a model for later writers of poetic or imaginative prose.

Sir Thomas Browne's works are published in collected editions by Simon Wilkin in Bohn's brary and by Charles Sayle in the English Library. The *Religio Medici* is included in the lden Treasury Series, and in Everyman's Library. There are essays on Browne by Thomas Quincey and Walter Pater, both of whom were influenced by him in their art of prose writing.

## *From* RELIGIO MEDICI

The essay consists of seventy-five sections, e first eighteen of which appear below.

For my religion, though there be several cumstances that might persuade the world have none at all, as the general scandal of profession, the natural course of my dies, the indifferency of my behavior and course in matters of religion, neither vio- tly defending one, nor with that common lor and contention opposing another; yet despite hereof, I dare, without usurpation, sume the honorable style of a Christian. ot that I merely owe this title to the font, y education, or clime wherein I was born, being bred up either to confirm those prin- ples my parents instilled into my under- nding, or by a general consent proceed in e religion of my country: but having in my er years and confirmed judgment, seen and amined all, I find myself obliged by the inciples of grace, and the law of mine own ason, to embrace no other name but this: ither doth herein my zeal so far make me get the general charity I owe unto human- , as rather to hate than pity Turks, in- els, and (what is worse) Jews; rather con- nting myself to enjoy that happy style, an maligning those who refuse so glorious title.

Sect. 2. — But, because the name of a ristian is become too general to express our ith, there being a geography of religion as ll as lands, and every clime distinguished t only by their laws and limits, but circum- scribed by their doctrines and rules of faith; to be particular, I am of that reformed new-cast religion,[1] wherein I dislike nothing but the name; of the same belief our Savior taught, the apostles disseminated, the fathers authorized, and the martyrs confirmed, but by the sinister ends of princes, the ambition and avarice of prelates, and the fatal corruption of times, so decayed, impaired, and fallen from its native beauty, that it required the careful and charitable hands of these times to restore it to its primitive integrity. Now the accidental occasion whereupon, the slender means whereby, the low and abject condition of the person[2] by whom so good a work was set on foot, which in our adversaries beget contempt and scorn, fills me with wonder, and is the very same objection the insolent pagans first cast at Christ and his disciples.

Yet have I not so shaken hands with those desperate resolutions,[3] who had rather venture at large their decayed bottom,[4] than bring her in to be new trimmed in the dock; who had rather promiscuously retain all, than abridge any, and obstinately be what they are, than what they have been, as to stand in diameter and swords point with them. We have reformed from them, not against them; for omitting those improperations,[5] and terms of scurrility betwixt us, which only difference our affections, and not our cause, there is between us one common name and

1 Protestant. 2 Luther.
3 i.e. men of desperate resolutions.
4 ship. 5 insults.

appellation, one faith and necessary body of principles common to us both. And therefore I am not scrupulous to converse and live with them, to enter their churches in defect of ours, and either pray with them, or for them. I could never perceive any rational consequence from those many texts which prohibit the Children of Israel to pollute themselves with the temples of the heathens; we being all Christians, and not divided by such detested impieties as might profane our prayers, or the place wherein we make them; or that a resolved conscience may not adore her Creator anywhere, especially in places devoted to his service; where if their devotions offend him, mine may please him; if theirs profane it, mine may hallow it; holy-water and crucifix (dangerous to the common people) deceive not my judgment, nor abuse my devotion at all. I am, I confess, naturally inclined to that which misguided zeal terms superstition: my common conversation I do acknowledge austere, my behavior full of rigor, sometimes not without morosity; yet at my devotion I love to use the civility of my knee, my hat, and hand, with all those outward and sensible motions which may express or promote any invisible devotion. I should violate my own arm rather than a church, nor willingly deface the name of saint or martyr. At the sight of a cross or crucifix I can dispense with my hat, but scarce with the thought or memory of my Savior: I cannot laugh at, but rather pity the fruitless journeys of pilgrims, or contemn the miserable condition of friars; for though misplaced in circumstances, there is something in it of devotion. I could never hear the Ave-Mary bell [1] without an elevation, or think it a sufficient warrant, because they erred in one circumstance, for me to err in all, that is, in silence and dumb contempt. Whilst therefore they direct their devotions to her, I offer mine to God, and rectify the errors of their prayers, by rightly ordering mine own. At a solemn procession I have wept abundantly, while my consorts, blind with opposition and prejudice, have fallen into an excess of scorn and laughter. There are questionless, both in Greek, Roman, and African churches, solemnities and ceremonies, whereof the wiser zeals do make a Christian use, and stand condemned by us, not as evil in themselves, but as allurements and baits of superstition to those vulgar heads that look asquint o the face of truth, and those unstable jud ments that cannot resist in the narrow poi and center of virtue without a reel or stagg to the circumference.

As there were many reformers, so likewi many reformations; every country proceed ing in a particular way and method, accor ing as their national interest, together wit their constitution and clime inclined the some angrily, and with extremity; othe calmly, and with mediocrity, not rending b easily dividing the community, and leavin an honest possibility of a reconciliatio which though peaceable spirits do desire, an may conceive that revolution of time and th mercies of God may effect, yet that judgme that shall consider the present antipathi between the two extremes, their contrarieti in condition, affection and opinion, may wit the same hopes expect a union in the poles heaven.

But to difference myself nearer,[1] and dra into a lesser circle: there is no church, whos every part so squares unto my conscience whose articles, constitutions, and custom seem so consonant unto reason, and as were framed to my particular devotion, a this whereof I hold my belief, the Church o England, to whose faith I am a sworn sub ject, and therefore, in a double obligation subscribe unto her articles, and endeavor t observe her constitutions: whatsoever beyond, as points indifferent, I observe, ac cording to the rules of my private reason, o the humor and fashion of my devotion neither believing this because Luther af firmed it, nor disapproving that becaus Calvin hath disavouched it. I condemn no all things in the council of Trent,[2] nor ap prove all in the synod of Dort.[3] In brief where the Scripture is silent, the church i my text; where that speaks, 'tis but my com ment; where there is a joint silence of both, borrow not the rules of my religion from Rome or Geneva, but from the dictates o my own reason. It is an unjust scandal o our adversaries, and a gross error in our selves, to compute the nativity of our re ligion from Henry the Eighth; who, though he rejected the Pope, refused not the faith o Rome, and effected no more than what his own predecessors desired and essayed in ages

1 "A church bell that tolls every day at six and twelve of the clock; at the hearing whereof, every one in what place soever, either of house or street, betakes himself to his prayer, which is commonly directed to the Virgin." — (Browne's note).

1 to define more closely.

2 This council, held at Trent in the Tyrol, 1545–63, decided against the ideas of the Reformation.

3 The meeting, held at Dort in the Netherlands, 1618–19, condemned the doctrines of Arminius, the Leyden remonstrant.

ast, and it was conceived the state of Venice ould have attempted in our days.[1] It is as ncharitable a point in us to fall upon those opular scurrilities and opprobrious scoffs of he Bishop of Rome, to whom, as a temporal rince, we owe the duty of good language. I onfess there is a cause of passion[2] between s: by his sentence I stand excommunicated; eretic is the best language he affords me: et can no ear witness I ever returned to him he name of antichrist, man of sin, or whore Babylon. It is the method of charity to uffer without reaction: those usual satires nd invectives of the pulpit may perchance roduce a good effect on the vulgar, whose ars are opener to rhetoric than logic; yet o they, in no wise, confirm the faith of wiser elievers, who know that a good cause needs ot be patroned by passion, but can sustain self upon a temperate dispute.

SECT. 6. — I could never divide myself rom any man upon the difference of an opin-n, or be angry with his judgment for not greeing with me in that from which, per-aps, within a few days, I should dissent my-elf. I have no genius to disputes in religion: nd have often thought it wisdom to decline hem, especially upon a disadvantage, or hen the cause of truth might suffer in the eakness of my patronage. Where we desire o be informed, 'tis good to contest with men bove ourselves; but, to confirm and estab-sh our opinions, 'tis best to argue with judg-ments below our own, that the frequent poils and victories over their reasons may ettle in ourselves an esteem and confirmed pinion of our own. Every man is not a roper champion for truth, nor fit to take up he gauntlet in the cause of verity; many, rom the ignorance of these maxims, and an nconsiderate zeal unto truth, have too rashly harged the troops of error and remain as rophies unto the enemies of truth. A man ay be in as just possession of truth as of a ity, and yet be forced to surrender; 'tis herefore far better to enjoy her with peace han to hazard her on a battle. If, therefore, here rise any doubts in my way, I do forget hem, or at least defer them, till my better ettled judgment and more manly reason be ble to resolve them; for I perceive every an's own reason is his best Œdipus,[3] and ill upon a reasonable truce, find a way to oose those bonds wherewith the subtleties f error have enchained our more flexible and tender judgments. In philosophy, where truth seems doublefaced, there is no man more paradoxical than myself: but in divinity I love to keep the road; and, though not in an implicit, yet an humble faith, follow the great wheel of the church, by which I move; not reserving any proper poles, or motion from the epicycle[1] of my own brain. By this means I leave no gap for heresy, schisms or errors, of which at present, I hope I shall not injure truth to say, I have no taint or tincture. I must confess my greener studies have been polluted with two or three; not any begotten in the latter centuries, but old and obsolete, such as could never have been revived but by such extravagant and irregular heads as mine. For, indeed, heresies perish not with their authors; but, like the river Arethusa,[2] though they lose their currents in one place, they rise up again in another. One general council is not able to extirpate one single heresy: it may be cancelled for the present; but revolution of time, and the like aspects from heaven, will restore it, when it will flourish till it be condemned again. For, as though there were a metempsychosis, and the soul of one man passed into another, opinions do find, after certain revolutions, men and minds like those that first begat them. To see ourselves again, we need not look for Plato's year:[3] every man is not only himself; there have been many Diogeneses, and as many Timons, though but few of that name; men are lived over again; the world is now as it was in ages past; there was none then, but there hath been some one since, that parallels him, and is, as it were, his revived self.

SECT. 7. — Now, the first of mine[4] was that of the Arabians, that the souls of men perished with their bodies, but should yet be raised again at the last day: not that I did absolutely conceive a mortality of the soul, but, if that were (which faith, not philosophy, hath yet thoroughly disproved), and that both entered the grave together, yet I held the same conceit thereof that we all do of the body, that it should rise again. Surely it is but the merits of our unworthy natures, if we sleep in darkness until the last alarm. A serious reflex upon my own unworthiness did make me backward from challenging this prerogative of my soul: so that I might enjoy

1 Referring to a quarrel between the Pope and Venice n 1606.

2 anger.

3 solver of perplexities.

1 i.e., figures taken from Ptolemaic astronomy.

2 Supposed to flow from Greece to Sicily, under the sea.

3 "A revolution of certain thousand years, when all things should return unto their former estate, and he be teaching again in his school, as when he delivered this opinion." — (Browne's note).

4 i.e., heresies.

my Savior at the last, I could with patience be nothing almost unto eternity. The second was that of Origen;[1] that God would not persist in his vengeance for ever, but, after a definite time of his wrath, would release the damned souls from torture; which error I fell into upon a serious contemplation of the great attribute of God, his mercy; and did a little cherish it in myself, because I found therein no malice, and a ready weight to sway me from the other extreme of despair whereunto melancholy and contemplative natures are too easily disposed. A third there is, which I did never positively maintain or practise, but have often wished it had been consonant to truth, and not offensive to my religion; and that is, the prayer for the dead; whereunto I was inclined from some charitable inducements, whereby I could scarce contain my prayers for a friend at the ringing of a bell, or behold his corpse without an orison for his soul. 'Twas a good way, methought, to be remembered by posterity, and far more noble than a history. These opinions I never maintained with pertinacity, or endeavored to inveigle any man's belief unto mine, nor so much as ever revealed, or disputed them with my dearest friends; by which means I neither propagated them in others, nor confirmed them in myself: but, suffering them to flame upon their own substance, without addition of new fuel, they went out insensibly of themselves; therefore these opinions, though condemned by lawful councils, were not heresies in me, but bare errors, and single lapses of my understanding, without a joint depravity of my will. Those have not only depraved understandings, but diseased affections, which cannot enjoy a singularity without a heresy, or be the author of an opinion without they be of a sect also. This was the villany of the first schism of Lucifer; who was not content to err alone, but drew into his faction many legions of spirits; and upon this experience he tempted only Eve, well understanding the communicable nature of sin, and that to deceive but one was tacitly and upon consequence to delude them both.

SECT. 8. — That heresies should arise, we have the prophecy of Christ; but, that old ones should be abolished, we hold no prediction. That there must be heresies, is true, not only in our church, but also in any other: even in the doctrines heretical there will be superheresies; and Arians, not only divided from the church, but also among themselves:

1 One of the early church fathers, third century A.D.

for heads that are disposed unto schism, and complexionally propense to innovation, are naturally indisposed for a community; nor will be ever confined unto the order or economy of one body; and therefore, when they separate from others, they knit but loosely among themselves; nor contented with a general breach or dichotomy [1] with their church, do subdivide and mince themselves almost into atoms. 'Tis true, that men of singular parts and humors have not been free from singular opinions and conceits in all ages; retaining something, not only beside the opinion of their own church, or any other, but also any particular author; which, notwithstanding, a sober judgment may do without offence or heresy; for there are yet, after all the decrees of councils, and the niceties of the schools, many things, untouched, unimagined, wherein the liberty of an honest reason may play and expatiate with security, and far without the circle of a heresy.

SECT. 9. — As for those wingy mysteries in divinity, and airy subtleties in religion, which have unhinged the brains of better heads, they never stretched the *pia mater* [2] of mine. Methinks there be not impossibilities enough in religion for an active faith: the deepest mysteries ours contains have not only been illustrated, but maintained, by syllogism and the rule of reason. I love to lose myself in a mystery; to pursue my reason to an *O altitudo!* [3] 'Tis my solitary recreation to pose my apprehension with those involved enigmas and riddles of the Trinity — incarnation and resurrection. I can answer all the objections of Satan and my rebellious reason with that odd resolution I learned of Tertullian,[4] *Certum est quia impossibile est.*[5] I desire to exercise my faith in the difficultest point; for, to credit ordinary and visible objects is not faith, but persuasion. Some believe the better for seeing Christ's sepulchre; and, when they have seen the Red Sea, doubt not of the miracle. Now, contrarily, I bless myself, and am thankful, that I lived not in the days of miracles; that I never saw Christ nor his disciples. I would not have been one of those Israelites that passed the Red Sea; nor one of Christ's patients, on whom he wrought his wonders: then had my faith been thrust upon me; nor should I enjoy that greater blessing pronounced to all that be-

1 division.
2 The inner membrane covering the brain.
3 "What a height;" i.e., the point beyond which human reason cannot go.
4 Early church father.
5 It is true, because it is impossible.

lieve and saw not. 'Tis an easy and necessary belief, to credit what our eye and sense hath examined. I believe he was dead, and buried, and rose again; and desire to see him in his glory, rather than to contemplate him in his cenotaph or sepulchre. Nor is this much to believe; as we have reason, we owe this faith unto history: they only had the advantage of a bold and noble faith, who lived before his coming, who, upon obscure prophesies and mystical types, could raise a belief, and expect apparent impossibilities.

SECT. 10. — 'Tis true, there is an edge in all firm belief, and with an easy metaphor we may say, the sword of faith; but in these obscurities I rather use it in the adjunct the Apostle gives it, a buckler; under which I conceive a wary combatant may lie invulnerable. Since I was of understanding to know that we know nothing, my reason hath been more pliable to the will of faith: I am now content to understand a mystery, without a rigid definition, in an easy and Platonic description. That allegorical description of Hermes [1] pleaseth me beyond all the metaphysical definitions of divines. Where I cannot satisfy my reason, I love to humor my fancy: I had as lieve you tell me that *anima est angelus hominis, est corpus Dei*,[2] as *ἐντελέχεια*;[3] — *lux est umbra Dei*,[4] as *actus perspicui*.[5] Where there is an obscurity too deep for our reason, 'tis good to sit down with a description, periphrasis, or adumbration; for, by acquainting our reason how unable it is to display the visible and obvious effects of nature, it becomes more humble and submissive unto the subtleties of faith: and thus I teach my haggard and unreclaimed reason to stoop unto the lure of faith. I believe there was already a tree, whose fruit our unhappy parents tasted, though, in the same chapter where God forbids it, 'tis positively said, the plants of the field were not yet grown; for God had not caused it to rain upon the earth. I believe that the serpent (if we shall literally understand it), from his proper form and figure, made his motion on his belly, before the curse. I find the trial of the pucelage [6] and virginity of women, which God ordained the Jews, is very fallible. Experience and history informs me that, not only many particular women, but likewise whole nations, have escaped the curse of childbirth, which God seems to pronounce upon the whole sex; yet do I believe that all this is true, which, indeed, my reason would persuade me to be false: and this, I think, is no vulgar part of faith, to believe a thing not only above, but contrary to, reason, and against the arguments of our proper senses.

SECT. 11. — In my solitary and retired imagination (*neque enim cum porticus aut me lectulus accepit, desum mihi*),[1] I remember I am not alone; and therefore forget not to contemplate him and his attributes, who is ever with me, especially those two mighty ones, his wisdom and eternity. With the one I recreate, with the other I confound, my understanding: for who can speak of eternity without a solecism, or think thereof without an ecstacy? Time we may comprehend; 'tis but five days older than ourselves, and hath the same horoscope with the world; but, to retire so far back as to apprehend a beginning, — to give such an infinite start forwards as to conceive an end, — in an essence that we affirm hath neither the one nor the other, it puts my reason to St. Paul's sanctuary: [2] my philosophy dares not say the angels can do it. God hath not made a creature that can comprehend him; 'tis a privilege of his own nature: "I am that I am" was his own definition unto Moses; and 'twas a short one to confound mortality, that durst question God, or ask him what he was. Indeed, he only is; all others have and shall be; but, in eternity, there is no distinction of tenses; and therefore that terrible term, predestination, which hath troubled so many weak heads to conceive, and the wisest to explain, is in respect to God no prescious determination of our estates to come, but a definite blast of his will already fulfilled, and at the instant that he first decreed it; for, to his eternity, which is indivisible, and altogether, the last trump is already sounded, the reprobates in the flame, and the blessed in Abraham's bosom. St. Peter speaks modestly, when he saith, "a thousand years to God are but as one day;" for, to speak like a philosopher, those continued instances of time, which flow into a thousand years, make not to him one moment. What to us is to come, to his eternity is present; his whole duration being

1 "Sphæra cujus centrum ubique, circumferentia nullibi." — (Browne's note).
(A sphere whose center is everywhere and circumference nowhere.) Hermes Trismegistus, a writer of the fourth century A.D., is the supposed father of alchemy.
2 The soul is the angel of man; it is the body of God.
3 "the actual being," Aristotle's term for the soul.
4 Light is the shadow of God.
5 "transparent phenomena," Aristotle's definition of light.
6 virginity.

1 For even when my porch or couch receives me, I remember myself.
2 i.e., I go to the Apostle for comfort.

but one permanent point, without succession, parts, flux, or division.

SECT. 12. — There is no attribute that adds more difficulty to the mystery of the Trinity, where, though in a relative way of Father and Son, we must deny a priority. I wonder how Aristotle could conceive the world eternal, or how he could make good two eternities. His similitude, of a triangle comprehended in a square, doth somewhat illustrate the trinity of our souls, and that the triple unity of God; for there is in us not three, but a trinity of, souls; because there is in us, if not three distinct souls, yet differing faculties, that can and do subsist apart in different subjects, and yet in us are thus united as to make but one soul and substance. If one soul were so perfect as to inform three distinct bodies, that were a petty trinity. Conceive the distinct number of three, not divided nor separated by the intellect, but actually comprehended in its unity, and that is a perfect trinity. I have often admired the mystical way of Pythagoras, and the secret magic of numbers. "Beware of philosophy," is a precept not to be received in too large a sense: for, in this mass of nature, there is a set of things that carry in their front, though not in capital letters, yet in stenography and short characters, something of divinity; which, to wiser reasons, serve as luminaries in the abyss of knowledge, and, to judicious beliefs, as scales and rundles [1] to mount the pinnacles and highest pieces of divinity. The severe schools shall never laugh me out of the philosophy of Hermes, that this visible world is but a picture of the invisible, wherein, as in a portrait, things are not truly, but in equivocal shapes, and as they counterfeit some real substance in that invisible fabric.

SECT. 13. — That other attribute, wherewith I recreate my devotion, is his wisdom, in which I am happy; and for the contemplation of this only do not repent me that I was bred in the way of study. The advantage I have of the vulgar, with the content and happiness I conceive therein, is an ample recompense for all my endeavors, in what part of knowledge soever. Wisdom is his most beauteous attribute: no man can attain unto it: yet Solomon pleased God when he desired it. He is wise, because he knows all things; and he knoweth all things, because he made them all: but his greatest knowledge is in comprehending that he made not, that is, himself. And this is also the greatest knowledge in man. For this do I honor my own profession, and embrace the counsel even of the devil himself: had he read such a lecture in Paradise as he did at Delphos,[1] we had better known ourselves; nor had we stood in fear to know him. I know God is wise in all; wonderful in what we conceive, but far more in what we comprehend not: for we behold him but asquint, upon reflex or shadow; our understanding is dimmer than Moses's eye; we are ignorant of the back parts or lower side of his divinity; therefore, to pry into the maze of his counsels, is not only folly in man, but presumption even in angels. Like us, they are his servants, not his senators; he holds no counsel, but that mystical one of the Trinity, wherein, though there be three persons, there is but one mind that decrees without contradiction. Nor needs he any; his actions are not begot with deliberation; his wisdom naturally knows what's best: his intellect stands ready fraught with the superlative and purest ideas of goodness: consultation and election, which are two motions in us, make but one in him: his actions springing from his power at the first touch of his will. These are contemplations metaphysical: my humble speculations have another method, and are content to trace and discover those expressions he hath left in his creatures, and the obvious effects of nature. There is no danger to profound [2] these mysteries, no *sanctum sanctorum* [3] in philosophy. The world was made to be inhabited by beasts, but studied and contemplated by man: 'tis the debt [4] our reason we owe unto God, and the homage we pay for not being beasts. Without this, the world is still as though it had not been, or as it was before the sixth day, when as yet there was not a creature that could conceive or say there was a world. The wisdom of God receives small honor from those vulgar heads that rudely stare about, and with a gross rusticity admire his works. Those highly magnify him, whose judicious enquiry into his acts, and deliberate research into his creatures, return the duty of a devout and learned admiration. Therefore,

Search while thou wilt; and let thy reason go
To ransom truth, e'en to th' abyss below;
Rally the scattered causes; and that line
Which nature twists be able to untwine.
It is thy Maker's will; for unto none
But unto reason can he e'er be known.

1 ladders.

1 Γνῶθι σεαυτόν. Nosce teipsum. — (Browne's note) (Know thyself.)
2 to sound, investigate. 3 holy of holies. 4 for.

The devils do know thee; but those damned meteors
Build not thy glory, but confound thy creatures.
Teach my endeavors so thy works to read,
That learning them in thee I may proceed.
Give thou my reason that instructive flight,
Whose weary wings may on thy hands still light.
Teach me to soar aloft, yet ever so,
When near the sun, to stoop again below.
Thus shall my humble feathers safely hover,
And, though near earth, more than the heav'ns discover.
And then at last, when homeward I shall drive,
Rich with the spoils of nature, to my hive,
There will I sit, like that industrious fly,
Buzzing thy praises; which shall never die
Till death abrupts them, and succeeding glory
Bid me go on in a more lasting story.

And this is almost all wherein an humble creature may endeavor to requite, and some way to retribute unto his Creator: for, if not he that saith, Lord, Lord, but he that doeth the will of the Father, shall be saved, certainly our wills must be our performances, and our intents make out our actions; otherwise our pious labors shall find anxiety in our graves, and our best endeavors not hope, but fear, a resurrection.

SECT. 14. — There is but one first cause, and four second causes of all things. Some are without efficient, as God; others without matter, as angels; some without form, as the first matter: but every essence, created or uncreated, hath its final cause, and some positive end both of its essence and operation. This is the cause I grope after in the works of nature; on this hangs the providence of God. To raise so beauteous a structure as the world and the creatures thereof was but his art; but their sundry and divided operations, with their predestinated ends, are from the treasury of his wisdom. In the causes, nature, and affections, of the eclipses of the sun and moon, there is most excellent speculation; but, to profound farther, and to contemplate a reason why his providence hath so disposed and ordered their motions in that vast circle, as to conjoin and obscure each other, is a sweeter piece of reason, and a diviner point of philosophy. Therefore, sometimes, and in some things, there appears to me as much divinity in Galen [1] his books, *De Usu Partium*,[2] as in Suarez's [3] Metaphysics. Had Aristotle been as curious in the enquiry of this cause as he was of the other, he had not left behind him an imperfect piece of philosophy, but an absolute tract of divinity.

SECT. 15. — *Natura nihil agit frustra*,[1] is the only indisputable axiom in philosophy. There are no grotesques in nature; not any thing framed to fill up empty cantons, and unnecessary spaces. In the most imperfect creatures, and such as were not preserved in the ark, but, having their seeds and principles in the womb of nature, are every where, where the power of the sun is, — in these is the wisdom of his hand discovered. Out of this rank Solomon chose the object of his admiration; indeed, what reason may not go to school to the wisdom of bees, ants, and spiders? What wise hand teacheth them to do what reason cannot teach us? Ruder heads stand amazed at those prodigious pieces of nature, whales, elephants, dromedaries, and camels; these, I confess, are the colossuses and majestic pieces of her hand; but in these narrow engines there is more curious mathematics; and the civility of these little citizens more neatly sets forth the wisdom of their Maker. Who admires not Regio Montanus [2] his fly beyond his eagle; or wonders not more at the operation of two souls in those little bodies than but one in the trunk of a cedar? I could never content my contemplation with those general pieces of wonder, the flux and reflux of the sea, the increase of Nile, the conversion of the needle to the north; and have studied to match and parallel those in the more obvious and neglected pieces of nature which, without farther travel, I can do in the cosmography of myself. We carry with us the wonders we seek without us: there is all Africa and her prodigies in us. We are that bold and adventurous piece of nature, which he that studies wisely learns, in a compendium, what others labor at in a divided piece and endless volume.

SECT. 16. — Thus there are two books from whence I collect my divinity: besides that written one of God, another of his servant, nature, that universal and public manuscript, that lies expansed unto the eyes of all. Those that never saw him in the one have discovered him in the other: this was the scripture and theology of the heathens; the natural motion of the sun made them more admire him than its supernatural station did the children of Israel. The ordinary effects of nature wrought more admiration in

1 Mediæval writer on medicine.
2 On the use of parts.
3 A Jesuit religious philosopher.

1 Nature does nothing in vain.
2 A German of Königsberg, 1436–75, who constructed a mechanical fly and an eagle which could soar.

them than, in the other, all his miracles. Surely the heathens knew better how to join and read these mystical letters than we Christians, who cast a more careless eye on these common hieroglyphics, and disdain to suck divinity from the flowers of nature. Nor do I so forget God as to adore the name of nature; which I define not, with the schools, to be the principle of motion and rest, but that straight and regular line, that settled and constant course the wisdom of God hath ordained the actions of his creatures, according to their several kinds. To make a revolution every day is the nature of the sun, because of that necessary course which God hath ordained it, from which it cannot swerve but by a faculty from that voice which first did give it motion. Now this course of nature God seldom alters or perverts; but, like an excellent artist, hath so contrived his work, that, with the self-same instrument, without a new creation, he may effect his obscurest designs. Thus he sweeteneth the water with a word, preserveth the creatures in the ark, which the blast of his mouth might have as easily created; — for God is like a skilful geometrician, who, when more easily, and with one stroke of his compass, he might describe or divide a right line, had yet rather do this in a circle or longer way, according to the constituted and forelaid principles of his art: yet this rule of his he doth sometimes pervert, to acquaint the world with his prerogative, lest the arrogancy of our reason should question his power, and conclude he could not. And thus I call the effects of nature the works of God, whose hand and instrument she only is; and therefore, to ascribe his actions unto her is to devolve the honor of the principal agent upon the instrument; which if with reason we may do, then let our hammers rise up and boast they have built our houses, and our pens receive the honor of our writings. I hold there is a general beauty in the works of God, and therefore no deformity in any kind of species or creature whatsoever. I cannot tell by what logic we call a toad, a bear, or an elephant ugly; they being created in those outward shapes and figures which best express the actions of their inward forms; and having passed that general visitation of God, who saw that all that he had made was good, that is, conformable to his will, which abhors deformity, and is the rule of order and beauty. There is no deformity but in monstrosity; wherein, notwithstanding, there is a kind of beauty; nature so ingeniously contriving the irregular parts, as they become sometime more remarkable than the principal fabric. To speak yet more narrowly, there was never any thing ugly or mis-shapen, but the chaos; wherein, notwithstanding, to speak strictly, there was no deformity, because no form; nor was it yet impregnate by the voice of God. Now nature is not at variance with art, nor art with nature; they being both the servants of his providence. Art is the perfection of nature. Were the world now as it was the sixth day, there were yet a chaos. Nature hath made one world, and art another. In brief, all things are artificial; for nature is the art of God.

SECT. 17. — This is the ordinary and open way of his providence, which art and industry have in good part discovered; whose effects we may foretell without an oracle. To foreshow these is not prophecy, but prognostication. There is another way, full of meanders and labyrinths, whereof the devil and spirits have no exact ephemerides:[1] and that is a more particular and obscure method of his providence; directing the operation of individual and single essences: this we call fortune; that serpentine and crooked line, whereby he draws those actions his wisdom intends in a more unknown and secret way: this cryptic and involved method of his providence have I ever admired; nor can I relate the history of my life, the occurrences of my days, the escapes, or dangers, and hits of chance, with a *bezo las manos*[2] to Fortune, or a bare gramercy[3] to my good stars. Abraham might have thought the ram in the thicket came thither by accident: human reason would have said, that mere chance conveyed Moses in the ark to the sight of Pharaoh's daughter. What a labyrinth is there in the story of Joseph! able to convert a stoic. Surely there are in every man's life certain rubs, doublings, and wrenches, which pass a while under the effects of chance; but at the last, well examined, prove the mere hand of God. 'Twas not dumb chance that, to discover the fougade, or powder plot, contrived a miscarriage in the letter. I like the victory of '88[4] the better for that one occurrence which our enemies imputed to our dishonor, and the partiality of fortune; to wit, the tempests and contrariety of winds. King Philip did not detract from the nation when he said, he sent his armada to fight with men, and not to combat with the winds.

1 almanacs. 2 I kiss your hands.
3 many (lit. great) thanks.
4 The defeat of the Spanish Armada.

Where there is a manifest disproportion between the powers and forces of two several agents, upon a maxim of reason we may promise the victory to the superior: but when unexpected accidents slip in, and unthought-of occurrences intervene, these must proceed from a power that owes no obedience to those axioms; where, as in the writing upon the wall, we may behold the hand, but see not the spring that moves it. The success of that petty province of Holland (of which the Grand Seignior [1] proudly said, if they should trouble him, as they did the Spaniard, he would send his men with shovels and pick-axes, and throw it into the sea) I cannot altogether ascribe to the ingenuity and industry of the people, but the mercy of God, that hath disposed them to such a thriving genius; and to the will of his providence, that dispenseth his favor to each country in their preordinate season. All cannot be happy at once; for, because the glory of one state depends upon the ruin of another, there is a revolution and vicissitude of their greatness, and must obey the swing of that wheel, not moved by intelligences, but by the hand of God, whereby all estates rise to their zenith and vertical points, according to their predestinated periods. For the lives not only of men, but of commonwealths and the whole world, run not upon a helix [2] that still enlargeth; but on a circle, where, arriving to their meridian, they decline in obscurity, and fall under the horizon again.

Sect. 18. — These must not therefore be named the effects of fortune but in a relative way, and as we term the works of nature. It was the ignorance of man's reason that begat this very name, and by a careless term miscalled the providence of God: for there is no liberty for causes to operate in a loose and straggling way; nor any effect whatsoever but hath its warrant from some universal or superior cause. 'Tis not a ridiculous devotion to say a prayer before a game at tables; for, even in sortileges [3] and matters of greatest uncertainty, there is a settled and preordered course of effects. It is we that are blind, not fortune. Because our eye is too dim to discover the mystery of her effects, we foolishly paint her blind, and hoodwink the providence of the Almighty. I cannot justify that contemptible proverb, that "fools only are fortunate;" or that insolent paradox, that "a wise man is out of the reach of fortune;" much less those opprobrious epithets of poets, — whore, bawd, and strumpet. 'Tis, I confess, the common fate of men of singular gifts of mind, to be destitute of those of fortune; which doth not any way deject the spirit of wiser judgments who thoroughly understand the justice of this proceeding; and, being enriched with higher donatives, cast a more careless eye on these vulgar parts of felicity. It is a most unjust ambition, to desire to engross the mercies of the Almighty, not to be content with the goods of mind, without a possession of those of body or fortune: and it is an error, worse than heresy, to adore these complimental and circumstantial pieces of felicity, and undervalue those perfections and essential points of happiness, wherein we resemble our Maker. To wiser desires it is satisfaction enough to deserve, though not to enjoy, the favors of fortune. Let providence provide for fools: 'tis not partiality, but equity, in God, who deals with us but as our natural parents. Those that are of able body and mind he leaves to their deserts; to those of weaker merits he imparts a larger portion; and pieces out the defect of one by the excess of the other. Thus have we no just quarrel with nature for leaving us naked; or to envy the horns, hoofs, skins, and furs of other creatures; being provided with reason, that can supply them all. We need not labor, with so many arguments, to confute judicial astrology; for, if there be a truth therein, it doth not injure divinity. If to be born under Mercury disposeth us to be witty; under Jupiter to be wealthy; I do not owe a knee unto these, but unto that merciful hand that hath ordered my indifferent and uncertain nativity into such benevolous aspects. Those that hold, that all things are governed by fortune, had not erred, had they not persisted there. The Romans, that erected a temple to Fortune, acknowledged therein, though in a blinder way, somewhat of divinity; for, in a wise supputation,[1] all things begin and end in the Almighty. There is a nearer way to heaven than Homer's chain; an easy logic may conjoin a heaven and earth in one argument, and, with less than a sorites,[2] resolve all things to God. For though we christen effects by their most sensible and nearest causes, yet is God the true and infallible cause of all; whose concourse, though it be general, yet doth it subdivide itself into the particular actions of every thing, and is that spirit, by which each singular essence not only subsists, but performs its operation.

1 The Sultan. 2 spiral.
3 prophecies by drawing lots.

1 accounting. 2 syllogism.

# THOMAS FULLER (1608–1661)

Thomas Fuller was the son of a clergyman, born in 1608. He attended Queen's College, Cambridge, entered the church, and held various livings. He adhered to the king's party in the Civil War, and joined the royal army at Oxford. After the defeat of the King he lived largely by his writings. He died shortly after the restoration of Charles II.

Fuller's writings are voluminous and miscellaneous. He was a favorite preacher, being much reputed for his pithy proverbial expressions and his wit. He compiled a volume of practical ethics called *The Holy State and the Prophane State* (1642) and *The History of the Worthies of England*, which appeared after his death. This is a sort of dictionary of national biography, a survey of England by counties, with brief sketches of the most distinguished representatives of the various professions. Fuller was a great favorite with the critics of the early nineteenth century, Coleridge and Lamb, for his quaintness, his curious turns of mind and style, in which he showed something of the spirit of the "metaphysical poets."

## THE LIFE OF SIR FRANCIS DRAKE

*From* THE HOLY STATE, BK. II, CH. XXII

Francis Drake was born nigh South Tavistock in Devonshire, and brought up in Kent; God dividing the honor betwixt two counties, that the one might have his birth, and the other his education. His father, being a minister, fled into Kent, for fear of the Six Articles, wherein the sting of Popery still remained in England, though the teeth thereof were knocked out, and the Pope's supremacy abolished. Coming into Kent, he bound his son Francis apprentice to the master of a small bark, which traded into France and Zealand, where he underwent a hard service; and pains, with patience in his youth, did knit the joints of his soul, and made them more solid and compacted. His master, dying unmarried, in reward of his industry, bequeathed his bark unto him for a legacy.

For some time he continued his master's profession; but the narrow seas were a prison for so large a spirit, born for greater undertakings. He soon grew weary of his bark; which would scarce go alone, but as it crept along by the shore; wherefore, selling it, he unfortunately ventured most of his estate with Captain John Hawkins into the West Indies, in 1567; whose goods were taken by the Spaniards at St. John de Ulva, and he himself scarce escaped with life: the king of Spain being so tender in those parts, that the least touch doth wound him; and so jealous of the West Indies, his wife, that willingly he would have none look upon her: he therefore used them with the greater severity.

Drake was persuaded by the minister of his ship, that he might lawfully recover in value of the king of Spain, and repair his losses upon him anywhere else. The case was clear in sea-divinity; and few are such infidels, as not to believe doctrines which make for their own profit. Whereupon Drake, though a poor private man, hereafter undertook to revenge himself on so mighty a monarch; who, as not contented that the sun riseth and setteth in his dominions, may seem to desire to make all his own where he shineth. And now let us see how a dwarf, standing on the mount of God's providence, may prove an overmatch for a giant.

After two or three several voyages to gain intelligence in the West Indies, and some prizes taken, at last he effectually set forward from Plymouth with two ships, the one of seventy, the other twenty-five tons, and seventy-three men and boys in both. He made with all speed and secrecy to Nombre de Dios, as loath to put the town to too much charge (which he knew they would willingly bestow) in providing beforehand for his entertainment; which city was then the granary of the West Indies, wherein the golden harvest brought from Panama was hoarded up till it could be conveyed into Spain. They came hard aboard the shore, and lay quiet all night, intending to attempt the town in the dawning of the day.

But he was forced to alter his resolution, and assault it sooner; for he heard his men muttering amongst themselves of the strength and greatness of the town: and when men's heads are once fly-blown with buzzes of suspicion, the vermin multiply instantly, and one jealousy begets another. Wherefore, he raised them from their nest before they had hatched their fears; and, to put away those conceits, he persuaded them it was day-dawning when the moon rose, and instantly set on the town, and won it, being unwalled. In the market-place the Spaniards saluted them with a volley of shot; Drake returned their greeting with a flight of arrows, the best and ancient English compliment, which

drave their enemies away. Here Drake received a dangerous wound, though he valiantly concealed it a long time; knowing if his heart stooped, his men's would fall, and loath to leave off the action, wherein if so bright an opportunity once setteth, it seldom riseth again. But at length his men forced him to return to his ship, that his wound might be dressed; and this unhappy accident defeated the whole design. Thus victory sometimes slips through their fingers who have caught it in their hands.

But his valor would not let him give over the project as long as there was either life or warmth in it; and therefore, having received intelligence from the negroes called Symerons of many mules'-lading of gold and silver, which was to be brought from Panama, he, leaving competent numbers to man his ships, went on land with the rest, and bestowed himself in the woods by the way as they were to pass, and so intercepted and carried away an infinite mass of gold. As for the silver, which was not portable over the mountains, they digged holes in the ground and hid it therein.

There want not those who love to beat down the price of every honorable action, though they themselves never mean to be chapmen.[1] These cry up Drake's fortune herein to cry down his valor; as if this his performance were nothing, wherein a golden opportunity ran his head, with his long forelock, into Drake's hands beyond expectation. But, certainly, his resolution and unconquerable patience deserved much praise, to adventure on such a design, which had in it just no more probability than what was enough to keep it from being impossible. Yet I admire not so much at all the treasure he took, as at the rich and deep mine of God's providence.

Having now full freighted himself with wealth, and burnt at the House of Crosses above two hundred thousand pounds' worth of Spanish merchandise, he returned with honor and safety into England, and, some years after (December 13th, 1577) undertook that his famous voyage about the world, most accurately described by our English authors: and yet a word or two thereof will not be amiss.

Setting forward from Plymouth, he bore up for Cabo-verd,[2] where, near to the island of St. Jago, he took prisoner Nuno de Silva, an experienced Spanish pilot, whose direction he used in the coasts of Brazil and Magellan Straits, and afterwards safely landed him at Guatulco in New Spain. Hence they took their course to the Island of Brava; and hereabouts they met with those tempestuous winds whose only praise is, that they continue not an hour, in which time they change all the points of the compass. Here they had great plenty of rain, poured (not, as in other places, as it were out of sieves, but) as out of spouts, so that a butt of water falls down in a place; which, notwithstanding, is but a courteous injury in that hot climate far from land, and where otherwise fresh water cannot be provided. Then cutting the Line, they saw the face of that heaven which earth hideth from us, but therein only three stars of the first greatness, the rest few and small compared to our hemisphere; as if God, on purpose, had set up the best and biggest candles in that room wherein his civilest guests are entertained.

Sailing the south of Brazil, he afterwards passed the Magellan Straits (August 20th, 1578) and then entered *Mare Pacificum*, came to the southernmost land at the height of 55½ latitudes; thence directing his course northward, he pillaged many Spanish towns, and took rich prizes of high value in the kingdoms of Chili, Peru, and New Spain. Then, bending eastwards, he coasted China, and the Moluccas, where, by the king of Terrenate, a true gentleman Pagan, he was most honorably entertained. The king told them, they and he were all of one religion in this respect, — that they believed not in gods made of stocks and stones, as did the Portugals. He furnished them also with all necessaries that they wanted.

On January 9th following (1579), his ship, having a large wind and a smooth sea, ran aground on a dangerous shoal, and struck twice on it; knocking twice at the door of death, which, no doubt, had opened the third time. Here they stuck, from eight o'clock at night till four the next afternoon, having ground too much, and yet too little to land on; and water too much, and yet too little to sail in. Had God (who, as the wise man saith, "holdeth the winds in his fist," Prov. xxx. 4) but opened his little finger, and let out the smallest blast, they had undoubtedly been cast away; but there blew not any wind all the while. Then they, conceiving aright that the best way to lighten the ship was, first, to ease it of the burden of their sins by true repentance, humbled themselves, by fasting, under the hand of God. Afterwards they received the communion,

1 merchants. 2 Cape Verde.

dining on Christ in the sacrament, expecting no other than to sup with him in heaven. Then they cast out of their ship six great pieces of ordnance, threw overboard as much wealth as would break the heart of a miser to think on it, with much sugar, and packs of spices, making a caudle[1] of the sea round about. Then they betook themselves to their prayers, the best lever at such a dead lift indeed; and it pleased God, that the wind, formerly their mortal enemy, became their friend; which, changing from the starboard to the larboard of the ship, and rising by degrees, cleared them off to the sea again, — for which they returned unfeigned thanks to Almighty God.

By the Cape of Good Hope and west of Africa, he returned safe into England, and (November 3rd, 1580) landed at Plymouth (being almost the first of those that made a thorough light through the world), having, in his whole voyage, though a curious searcher after the time, lost one day through the variation of several climates. He feasted the queen in his ship at Dartford, who knighted him for his service. Yet it grieved him not a little, that some prime courtiers refused the gold he offered them, as gotten by piracy. Some of them would have been loath to have been told, that they had *aurum Tholosanum*[2] in their own purses. Some think, that they did it to show that their envious pride was above their covetousness, who of set purpose did blur the fair copy of his performance, because they would not take pains to write after it.

I pass by his next West-Indian voyage (1585), wherein he took the cities of St. Jago, St. Domingo, Carthagena, and St. Augustine in Florida; as also his service performed in 1588, wherein he, with many others, helped to the waning of that half-moon,[3] which sought to govern all the motion of our sea. I haste to his last voyage.

Queen Elizabeth, in 1595, perceiving that the only way to make the Spaniard a cripple forever, was to cut his sinews of war in the West Indies, furnished Sir Francis Drake, and Sir John Hawkins, with six of her own ships, besides twenty-one ships and barks of their own providing, containing in all two thousand five hundred men and boys, for some service on America. But, alas! this voyage was marred before begun. For, so great preparations being too big for a cover, the king of Spain knew of it, and sent a caraval of adviso[1] to the West Indies; so that they had intelligence three weeks before the fleet set forth of England, either to fortify or remove their treasure; whereas, in other of Drake's voyages, not two of his own men knew whither he went; and managing such a design is like carrying a mine in war, — if it hath any vent, all is spoiled. Besides, Drake and Hawkins, being in joint commission, hindered each other. The latter took himself to be inferior rather in success than skill; and the action was unlike to prosper when neither would follow, and both could not handsomely go abreast. It vexed old Hawkins, that his counsel was not followed, in present sailing to America, but that they spent time in vain in assaulting the Canaries; and the grief that his advice was slighted, say some, was the cause of his death. Others impute it to the sorrow he took for the taking of his bark called "the Francis," which five Spanish frigates had intercepted. But when the same heart hath two mortal wounds given it together, it is hard to say which of them killeth.

Drake continued his course for Porto Rico; and, riding within the road, a shot from the Castle entered the steerage of the ship, took away the stool from under him as he sat at supper, wounded Sir Nicholas Clifford, and Brute Brown to death. "Ah, dear Brute!" said Drake, "I could grieve for thee, but now is no time for me to let down my spirits." And, indeed, a soldier's most proper bemoaning a friend's death in war, is in revenging it. And, sure, as if grief had made the English furious, they soon after fired five Spanish ships of two hundred tons apiece, in despite of the Castle.

America is not unfitly resembled to an hourglass, which hath a narrow neck of land (suppose it the hole where the sand passeth), betwixt the parts thereof, — Mexicana and Peruana. Now, the English had a design to march by land over this Isthmus, from Porto Rico to Panama, where the Spanish treasure was laid up. Sir Thomas Baskerville, general of the land-forces, undertook the service with seven hundred and fifty armed men. They marched through deep ways, the Spaniards much annoying them with shot out of the woods. One fort in the passage they assaulted in vain, and heard two others were built to stop them, besides Panama itself. They had so much of this breakfast, they thought they should surfeit of a dinner and supper of the same. No hope of conquest,

1 a warm mixed drink.
2 Spanish gold; here, bribes. 3 Spain.

1 messengership.

xcept with cloying the jaws of death, and hrusting men on the mouth of the cannon. Wherefore, fearing to find the proverb true, hat "gold may be bought too dear," they eturned to their ships. Drake afterwards red Nombre de Dios, and many other petty owns (whose treasure the Spaniards had onveyed away), burning the empty casks, when their precious liquor was run out before, and then prepared for their returning ome.

Great was the difference betwixt the Indian cities now, from what they were when Drake first haunted these coasts. At first, he Spaniards here were safe and secure, ounting their treasure sufficient to defend tself, the remoteness thereof being the greatst (almost only) resistance, and the fetching f it more than the fighting for it. Whilst he king of Spain guarded the head and heart f his dominions in Europe, he left his long egs in America open to blows; till, finding hem to smart, being beaten black and blue y the English, he learned to arm them at ast, fortifying the most important of them o make them impregnable.

Now began Sir Francis's discontent to eed upon him. He conceived that expectation, a merciless usurer, computing each day since his departure, exacted all interest nd return of honor and profit proportionable o his great preparations, and transcending is former achievements. He saw that all the ood which he had done in this voyage consisted in the evil he had done to the Spaards afar off, whereof he could present but mall visible fruits in England. These apprehensions, accompanying, if not causing, the disease of the flux, wrought his sudden death, January 28th, 1595. And sickness did not so much untie his clothes, as sorrow did rend at once the robe of his mortality asunder. He lived by the sea, died on it, and was buried in it. Thus an extempore performance (scarce heard to be begun before we hear it is ended!) comes off with better applause, or miscarries with less disgrace, than a long-studied and openly-premeditated action. Besides, we see how great spirits, having mounted to the highest pitch of performance, afterwards strain and break their credits in striving to go beyond it. Lastly, God oftentimes leaves the brightest men in an eclipse, to show that they do but borrow their luster from his reflexion. We will not justify all the actions of any man, though of a tamer profession than a sea-captain, in whom civility is often counted preciseness. For the main, we say that this our captain was a religious man towards God and his houses (generally sparing churches where he came), chaste in his life, just in his dealings, true of his word, and merciful to those that were under him, hating nothing so much as idleness: and therefore, lest his soul should rust in peace, at spare hours he brought fresh water to Plymouth. Careful he was for posterity (though men of his profession have as well an ebb of riot, as a float of fortune), and providently raised a worshipful family of his kindred. In a word: should those that speak against him fast till they fetch their bread where he did his, they would have a good stomach to eat it.

## JEREMY TAYLOR (1613–1667)

Taylor became a preacher shortly after his graduation from Cambridge; was soon appointed chaplain to King Charles I; and after the Restoration was made a bishop. As a clergyman he was noted for his unswerving faith, his gentleness and diligence, and his eloquence. He wrote much prose. Best known of his writings are *Holy Living*, 1650, and *Holy Dying*, 1651.

Taylor is one of the prose stylists of the seventeenth century. His prose is clear and vigorous, scholarly in its references, emotional in its allusions and figures of speech, and always beautiful in cadence.

### OF THE SLAVERY AND PAINS ETERNAL[1]

The slavery of the damned in hell is such, that all their senses, and powers of soul and body, are subject unto eternal pains and torments; with their touch, they are to serve the burning and never-consuming fire; with their taste, hunger and thirst; with their smell, stink; with their sight, those horrid and monstrous shapes which the devils shall assume; with their hearing, scorns and affronts; with their imagination, horror; with their will, loathsomeness and detestation; with their memory, despair; with their understanding, confusion; with such a multitude of other punishments, as they shall want eyes to weep for them.

1 From *Contemplations of the State of Man*, Book II, chapter 7.

Aelian[1] writes of Trizus, the tyrant, that he commanded his subjects not to speak together, and when they used signs, instead of words, he also forbade those; whereupon the afflicted people met in the market-place to at least weep for their misfortunes, but neither was that permitted: greater shall be the rigor in hell, where they shall neither be suffered to speak a word of comfort, nor move hand or foot, nor ease their hearts with weeping. Jeremias the prophet lamented with floods of tears, that Jerusalem, which was the queen of nations, should be made a slave and tributary: what tears are sufficient to lament the damnation of a poor soul who, from an heir and prince of the kingdom of heaven, hath made himself a slave to the devil, and those eternal punishments in hell, unto which he is to pay as many tributes as he hath senses, powers, and members.

As the slaves of the earth are whipped and punished by their masters, so the slaves of hell are tormented by the devils, who have power and dominion over them: children, as slaves, are whipped and chastised by their masters, so the tormentors, making the damned as their slaves, lay upon them a thousand afflictions, griefs, and miseries: every member of their body shall suffer greater pain and torment, than if it were torn from the body. If one cannot tell how to suffer a toothache, headache, or the pain of the cholic, what will it be when there shall not be any joint, or the least part of the body, which shall not cause him an intolerable pain? Not only the head, or teeth, but also the breasts, sides, shoulders, the back, the heart, and all the parts of the body, even to the very bones and marrow. Who can express the number and greatness of their torments, since all their powers and senses, soul and body, are to suffer in a most violent manner? Besides this, every sense from his particular object shall receive a particular punishment.

The eye shall not only be grieved with a scorching heat, but shall be tormented with monstrous and horrible figures: many are affrighted very much, passing through a churchyard, only for fear of seeing a fantasm; in what a fright will be a miserable damned soul, which shall see so many, and of so horrid shapes? Their sight also shall be tormented with beholding the punishment of their friends and kindred. Hegesippus[2] writes, that Alexander, the son of Hyrcannus, resolving to punish certain persons with exemplary rigor, caused eight hundred to be crucified; and whilst they were yet alive, caused their wives and children to be murdered before their eyes; that so they might die not once, but many deaths. This rigor shall not be wanting in hell, where fathers shall see their sons, and brothers their brothers, tormented. The torment of the eyes shall be also very great, in regard that those which have given other scandal, and made others fall into sin, shall see themselves, and those others, in that abyss of torments. To the sight of those dreadful apparitions shall be added the horror and fearful darkness of the place.

The darkness of Egypt was said to be horrible, because there the Egyptians beheld fearful figures and fantasms which terrified them. In the like manner, in that infernal darkness, the eyes shall be tormented with the monstrous figures of the wicked spirits, which shall appear much more dreadful, by reason of the obscurity and sadness of that eternal night.

The hearing shall not only be afflicted by an intolerable pain, caused by that ever burning and penetrating fire, but also with the fearful and amazing noises of thunders, howlings, clamors, groans, curses, and blasphemies. Sylla,[1] being dictator, caused six thousand persons to be enclosed in the circus; and then appointing the senate to meet in a temple close by, where he intended to speak unto them about his own affairs, to strike the greater terror into them, and make them know he was their master, he gave order, that, so soon as he began his oration, the soldiers should kill this multitude of people, which was effected: upon which were heard such lamentations, outcries, groans, clashing of armor, and blows of those merciless homicides, that the senators could not hear a word, but stood amazed with terror of so horrid a fact. What shall be the harmony of hell, where the ears shall be deafened with the cries and complaints of the damned? What confusion and horror shall it breed, to hear all lament, all complain, all curse and blaspheme, through the bitterness of the torments which they suffer?

But the damned shall principally be affrighted, and shall quake to hear the thunderclap of the wrath of God, which shall continually resound in their ears! "Whereas the just," saith the royal prophet, "shall be

1 A Roman writer of anecdotes, second century A.D.
2 Early historian of the Christian Church, second century A.D.

1 Sulla, dictator of Rome in 82 B.C.

in the eternal memory of God, and shall not fear the dreadful crack of his wrath."

The smell shall also be tormented with a most pentilential stink. Horrible was that torment used by Mezentius,[1] to tie a living body to a dead, and there to leave them, until the infection and putrefied exhalations of the dead had killed the living. What can be more abominable, than for a living man to have his mouth laid close to that of a dead one, full of grubs and worms, where the living must receive all those pestilential vapors, breathed forth from a corrupt carcass, and suffer such loathsomeness and abominable stink? But what is this in respect of hell, when each body of the damned is more loathsome and unsavory than a million of dead dogs, and all those pressed and crowded together in so strait a compass? Bonaventure[2] goes so far as to say, that if one only of the damned were brought into this world, it were sufficient to infect the whole earth. Neither shall the devils send forth a better smell; for although they are spirits, yet those fiery bodies, unto which they are fastened and confined, shall be of a more pestilential savor.

Hell is the world's sink, and the receptacle of all the filth in this great frame, and withal a deep dungeon, where the air hath no access. How great must the stink and infection needs be of so many corruptions heaped one upon another! and how insufferable the smell of that infernal brimstone, mixed with so many corrupted matters! O gulf of horror! O infernal grave! without vent or breathing place! Eternal grave of such as die continually and cannot die, with what abominable filth art thou not filled!

What shall I then say of the tongue, which is the instrument of so many ways of sinning, flattery, lying, murmuring, and calumniating, gluttony, and drunkenness. Who can express that bitterness, which the damned shall suffer, greater than that of aloes or wormwood? The Scripture tells us, the gall of dragons shall be their wine; and they shall taste the poison of asps for all eternity, unto which shall be joined an intolerable thirst, and doglike hunger: conformable to which David said, "they shall suffer hunger, as dogs." Famine is the most pressing of all necessities, and most deformed of all evils; plagues and wars are happinesses in respect of it. If, then, a famine of eight days be the worst of temporal evils, what shall that famine be which is eternal? Let our epicures hear what the Son of God prophesies: "Wo unto you who are full;" for you shall be a hungered, and with such a hunger as shall be eternal. Hunger in this life doth bring men to such extremity, that not only they come to desire to eat dogs, cats, rats, and mice, but also mothers come to eat their own children, and men the flesh of their own arms, as it fell out to Zeno[1] the emperor. If hunger be so terrible a mischief in this life, how will it afflict the damned in the other! Without all doubt, the damned would rather tear themselves in pieces than suffer it; all the most horrible famines, that Scripture histories propose unto us, are but weak pictures to that which the damned suffer in this unfortunate residence of eternal miseries; neither shall thirst torment them less.

The sense of touching, as it is the most extended sense of all the rest, so it shall be the most tormented in that burning fire; all the torments which the Scripture doth exhibit to us, as prepared for the reprobate, seem to fall upon this only sense: "They shall pass," saith Job, "from extremity of cold to intolerable heats," whole floods of fire and brimstone, which shower down upon those unfortunate wretches; all this belongs unto the sense of touching. We are amazed to think of the inhumanity of Phalaris,[2] who roasted men alive in his brazen bull: this was a joy in respect of that fire of hell, which penetrates the very entrails of the body without consuming them. The burning of a finger only does cause so great a torment, that it is insufferable; but far greater were it to burn the whole arm; and far greater were it, besides the arms, to burn the legs; and far more violent torment would it be to burn the whole body. This torment is so great that it cannot be expressed, since it comprises as many torments as the body of man hath joints, sinews, arteries, etc., and especially being caused by that penetrating and real fire, of which this temporal fire is but a painted fire in respect of that in hell.

Amongst all the torments which human justice hath invented for the punishment of crimes, there is none held more rigorous than that of fire, by reason of the great activity of that element. What shall the heat of that fire be, which shall be the executioner of the justice of the God of vengeance! whose zeal

1 A mythical Etruscan king, whose cruelties were proverbial.

2 Noted Italian theologian, 1221–74, who was later canonized.

1 Emperor of the East, fifth century A.D.

2 A cruel tyrant of Sicily in the sixth century B.C., the supposed author of the "epistles of Phalaris," which were shown by Bentley in 1697 to be spurious.

shall be inflamed against the wicked, and shall kindle the fire, which shall eternally burn in the extremities of hell! Such are the torments and miseries of hell, that if all the trees in the world were put in one heap, and set on fire, I would rather burn there till the day of judgment, than suffer, only for the space of one hour, that fire of hell. What a miserable unhappiness will it be to burn in those flames of hell, not only for an hour, but till the day of judgment! yea, even for all eternity, and world without end! Who would not esteem it a hideous torment, if he were to be burnt alive a hundred times, and his torment was to last every time for the space of an hour, with what compassionate eyes would all the world look upon such a miserable wretch! Nevertheless, without all doubt, any of the damned in hell would receive this as a great happiness to end his torments with those hundred times burning: for what comparison is there betwixt a hundred hours burning, with some space of time betwixt every hour, and to burn a hundred years of continual torment! And what comparison will there be betwixt burning for a hundred years' space, and to be burning without interruption, as long as God is God!

Who can express the strange and horrible confusion which shall inhabit the appetite of these wretched creatures? If all the disorders of man's life spring from his passions, what disorder must those miserable souls needs feel in that part, what convulsions, what rage, what fury? Alas! that noble passion, love, the queen of all the rest, the sun of life, that passion which might have made them happy for ever, if they had turned it towards God; that amiable object being razed out of them, the perpetual aversion they have to love shall eternally afflict them, the passion of hatred shall be outrageous in the damned, whence shall proceed their continual blasphemies against God, and the perpetual curses and imprecations which they shall make against the creatures; and if they have any desires, they shall be desirous to see all the world partaker of their pains; their aversion from all good shall be as much tormenting, as in itself it is execrable: of joy there must no mention be made in that place of dolor; but contrariwise of incredible sadness, which shall oppress them without any consolation. The heat of anger shall redouble the heat of their flames; hope banished from their hearts shall leave the place void to despair, which shall be one of their fiercest tormentors. And though their bodies be within hell's bosom, yet shall they bear about them another hell in their own bosoms.

Consider, now, my soul, whether thou art able to live in this devouring fire, whether thou wilt make choice of thy habitation in eternal flames. This fire is prepared for the devil and his angels; consider whether thou wilt enter in to this cursed crew, and take part of the dregs of their chalice. There is no medium; either thou must forsake thy sins, or else thou must be given up a prey to this eternal torment. I doubt not, thou wilt make a happy choice; and, to escape so dangerous a gulf, cast thy self into the arms of Divine mercy, which only admits the penitent, and say thus: O great God, who art a consuming fire, and makest the fire of thy Divine justice issue from amongst the thorns, to burn the tallest cedars in Lebanon; let the fire, which walks before thee as executioner of justice, never depart from our memory; may it be unto us a pillar of light in the darkness of our errors, a lamp unto our feet, and a lantern to our ways, whereby we may discover this infernal gulf, which is ready to swallow us up. Thou, O Lord, who didst deliver the three children out of the Babylonian furnace, preserve us from those eternal flames, and exempt us from the burning ones of thy wrath; place us in the light and bright one of thy love, where, like Pyratides[1] and sacred Salamanders,[2] we shall live happy, without pain and torment, singing honor, praise, and benediction unto thee, our God, for ever and ever. Amen.

1 children of fire.

2 The Salamander was supposed, erroneously, to be able to live in fire. In certain mediæval cults a soul that could endure fire was called a Salamander.

## ABRAHAM COWLEY (1618–1667)

Cowley is remembered for his Pindaric odes, his light lyrics, especially those after the manner of the Greek poet Anacreon, and his prose essays. Shortly after his graduation from Cambridge, he joined the Royalist side in the Civil War, spending a dozen years in France during the Commonwealth in the employ of the Queen. At the Restoration he received as a reward a small country estate, where he spent the remainder of his life. Although an avowed disciple of Spenser, much of Cowley's verse is typical of the century in its metaphysical character, — often sparkling, but

ometimes forced. During his life he enjoyed a high reputation as a writer and as a scholar. Among his honors was the presidency of the Royal Society. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, near his master, Spenser.

## OF MYSELF

It is a hard and nice [1] subject for a man to write of himself; it grates his own heart to say anything of disparagement and the reader's ears to hear anything of praise for him. There is no danger from me of offending him in this kind; neither my mind, nor my body, nor my fortune allow me any materials for that vanity. It is sufficient for my own contentment that they have preserved me from being scandalous, or remarkable on the defective side. But besides that, I shall here speak of myself only in relation to the subject of these precedent discourses, and shall be likelier thereby to fall into the contempt than rise up to the estimation of most people.

As far as my memory can return back into my past life, before I knew or was capable of guessing what the world, or glories, or business of it were, the natural affections of my soul gave a secret bent of aversion from them, as some plants are said to turn away from others, by an antipathy imperceptible to themselves and inscrutable to man's understanding. Even when I was a very young boy at school, instead of running about on holidays, and playing with my fellows, I was wont to steal from them and walk into the fields, either alone with a book, or with some one companion, if I could find any of the same temper. I was then, too, so much an enemy to constraint, that my masters could never prevail on me, by any persuasions or encouragements, to learn without book the common rules of grammar, in which they dispensed with me alone, because they found I made a shift to do the usual exercises out of my own reading and observation. That I was then of the same mind as I am now — which, I confess, I wonder at myself — may appear at the latter end of an ode which I made when I was but thirteen years old, and which was then printed with many other verses. The beginning of it is boyish; but of this part which I here set down, if a very little were corrected, I should hardly now be much ashamed.

9

This only grant me, that my means may lie
Too low for envy, for contempt too high.
Some honor I would have,
Not from great deeds, but good alone.
Th' unknown are better than ill-known.
Rumor can ope the grave;
Acquaintance I would have; but when 't depends
Not on the number, but the choice of friends.

10

Books should, not business, entertain the light,
And sleep, as undisturbed as death, the night.
My house a cottage, more
Than palace, and should fitting be
For all my use, no luxury.
My garden painted o'er
With Nature's hand, not Art's; and pleasures yield,
Horace might envy in his Sabine [1] field.

11

Thus would I double my life's fading space,
For he that runs it well, twice runs his race.
And in this true delight,
These unbought sports, that happy state,
I would not fear nor wish my fate,
But boldly say each night,
To-morrow let my sun his beams display,
Or in clouds hide them; I have lived to-day.

You may see by it I was even then acquainted with the poets, (for the conclusion is taken out of Horace); and perhaps it was the immature and immoderate love of them which stamped first, or rather engraved, the characters in me. They were like letters cut into the bark of a young tree, which, with the tree, still grow proportionably. But how this love came to be produced in me so early is a hard question. I believe I can tell the particular little chance that filled my head first with such chimes of verse, as have never since left ringing there; for I remember when I began to read, and take some pleasure in it, there was wont to lie in my mother's parlor — I know not by what accident, for she herself never in her life read any book but of devotion — but there was wont to lie Spenser's works; this I happened to fall upon, and was infinitely delighted with the stories of the knights, and giants, and monsters, and brave houses, which I found everywhere there — though my understanding had little to do with all this — and by degrees, with the tinkling of the rhyme, and dance of the numbers; so that I think I had read him all over before I was twelve years old, and was

1 delicate.

1 The country place of the Roman poet Horace, given to him, about 33 B.C., by his patron Mæcenas.

thus made a poet as immediately as a child is made an eunuch. With these affections of mind, and my heart wholly set upon letters, I went to the university, but was soon torn from thence by that violent public storm [1] which would suffer nothing to stand where it did, but rooted up every plant, even from the princely cedars, to me, the hyssop.[2] Yet I had as good fortune as could have befallen me in such a tempest; for I was cast by it into the family of one [3] of the best persons, and into the court of one of the best princesses [4] of the world. Now, though I was here engaged in ways most contrary to the original design of my life, that is, into much company, and no small business, and into a daily sight of greatness, both militant and triumphant — for that was the state then of the English and the French courts — yet all this was so far from altering my opinion, that it only added the confirmation of reason to that which was before but natural inclination. I saw plainly all the paint of that kind of life, the nearer I came to it; and that beauty which I did not fall in love with, when, for aught I knew, it was real, was not like to bewitch or entice me when I saw it was adulterate. I met with several great persons, whom I liked very well, but could not perceive that any part of their greatness was to be liked or desired, no more than I would be glad or content to be in a storm, though I saw many ships which rid safely and bravely in it. A storm would not agree with my stomach, if it did with my courage. Though I was in a crowd of as good company as could be found anywhere, though I was in business of great and honorable trust, though I eat at the best table, and enjoyed the best conveniences for present subsistence that ought to be desired by a man of my condition, in banishment and public distresses, yet I could not abstain from renewing my old school-boy's wish in a copy of verses to the same effect:

Well then. I now do plainly see
This busy world and I shall ne'er agree, etc.

And I never then proposed to myself any other advantage from his majesty's happy restoration, but the getting into some moderately convenient retreat in the country, which I thought in that case I might easily have compassed, as well as some others, who, with no greater probabilities or pretences, have arrived to extraordinary fortunes. But I had before written a shrewd prophecy against myself, and I think Apollo inspired me in the truth, though not in the elegance of it:

Thou neither great at court, nor in the war,
Nor at the Exchange shalt be, nor at the wrangling bar;
Content thyself with the small barren praise
Which thy neglected verse does raise, etc.

However, by the failing of the forces which I had expected, I did not quit the design which I had resolved on; I cast myself into it a *corpus perditum*,[1] without making capitulations, or taking counsel of fortune. But God laughs at a man who says to his soul, Take thy ease. I met presently not only with many little incumbrances and impediments, but with so much sickness — a new misfortune to me — as would have spoiled the happiness of an emperor as well as mine. Yet I do neither repent nor alter my course: *Non ego perfidum dixi sacramentum*.[2] Nothing shall separate me from a mistress which I have loved so long, and have now at last married, though she neither has brought me a rich portion, nor lived yet so quietly with me as I hoped from her.

*— Nec vos dulcissima mundi*
*Nomina, vos musæ, libertas, otia, libri,*
*Hortique, sylvæque, anima remanente relinquam.*

Nor by me e'er shall you,
You of all names the sweetest and the best,
You muses, books, and liberty, and rest;
You gardens, fields, and woods forsaken be,
As long as life itself forsakes not me.[3]

1 The civil war of 1642.

2 A small plant; the comparison here between the cedar and the hyssop is from 1 Kings IV, 33.

3 William Hervey, whose brother John (later Earl of St. Albans) was the confidant of Charles I's queen, Henrietta Maria. On the death of William Hervey, Cowley wrote a sincere elegy, which may be found in Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*.

4 Queen Henrietta Maria, whose secretary Cowley was after her flight to France.

## ANACREONTICS

### 1. DRINKING

The thirsty earth soaks up the rain,
And drinks and gapes for drink again;
The plants suck in the earth, and are
With constant drinking fresh and fair;
The sea itself (which one would think
Should have but little need of drink)
Drinks twice ten thousand rivers up,
So filled that they o'erflow the cup.

1 lost body. 2 I have not sworn a false oath.

3 Cowley concludes the essay with two translations from Martial.

The busy Sun (and one would guess
By's drunken fiery face no less)
Drinks up the sea, and when he's done,
The Moon and Stars drink up the Sun:
They drink and dance by their own light,
They drink and revel all the night:
Nothing in Nature's sober found,
But an eternal health goes round.
Fill up the bowl, then, fill it high,
Fill all the glasses there — for why
Should every creature drink but I?
Why, man of morals, tell me why?

2. THE EPICURE

Underneath this myrtle shade,
On flowery beds supinely laid,
With odorous oils my head o'erflowing,
And around it roses growing,
What should I do but drink away
The heat and troubles of the day?
In this more than kingly state
Love himself on me shall wait.
Fill to me, Love! nay, fill it up!
And mingled cast into the cup
Wit and mirth and noble fires,
Vigorous health and gay desires.
The wheel of life no less will stay
In a smooth than rugged way:
Since it equally doth flee,
Let the motion pleasant be.
Why do we precious ointments shower? —
Nobler wines why do we pour?
Beauteous flowers why do we spread
Upon the monuments of the dead?
Nothing they but dust can show,
Of bones that hasten to be so.
Crown me with roses while I live,
Now your wines and ointments give;
After death I nothing crave,
Let me alive my pleasures have:
All are Stoics in the grave.

## THE WISH

Well then! I now do plainly see
This busy world and I shall ne'er agree.[1]
The very honey of all earthly joy
Does of all meats the soonest cloy;
And they, methinks, deserve my pity
Who for it can endure the stings,
The crowd and buzz and murmurings,
Of this great hive, the city.

Ah, yet, ere I descend to the grave
May I a small house and large garden have;
And a few friends, and many books, both true,
Both wise, and both delightful too!
And since love ne'er will from me flee,
A Mistress moderately fair,
And good as guardian angels are,
Only beloved and loving me.

O fountains! when in you shall I
Myself eased of unpeaceful thoughts espy?
O fields! O woods! when, when shall I be made
The happy tenant of your shade?
Here's the spring-head of Pleasure's flood;
Here's wealthy Nature's treasury,
Where all the riches lie that she
Has coined and stamped for good.

Pride and ambition here
Only in far-fetched metaphors appear;
Here nought but winds can hurtful murmurs scatter,
And nought but Echo flatter.
The gods, when they descended, hither
From heaven did always choose their way;
And therefore we may boldly say
That 'tis the way too thither.

How happy here should I
And one dear She live, and embracing die!
She who is all the world, and can exclude
In deserts solitude.
I should have then this only fear:
Lest men, when they my pleasures see,
Should hither throng to live like me,
And so make a city here.

1 Cf. Cowley's essay, *Of Myself*.

## THE THIEF

Thou robbest my days of business and delights,
Of sleep thou robbest my nights;
Ah, lovely thief, what wilt thou do?
What, rob me of Heaven too?
Thou even my prayers dost steal from me,
And I, with wild idolatry,
Begin to God, and end them all to thee.

Is it a sin to love, that it should thus
Like an ill conscience, torture us?
Whate'er I do, where e'er I go,
(None guiltless e'er was haunted so)
Still, still, methinks thy face I view,
And still thy shape does me pursue,
As if not you me, but I had murdered you.

From books I strive some remedy to take,
  But thy name all the letters make;
  Whate'er 'tis writ, I find that there,
  Like points and commas everywhere.
  Me blest for this let no man hold;
  For I, as Midas did of old,
Perish by turning everything to gold.

What do I seek, alas, or why do I
  Attempt in vain from thee to fly?
  For making thee my deity
  I give thee then ubiquity.
  My pains resemble hell in this:
  The divine presence there too is,
But to torment men, not to give them bliss.

## A SUPPLICATION

  Awake, awake, my Lyre!
And tell thy silent master's humble tale
  In sounds that may prevail;
  Sounds that gentle thoughts inspire:
  Though so exalted she
  And I so lowly be
Tell her, such different notes make all thy harmony.

  Hark, how the strings awake!
And, though the moving hand approach not near,
  Themselves with awful fear
  A kind of numerous[1] trembling make.
  Now all thy forces try;
  Now all thy charms apply;
Revenge upon her ear the conquests of her eye.

  Weak Lyre! thy virtue sure
Is useless here, since thou art only found
  To cure, but not to wound,
  And she to wound, but not to cure.
  Too weak too, wilt thou prove
  My passion to remove;
Physic to other ills, thou'rt nourishment to Love.

  Sleep, sleep again, my Lyre!
For thou canst never tell my humble tale
  In sounds that will prevail,
  Nor gentle thoughts in her inspire;
  All thy vain mirth lay by,
  Bid thy strings silent lie,
Sleep, sleep again, my Lyre, and let thy master die.

1 metrical.

# JOHN MILTON (1608–1674)

John Milton was born in London December 9, 1608. His father was a scrivener, or drawer of legal documents, who had broken off relations with his family, which was Roman Catholic, in order to follow the Puritan faith. He was a man of culture, and a musician of some note. John Milton was sent to Saint Paul's School and later to Christ's College, Cambridge, where he made his mark as a scholar, though he found the academic routine distasteful. His father had purchased a small estate in the country, at Horton, where Milton spent some five years after his departure from Cambridge, 1632 to 1637, reading the classics and writing poetry. In 1638 he went to Italy. The Italian poetry of the early Renaissance which had been such an inspiration to Chaucer had become conventional and stereotyped, practiced by poets who associated themselves in circles or academies, for purposes of literary competition. Milton enjoyed the elegance and culture which he found in Italy, but he recognized the lack of freedom of thought under the tyranny of Spain and the Church. When he learned that his own countrymen were engaged in a struggle to preserve their own liberties against Charles I, he "thought it shame" to be absent, and returned to England in 1639.

For the next eighteen years Milton was absorbed in the political movements of the time. He was a zealous opponent of the Established Church and the King. He became Latin Secretary to the Council of State and wrote much in defense of the revolution and execution of the King. It was in consequence of these labors that his eyesight, which had always been weak, failed totally. Before this, in 1643, Milton had married Mary Powell, daughter of a Cavalier family. She left him shortly after the marriage, but returned to him in 1645, and bore him three daughters. After her death he married Katharine Woodcock in 1656, who died a year later. His third wife was Elizabeth Minshull. After the restoration of Charles II, Milton was in some personal danger and had to go into hiding, but he was relieved by the act of oblivion and resumed work on his greater poems, which occupied him until shortly before his death in 1674.

Milton was born when the mood of appreciation of the experience of the present world which was characteristic of the Renaissance was yielding to that interest in the other world which was the essence of Puritanism. Nevertheless, the London which he knew as a boy was the London of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson. The letters and elegies which he wrote in Latin contain ample evidence of his delight in music, the stage, and in the beauty of women. Yet this urge of the Renaissance was restrained by a Puritan sense of the meaning of life. He early felt himself called to

be a poet, "to leave something so written to aftertimes as they should not willingly let it die." How seriously he took this vocation is shown by his sonnet *On Reaching the Age of Twenty-Three.* His first considerable poem was the *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity* (1629). There followed the two poems, *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, inspired by his early residence at Horton. While there, at the instance of his friend Henry Lawes, the chief musical composer of the day, he wrote the pastoral play, *Comus*, and just before his departure for Italy, the elegy on the death of a college friend, which he called *Lycidas*. When Milton returned from Italy, he found Parliament entering on the long contest with Charles I which culminated in the Civil War. The first phase of the struggle which interested him was the issue of freedom of worship from the authority of the Established Church. Later he became concerned with the problem of individual liberty in relation to the necessary control of the State. His desertion by his first wife led him to write several pamphlets on the right of divorce, and the magnificent plea for freedom of speech called *Areopagitica*. In opposition to the doctrine of divine right, he defended the right of the people to put to death a king who oppressed them, in his *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates;* and against the hostile criticism of scholars and publicists on the Continent he wrote in Latin his *First Defense of the People of England*, followed by the *Second Defense*. All this, however, was apart from the serious vocation as poet. This he resumed when his blindness gave him some release from the cares of office. *Paradise Lost* was published in 1663. A kindred theme, the story of Christ's temptation, he dealt with in *Paradise Regained*. His last poem was a tragedy on the Greek model, *Samson Agonistes*, based on the story of Samson's destruction of the Philistine temple of Dagon.

Milton's poetry is edited by David Masson in three volumes. A single-volume edition is that edited by W. V. Moody (Cambridge Poets). Milton's prose works are collected in the Bohn Library. Annotated editions of the *Areopagitica* are those by J. W. Hales (Clarendon Press) and Laura E. Lockwood in the Riverside Literature Series.

The chief life of Milton is that by David Masson in seven volumes. Single-volume lives are those by Mark Pattison in the English Men of Letters Series and by Richard Garnett in the Great Writers Series. The famous Essay on Milton by Lord Macaulay appears on page 1002 of the present work. Other essays are those by W. Bagehot, J. R. Lowell, G. E. Woodbury, etc. An important study is Denis Saurat's *Milton, Man and Thinker*. James Holly Hanford's *A Milton Handbook* is useful.

## L'ALLEGRO AND IL PENSEROSO

1631–1633

These poems were written at Horton, either during a vacation in 1631, or after Milton had taken up his residence there in July, 1632. They are companion pieces, The Joyous Man and The Thoughtful Man, written to emphasize two attitudes toward life, the cheerful and social, and the thoughtful and solitary. It is certain that Milton in his own experience comprehended both the frank delight in the sensations of the present, which was of the Renaissance; and the serious contemplation of man's place in the world, which was enforced by Puritanism. The poems are examples of Milton's classic sense of form, the central theme in each case strictly controlling the detail abundantly offered in its illustration. They are classic in another respect, in the choice of language fitted to the thought with a perfection that is beyond praise.

### L'ALLEGRO

Hence, loathèd Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy,
Find out some uncouth [1] cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings;
There under ebon shades, and low-browed rocks,
As ragged [1] as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert [2] ever dwell.
But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
In heaven ycleped Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth
With two sister Graces more
To ivy-crownèd Bacchus bore;
Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolic Wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying,
There on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew.
Filled her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity,
Quips, and Cranks,[3] and wanton Wiles,
Nods, and Becks, and wreathèd Smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;

1 unknown.

1 rugged.
2 Known to the Homeric Greeks as a land of mist and darkness.
3 windings.

Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as ye go,
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain Nymph, sweet Liberty;
And, if I give thee honor due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreproved [1] pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled Dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,[2]
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweet-briar or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine;
While the cock with lively din
Scatters the rear of Darkness thin;
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering Morn,
From the side of some hoar [3] hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate,
Where the great Sun begins his state,[4]
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale [5]
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landscape round it measures:
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains on whose barren breast
The laboring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pied;
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide.
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some Beauty lies,
The Cynosure [6] of neighboring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met
Are at their savory dinner set
Of herbs and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tanned haycock in the mead.
Sometimes with secure [1] delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks [2] sound
To many a youth and many a maid
Dancing in the chequered shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday,
Till the livelong daylight fail:
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How fairy Mab [3] the junkets eat:
She was pinched and pulled, she said;
And he, by Friar's [4] lantern led,
Tells how the drudging Goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
That ten day-laborers could not end;
Then lies him down, the lubber fiend,[5]
And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
Towered cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of Knights and Barons bold,
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,
With store of Ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit or arms, while both contend
To win her grace whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask and antique pageantry;
Such sights as youthful Poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock [6] be on,

1 innocent. 2 in order to spite sorrow.
3 white with frost in autumn, the hunting season.
4 royal progress. 5 counts his flock.
6 In astronomy, the constellation of the Lesser Bear, containing the Pole Star, by which the Tyrian sailors steered their course.

1 carefree. 2 early type of fiddle.
3 The fairy Mab concerned herself with servant girls either as their benevolent patroness or evil genius.
4 Friar Rush, sometimes called Jack-a-lantern, and Robin Good-fellow performed similar offices toward farm-laborers.
5 Lob-lie-by-the-fire.
6 Implying comedy. Comic actors wore the *soccus*, a low slipper. Tragic actors wore the *cothurnus*, a high boot, or buskin.

Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes with many a winding bout[1]
Of linkèd sweetness long drawn out
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

## IL PENSEROSO

Hence, vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bested,[2]
Or fill the fixèd mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners[3] of Morpheus' train.
But, hail! thou Goddess sage and holy!
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,[4]
Or that starred Ethiop Queen[5] that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The Sea-Nymphs, and their powers offended.
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she; in Saturn's reign
Such mixture was not held a stain.

1 turn, or involution. 2 benefit.
3 Queen Elizabeth's body guards, noblemen picked for their wealth and personal beauty, were known as her "pensioners."
4 Prince Memnon was of traditional beauty. The suggestion is that this is also an attribute of his sister, although no such person exists in legend.
5 Cassiopeia.

Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's[1] inmost grove,
Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove.
Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of cypress lawn
Over thy decent[2] shoulders drawn.
Come; but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad[3] leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast.
And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing;
And add to these retirèd Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;
But, first and chiefest, with thee bring
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,
The Cherub Contemplation;
And the mute Silence hist along,[4]
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke[5]
Gently o'er the accustomed oak.
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, Chauntress, oft the woods among
I woo, to hear thy even-song;
And, missing thee, I walk unseen[6]
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering Moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way,
And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar;
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removèd place will fit,

1 Mount Ida, in Crete, the home of the Muses, where the infant Jove was nurtured.
2 comely. 3 sober.
4 bring along with finger on lip, saying hist!
5 Mythology attributes the dragon team not to the moon but to Ceres.
6 Supposedly, the nightingale does not sing after the grass is mown; hence, "missing thee."

Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the Bellman's drowsy charm
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
Or let my lamp, at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,[1]
With thrice-great Hermes,[2] or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook;
And of those demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or underground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,[3]
Or the tale of Troy divine,
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the buskined[4] stage.
But, O sad Virgin! that thy power
Might raise Musæus[5] from his bower;
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what Love did seek;
Or call up him that left half-told
The story of Cambuscan bold,[6]
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canacè to wife,
That owned the virtuous[7] ring and glass,
And of the wondrous horse of brass
On which the Tartar King did ride;
And if aught else great Bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited[8] Morn appear,
Not tricked and frounced, as she was wont
With the Attic boy[9] to hunt,
But kerchieft in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or ushered with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute-drops from off the eaves.
And, when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
To archèd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan[1] loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe with heavèd stroke
Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
There, in close covert, by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from Day's garish eye,
While the bee with honeyed thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feathered Sleep.
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings, in airy stream
Of lively portraiture displayed,
Softly on my eyelids laid.
And as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen Genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale,[2]
And love the high embowèd roof,
With antique pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full voiced Quire below,
In service high and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that Heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

1 Watch until dawn, as the constellation of the Bear does not set.
2 Hermes Trismegistus, a mythical philosopher and magician. During the middle ages his name was used as a signature to various books on mysticism and magic.
3 The *Seven against Thebes*, of Æschylus, the *Œdipus Tyrannus* and *Antigone* of Sophocles, the *Electra*, and the *Iphigenia* of Euripides, deal with these subjects.
4 Cf. *L'Allegro*, line 132.
5 Like Orpheus, a mythical Greek poet.
6 Chaucer's Squire's Tale, in which Camball, Algarsife, and Canace are personages.
7 with magic power. 8 soberly dressed.
9 Cephalus.

## LYCIDAS

### 1637

*L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* mark the beginning of the period of quiet enjoyment and study which made up Milton's life at Horton. *Lyci-*

1 Sylvanus, the god of woods. 2 enclosure.

*das* represents the deepening seriousness of its close. The occasion of the poem was the death of Edward King, a fellow student of Milton's at Cambridge, by drowning in the Irish Sea. It was a contribution to a memorial volume made up by his friends in 1637. It is in a form which was much in fashion among poets of the Renaissance — that of the pastoral elegy. Historically this form goes back to Theocritus and the Greek poets of Alexandria, who made the rude songs of shepherds and goatherds, sung in competition for a prize, in lamentation for disappointment in love or as a dirge over a dead comrade, the conventional basis for more artificial compositions. Spenser had given examples of various kinds of pastoral poetry in his *Shepherd's Calendar*. Now Milton adopted the elegy as the expression of grief for a young and promising friend, who as a clergyman might not unfittingly be described as a shepherd. Like Spenser, Milton introduced into his poem certain reflections on matters of current interest, particularly the arrogance of the Established church which was soon to lead to civil war between Parliament and the King. Although *Lycidas* follows a model inherited from classical literature, it is much less classical in style than the preceding poems — less restrained and chiselled, more emotional, decorated, eloquent, approaching the sublime. Especially in lines 155–163 in which he makes use of the romantic appeal of remote places he anticipates the rhetorical splendor of the great passages in *Paradise Lost*.

Yet once more, O ye Laurels, and once more,
Ye Myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear
Compels me to disturb your season due;
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.
Begin, then, Sisters of the sacred well [1]
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain and coy excuse:
So may some gentle Muse [2]
With lucky [1] words favour *my* destined urn,
And as he passes turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud!
For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill;
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the grey-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose at evening bright
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute;
Tempered [2] to the oaten flute
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damœtas [3] loved to hear our song.
But, oh! the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn.
The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the white-thorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.
Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep [4]
Where your old Bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,

1 The nine muses of Greek mythology, to whom the fountain of Aganippe, on Mt. Helicon, where there was also an altar dedicated to Jove, was sacred. Making the source of the spring from beneath the altar was original with Milton.

2 poet.

1 auspicious. 2 in tune with.

3 Perhaps a reference to William Chappell, Milton's tutor at Cambridge.

4 Possibly the Druid sepulchers at Kerig y Druidion in Denbighshire, a possible haunt of the Muses. *Mona*, the island of Anglesey, is now treeless, but was evidently wooded in Milton's time. *Deva*, or the Dee, is a "wizard stream," because of a tradition that the shifting of its channel portended good fortune for the side toward which it tended.

Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.
Ay me! I fondly dream
"Had ye been there," . . . for what could that have done?
What could the Muse [1] herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?
Alas! what boots it with uncessant care
To tend the homely, slighted, Shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear [2] spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury [3] with the abhorrèd shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears:
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil [4]
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumor lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."
O fountain Arethuse, [5] and thou honored flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood.
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the Herald of the Sea, [6]
That came in Neptune's plea.
He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain?
And questioned every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beakèd promontory.
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotades [1] their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed:
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope [2] with all her sisters played.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
Next, Camus, [3] reverend Sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower [4] inscribed with woe.
"Ah! who hath reft," quoth he, "my dearest pledge?"
Last came, and last did go,
The Pilot of the Galilean Lake; [5]
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake: —
"How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as, for their bellies' sake,
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold!
Of other care they little reckoning make
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learnt aught else the least
That to the faithful Herdman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
And, when they list, their lean and flashy [6] songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;

1 Calliope, mother of Orpheus. 2 untainted.
3 Atropos, one of the Fates, usually represented as blind.
4 Referring to the use of gold or silver leaf to set off a jewel.
5 The Fountain Arethuse, in Sicily, represents pastoral poetry, as does the River Mincius, from the association with Virgil's *Eclogues*.
6 Triton.

1 Æolus, son of Hippotes, the god of winds.
2 One of the daughters of Nereus.
3 Many of the Cambridge poets have thus personified the river Cam.
4 The hyacinth sprung from the blood of Hyacinthus, *ai, ai*, the Greek exclamation of lament, inscribed thereon.
5 Saint Peter, who holds keys to the Kingdom of Heaven.
6 vapid. Songs may be taken to mean discourses.

The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;
Besides what the grim Wolf[1] with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said.
But that two-handed engine[2] at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."
Return, Alpheus; the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use[3]
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe[4] primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears;
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For so, to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled;
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus[1] old,
Where the great Vision of the guarded mount[2]
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold.[3]
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth:
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.
Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor.
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves,
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive[4] nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the Saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the Shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth[5] Swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still Morn went out with sandals grey:
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay.
At last he rose, and twitched[6] his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

1 The Roman Catholic Church.
2 This obscurity is susceptible of many explanations; perhaps, the two houses of Parliament.
3 frequent, visit. 4 early.

1 Fabled Bellerium, the Latin name for Land's End in Cornwall.
2 The legend that the Archangel Michael appeared at a craggy seat looking out over the sea, near the ruins of an old Norman stronghold on St. Michael's Mount, opposite Penzance.
3 Both on the seacoast of Spain. 4 inexpressible.
5 unknown, for in 1637 Milton was still an "unknown" poet.
6 gathered about him.

## ON HIS BEING ARRIVED TO THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE

This sonnet was written at Cambridge, in 1631, shortly before Milton took his Master's degree.

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three and twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
That I to manhood am arrived so near,
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven.
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task-master's eye.

1631

## WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY

Written in November, 1642, when the forces of Charles I threatened the capture of London.

Captain, or Colonel, or Knight in arms,
Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,
If deed of honor did thee ever please,
Guard them, and him within protect from harms.
He can requite thee, for he knows the charms
That call fame on such gentle acts as these,
And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,
Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
Lift not thy spear against the Muse's bower;
The great Emathian[1] conqueror bid spare
The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
Went to the ground; and the repeated air
Of sad Electra's Poet[2] had the power
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

1642

1 Alexander the Great.
2 Euripides, to whose fame as a dramatist was attributed the leniency of the Spartans toward Athens.

## TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL

ON THE PROPOSALS OF CERTAIN MINISTERS AT THE COMMITTEE FOR PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL

The ministers referred to were the Presbyterian clergy who threatened to impose their ecclesiastical system in place of the Episcopal. Milton as an Independent demanded absolute freedom of conscience and worship. He looked to Cromwell to secure this.

Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast ploughed,
And on the neck of crownèd Fortune proud
Hast reared God's trophies, and his work pursued,
While Darwen[1] stream, with blood of Scots inbrued,
And Dunbar[2] field, resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's[3] laureate wreath: yet much remains
To conquer still; Peace hath her victories
No less renowned than War: new foes arise,
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains.
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves, whose Gospel is their maw.

1652

## ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEMONT

The Waldenses, a reformed sect dwelling among the mountains of Piedmont, were persecuted by the Duke of Savoy. Cromwell addressed a stern remonstrance to that ruler.

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered Saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,

1 The battle of Preston, August 17, 1648.
2 The battle of Dunbar against the Scots, September 3, 1650.
3 The battle of Worcester by which Cromwell suppressed the rising in favor of Charles II, September 3, 1651.

When all our fathers worshiped stocks and stones,[1]
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant;[2] that from these may grow
A hundredfold, who, having learnt thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.[3]

1655

## ON HIS BLINDNESS

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days[4] in this dark world and wide,
And that one Talent[5] which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide;
"Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?"
I fondly[6] ask. But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly: thousands[7] at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

1655

1 When, before the Reformation, England was a Catholic country.
2 The Pope, so called from his tiara surrounded by three crowns.
3 The woe which will be visited upon Babylon (interpreted as the Church of Rome) on the day of Judgment. Cf. Rev. XVIII.
4 Milton was forty-four when his blindness became total.
5 For the parable of the talents, see Matt. XXV, 14–30.
6 foolishly. 7 of heavenly messengers.

## ON HIS DECEASED WIFE

This sonnet refers to Milton's second wife, Katharine Woodcock, who died in 1657.

Methought I saw my late espousèd saint
Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescued from Death by force, though pale and faint.
Mine, as whom washed from spot of childbed taint
Purification in the Old Law did save,[1]
And such as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind.
Her face was veiled; yet to my fancied sight
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined
So clear as in no face with more delight.
But, oh! as to embrace me she inclined,
I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night.

1658

## PARADISE LOST

1658–1665

Milton's poetry was not the result of casual interest or occasional inspiration. With the seriousness which governed his entire life, he early devoted himself to preparation for his mission of giving to England a poem of the same greatness as Homer had given to Greece in the *Iliad*, or Virgil to Rome in the *Æneid*. In choice of subject he wavered between legendary British history, which was the material suggested by the examples of Homer and Virgil, and a Biblical theme. Since the Puritans had come to think of themselves as God's Chosen People, in succession to the Hebrews, and the Biblical narratives as the supreme illustrations of God's dealings with men, it was natural for him to choose the latter. A list in Milton's handwriting of more than a hundred subjects from the Old and New Testaments shows how systematically he explored the possibilities of the field. In all Biblical history, two events stand out as of the highest importance, the Fall of Man from his original state of holiness, and his Redemption by Christ. The former was a subject of much theological controversy in Milton's day, the view taken of it marking the difference between the Calvinists, who held that all events, including the Fall of Adam,

1 The reference is to the ceremonies of purification after childbirth, enjoined by Mosaic law. See Leviticus XII.

and the fate of every one of his sinful descendants, were immutably fixed in God's thought, and the Arminians, of whom Milton was one, who believed that God's decision in regard to the sinner was not irrevocable, but might through His grace be altered by repentance and faith in Christ. In view of its importance, both in the history of God's relation with man and in contemporary thought, Milton was constrained to choose the subject of the Fall.

Similarly Milton had a choice between two forms, both having classical authority, the epic and the tragedy. Certain of his subjects suggested the latter, notably the story of Samson which he later treated after the manner of Sophocles, but the Fall of Man was clearly epic in scope. Milton followed the account which had been elaborated by Christian fathers and rabbinical scholars upon the version given in Genesis. Vague allusions elsewhere in the Bible to Satan or Lucifer as an adversary of God, and to war in heaven, gave the suggestion for the revolt of part of the heavenly host under Lucifer's leadership. According to the practice of the epic, the poem begins in the thick of events after Lucifer and his rebel angels have been thrown from the battlements of heaven to the hell beneath. There follows their encouragement by their leader and their summons to a council, from which issues the plan to attack God's omnipotence by seducing into sin the man and woman whom He had created, to take with their descendants the places left vacant in heaven by the expulsion of the fallen angels. The first division of the poem closes with Lucifer's arrival on the earth and sight of the Garden of Eden. The second division of four books goes back over preceding events, the revolt of the angels, the creation of the universe and of man. The last four books deal with the temptation itself and the expulsion from paradise followed by Adam's prophetic view of the fortunes of his descendants in later history.

For his poetic form, Milton chose the pentameter blank verse which had been introduced by Surrey, and given currency by Marlowe and the dramatists. Milton's verse was, however, more stately and sustained than theirs. In his hands it became the equivalent in dignity and elevation of the dactylic hexameter of the classical epic poets. As in his earlier poetry Milton showed his power of using romantic suggestion and imagery in that strict subordination to the central theme which is the chief quality of classical art. The first two books of *Paradise Lost* afford magnificent illustration of this characteristic.

Milton had the material and form of *Paradise Lost* in mind for many years, but was prevented from beginning his work by his political writing, to which he was drawn by the situation of the time, and later by his Latin Secretaryship. Only in 1658 was he able to begin work in earnest and by this time he was totally blind. He composed largely at night, committing the verses to memory and dictating them later. The poem was finished in 1665. On account of the Great Fire in 1666 its publication was postponed until 1667, when Milton made an agreement to sell the copyright for £5 down, with two equal sums payable after successive sales of 1300 copies. *Paradise Lost* has come to be recognized as the greatest English epic, the poem which sets forth the traditional and historic faith of the English people in their God, and his dealings with the human race. It likewise embodies a complete philosophical survey of the universe. It is a monument of the time when men thought it still possible to achieve this sort of completeness and authority, a period of which Milton was the last great figure.

## BOOK I

### THE ARGUMENT

This First Book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject — Man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise, wherein he was placed: then touches the prime cause of his fall — the Serpent, or rather Satan in the Serpent; who, revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of Angels, was, by the command of God, driven out of Heaven, with all his crew, into the great Deep. Which action passed over, the Poem hastes into the midst of things; presenting Satan, with his Angels, now fallen into Hell — described here not in the Centre (for heaven and earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed), but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos. Here Satan, with his Angels lying on the burning lake, thunderstruck and astonished, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion; calls up him who, next in order and dignity, lay by him: they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded. They rise: their numbers; array of battle; their chief leaders named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech; comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven; but tells them, lastly, of a new world and new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy, or report, in Heaven — for that Angels were long before this visible creation was the opinion of many ancient Fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium, the palace of Satan, rises, suddenly built out of the Deep: the infernal Peers there sit in council.

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
Brought death into the World, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat,
Sing, Heavenly Muse,[1] that, on the secret top
Of Oreb,[2] or of Sinai, didst inspire
That Shepherd[3] who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the heavens and earth
Rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook[4] that flowed

1 The power that inspired Moses, and David, as opposed to the nine muses of Greek mythology.
2 The range of which Sinai was one mountain.
3 Moses.
4 At the foot of Mt. Moriah, on which stood the temple of Jerusalem.

Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventrous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount,[1] while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss,[2]
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support;
That, to the highth of this great argument,[3]
I may assert[4] Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.
Say first — for Heaven hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell — say first what cause
Moved our grand[5] Parents, in that happy state,
Favored of Heaven so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the World besides.
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?
The infernal Serpent; he it was whose guile,
Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host
Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers,
He trusted to have equalled the Most High,
If he opposed, and, with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God,
Raised impious war in Heaven and battle proud,
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he, with his horrid crew,
Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded, though immortal. But his doom
Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him: round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witnessed[1] huge affliction and dismay,
Mixed with obdúrate pride and steadfast hate.
At once, as far as Angels ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild.
A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames
No light; but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all, but torture without end
Still urges,[2] and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.
Such place Eternal Justice had prepared
For those rebellious; here their prison ordained
In utter[3] darkness, and their portion set,
As far removed from God and light of Heaven
As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.[4]
Oh how unlike the place from whence they fell!
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns; and, weltering by his side,
One next himself in power, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and named
Beelzebub. To whom the Arch-Enemy,[5]
And thence in Heaven called Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence, thus began: —
"If thou beest he — but Oh how fallen! how changed
From him! — who, in the happy realms of light,
Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
Myriads, though bright — if he whom mutual league,

1 The Aonian mount was Helicon, in Bœotia, sacred to the Muses. Milton means that he will surpass the classic poets, who drew their inspiration thence.

2 To the conception of God moving on the face of the deep Milton adds that of the descent of the Holy Ghost "in bodily shape like a dove" at the baptism of Jesus.

3 theme, subject. 4 vindicate. 5 first, original.

1 gave evidence of. 2 afflicts.

3 outer, the usual significance of utter in the seventeenth century.

4 Milton thought of the earth as surrounded by ten concentric spheres and hung from the threshold of heaven. The terrestrial poles projected outward through the intervening spheres to the outermost one.

5 Satan, in Hebrew, means "adversary."

United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
Joined with me once, now misery hath joined
In equal ruin; into what pit thou seest
From what highth fallen: so much the stronger proved
He with his thunder: and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
Nor what the potent Victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent, or change,
Though changed in outward lustre, that fixed mind,
And high disdain from sense of injured merit,
That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of Spirits armed,
That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,
His utmost power with adverse power opposed
In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
All is not lost — the unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield:
And what is else not to be overcome;
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power
Who, from the terror of this arm, so late
Doubted his empire — that were low indeed;
That were an ignominy and shame beneath
This downfall; since, by fate, the strength of Gods,
And this empyreal substance, cannot fail;
Since, through experience of this great event,
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcilable to our grand Foe,
Who now triumphs,' and in the excess of joy
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven."
So spake the apostate Angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair;
And him thus answered soon his bold Compeer: —
"O Prince, O Chief of many thronèd Powers
That led the embattled Seraphim to war
Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds
Fearless, endangered Heaven's perpetual King,
And put to proof his high supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate!
Too well I see and rue the dire event
That, with sad overthrow and foul defeat,
Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus low,
As far as Gods and Heavenly Essences
Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
Invincible, and vigor soon returns,
Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
Here swallowed up in endless misery.
But what if He our Conqueror (whom I now
Of force [1] believe almighty, since no less
Than such could have o'erpowered such force as ours)
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice [2] his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his business be,
Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy Deep? [3]
What can it then avail though yet we feel
Strength undiminished, or eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment?"
Whereto with speedy words the Arch-Fiend replied: —
"Fallen Cherub,[4] to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure —
To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to His high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labor must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which ofttimes may succeed so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail [5] not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destined aim.
But see! the angry Victor hath recalled
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the gates of Heaven: the sulphurous hail,
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
The fiery surge that from the precipice
Of Heaven received us falling; and the thunder,

1 perforce. 2 satisfy. 3 Chaos.
4 See note on line 737. 5 mistake.

Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.
Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn
Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
There rest, if any rest can harbor there;
And, re-assembling our afflicted powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our Enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
If not what resolution from despair."
Thus Satan, talking to his nearest Mate,
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,
Briareos or Typhon,[1] whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held,[2] or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim the ocean-stream.
Him, haply slumbering on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small night-foundered[3] skiff,
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixèd anchor in his scaly rind,
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wishèd morn delays.
So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay,
Chained on the burning lake; nor ever thence
Had risen, or heaved his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs,
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others, and enraged might see
How all his malice served but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy, shewn
On Man by him seduced, but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance poured.
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and, rolled
In billows, leave i' the midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
That felt unusual weight; till on dry land
He lights — if it were land that ever burned
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,
And such appeared in hue as when the force
Of subterranean wind transports a hill
Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side
Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible
And fuelled entrails, thence conceiving fire,
Sublimed[1] with mineral fury, aid the winds,
And leave a singèd bottom all involved
With stench and smoke. Such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him followed his next Mate;
Both glorying to have scaped the Stygian flood
As gods, and by their own recovered strength,
Not by the sufferance of supernal power.
"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"
Said then the lost Archangel, "this the seat
That we must change for Heaven? — this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since He
Who now is sovran can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from Him is best,
Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,
Infernal World! and thou, profoundest Hell,
Receive thy new possessor — one who brings
A mind not to be changed by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.

1 Briareos, one of the Titans; Typhon, one of the giants. Both "earth-born," as the offspring of Uranus and Ge (Earth).

2 An elaboration of a line of Æschylus, in which Typhon is described as living in a "Cilician den." Tarsus was the capital of Cilicia.

3 brought to a stand by the coming on of night.

1 changed from a solid to a vapor by the action of heat.

What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less than [1] he
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
Here we may reign secure; and, in my choice,
To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell:
Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
The associates and co-partners of our loss,
Lie thus astonished [2] on the oblivious [3] pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion, or once more
With rallied arms to try what may be yet
Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?"

So Satan spake; and him Beëlzebub
Thus answered: — "Leader of those armies bright
Which, but the Omnipotent, none could have foiled!
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers — heard so oft
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
Of battle, when it raged, in all assaults
Their surest signal — they will soon resume
New courage and revive, though now they lie
Grovelling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
As we erewhile, astounded and amazed;
No wonder, fallen such a pernicious highth!"

He scarce had ceased when the superior Fiend
Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Behind him cast. The broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist [4] views
At evening, from the top of Fesolè,
Or in Valdarno,[5] to descry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.
His spear — to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great Ammiral,[6] were but a wand —
He walked with, to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marle, not like those steps
On Heaven's azure; and the torrid clime
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.
Nathless [1] he so endured, till on the beach
Of that inflamèd sea he stood, and called
His legions — Angel Forms, who lay entranced
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades
High over-arched embower; or scattered sedge [2]
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion [3] armed
Hath vexed the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Busiris [4] and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursued
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore their floating carcases
And broken chariot-wheels. So thick bestrown,
Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.
He called so loud that all the hollow deep
Of Hell resounded: — "Princes, Potentates,
Warriors, the Flower of Heaven — once yours; now lost,
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal Spirits! Or have ye chosen this place
After the toil of battle to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find
To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
To adore the Conqueror, who now beholds
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
With scattered arms and ensigns, till anon
His swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern
The advantage, and, descending, tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linkèd thunderbolts
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf? —
Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!"

They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprung
Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch,
On duty sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
Yet to their General's voice they soon obeyed
Innumerable. As when the potent rod

1 only less than, or, all but equal to.
2 thunderstruck.
3 Oblivious is used in the now unusual causative sense of inducing forgetfulness.
4 Galileo, whom Milton had met at Florence.
5 valley of the river Arno, in which Florence lies.
6 Admiral, here transferred to the ship in which he sails, the flag-ship.

1 nevertheless.
2 The Hebrew name for the Red Sea signifies Sea of Sedge.
3 The great hunter of classic myth.
4 Busiris was really an earlier king than the Pharaoh of Moses.

Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Waved round the coast, up-called a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping[1] on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like Night, and darkened all the land of Nile;[2]
So numberless were those bad Angels seen
Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell,
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
Till, as a signal given, the uplifted spear
Of their great Sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain:
A multitude like which the populous North
Poured never from her frozen loins to pass
Rhene[3] or the Danaw,[4] when her barbarous sons
Came like a deluge on the South, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands.
Forthwith, from every squadron and each band,
The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
Their great Commander — godlike Shapes, and Forms
Excelling human; princely Dignities;
And Powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones,
Though of their names in Heavenly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and rased
By their rebellion from the Books of Life.
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names, till, wandering o'er the earth,
Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,
By falsities and lies the greatest part
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and the invisible
Glory of Him that made them to transform
Oft to the image of a brute, adorned
With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
And devils to adore for deities:
Then were they known to men by various names,
And various idols through the heathen world.
Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
Roused from the slumber on that fiery couch,
At their great Emperor's call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof.
The chief were those who, from the pit of Hell
Roaming to seek their prey on Earth, durst fix
Their seats, long after, next the seat of God,
Their altars by His altar, gods adored
Among the nations round, and durst abide
Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned
Between the Cherubim; yea, often placed
Within His sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations; and with cursèd things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned,
And with their darkness durst affront His light.
First, *Moloch*,[1] horrid King, besmeared with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears;
Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,
Their children's cries unheard that passed through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
Worshiped in Rabba[2] and her watery plain
In Argob[2] and in Basan,[2] to the stream
Of utmost Arnon.[2] Nor content with such
Audacious neighborhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna called, the type of Hell.
Next *Chemos*, the obscene dread of Moab's sons,
From Aroar[3] to Nebo and the wild
Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seon's[4] realm, beyond
The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines,
And Elealè to the Asphaltic Pool:
Peor his other name, when he enticed
Israel in Sittim,[5] on their march from Nile,
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.

1 Moving in curves. 2 See Exodus VI, 16–20.
3 Rhine. 4 Danube.

1 A nature-god, typifying the destructive power of the sun, called in Scripture the "abomination of the children of Ammon."

2 Rabba, capital city of the Ammonites; Argob, district of the mountain range of Bashan, here called Basan; Arnon, a boundary river to the east of Jordan. Here, as throughout the following two hundred lines, Milton uses proper names for their grandiloquent sound and rich but vague suggestion, rather than for the purpose of conveying information.

3 The towns and mountains mentioned in lines 407–411 all lie on or near the Dead Sea, called the Asphaltic Pool from the bitumen or asphaltus it contains.

4 King of the Ammonites. 5 See Numbers XXV.

Yet thence his lustful orgies[1] he enlarged
Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate,
Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.
With these came they who, from the bordering flood
Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of *Baalim* and *Ashtaroth* — those male,
These feminine. For Spirits, when they please,
Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
And uncompounded is their essence pure,
Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh; but, in what shape they choose,
Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
Can execute their aery purposes,
And works of love or enmity fulfil.
For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their Living Strength, and uufrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial gods; for which their heads, as low
Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came *Astoreth*, whom the Phœnicians called
Astarte, queen of heaven, with crescent horns;
To whose bright image nightly by the moon
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;
In Sion also not unsung, where stood
Her temple on the offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king[2] whose heart, though large,
Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell
To idols foul. *Thammuz*[3] came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In amorous ditties all a summer's day,
While smooth Adonis from his native rock
Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,
His eye surveyed the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourned in earnest, when the captive Ark
Maimed his brute image, head and hands lopt off,
In his own temple, on the grunsel-edge,[1]
Where he fell flat and shamed his worshipers:
*Dagon*[2] his name, sea-monster, upward man
And downward fish; yet had his temple high
Reared in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,
And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
Him followed *Rimmon*, whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
He also against the house of God was bold:
A leper once he lost, and gained a king[3] —
Ahaz, his sottish conqueror, whom he drew
God's altar to disparage and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious offerings, and adore the gods
Whom he had vanquished. After these appeared
A crew who, under names of old renown —
*Osiris*, *Isis*, *Orus*, and their train —
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused
Fanatic Egypt and her priests to seek
Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms
Rather than human. Nor did Israel scape
The infection, when their borrowed gold composed
The calf in Oreb;[4] and the rebel king[5]
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
Likening his Maker to the grazèd ox —
Jehovah, who, in one night, when he passed
From Egypt marching, equalled[6] with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
*Belial* came last; than whom a Spirit more lewd
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself. To him no temple stood
Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons,[7] who filled
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,

1 Used in the classic sense of rites, observances.
2 Solomon.
3 An important figure in Phœnician mythology, slain by a boar, but reviving again each spring, his death and resuscitation symbolizing the characteristics of winter and spring. When the river Adonis became reddened by the mud brought down from Lebanon by the spring torrents, it was believed to be the flowing afresh of Thammuz's wounds which caused the change of color.

1 ground-sill or threshold.
2 A sea-god, the national deity of the Philistines, who dwelt along the seashore. See 1 Samuel VI.
3 See 2 Kings V and XVI. 4 See 1 Kings XII, 28.
5 Jeroboam, who rebelled against Rehoboam. He made two calves of gold, setting one in Bethel and the other in Dan.
6 leveled, struck down. The reference is to the tenth plague, the smiting of "all the first-born of the land of Egypt . . . and all the first-born of the cattle."
7 See 1 Samuel II, 12–17.

nd injury and outrage; and, when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
f Belial, flown [1] with insolence and wine.
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
n Gibeah, when the hospitable door
xposed a matron, to avoid worse rape.[2]
These were the prime in order and in might:
he rest were long to tell; though far renowned
he Ionian gods — of Javan's issue held
ods,[3] yet confessed later than Heaven and Earth,
heir boasted parents; — *Titan*, Heaven's first-born,
Vith his enormous brood, and birthright seized
y younger *Saturn:* he from mightier Jove,
is own and Rhea's son, like measure found;
o *Jove* usurping reigned. These, first in Crete
nd Ida known, thence on the snowy top
f cold Olympus ruled the middle air,
heir highest heaven; or on the Delphian cliff,[4]
r in Dodona,[5] and through all the bounds
f Doric land; or who with Saturn old
led over Adria to the Hesperian fields,
nd o'er the Celtic [6] roamed the utmost Isles.
All these and more came flocking; but with looks
owncast and damp;[7] yet such wherein appeared
bscure some glimpse of joy to have found their Chief
ot in despair, to have found themselves not lost
n loss itself; which on his countenance cast
ike doubtful hue. But he, his wonted pride
oon recollecting,[8] with high words, that bore
emblance of worth, not substance, gently raised
heir fainting courage, and dispelled their fears:
hen straight commands that, at the warlike sound
f trumpets loud and clarions, be upreared
is mighty standard. That proud honor claimed
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall:
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled
The imperial ensign; which, full high advanced,
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich emblazed,
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:
At which the universal host up-sent
A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air,
With orient [1] colors waving: with them rose
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
Appeared, and serried shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable. Anon they move
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood [2]
Of flutes and soft recorders [3] — such as raised
To highth of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle, and instead of rage
Deliberate valor breathed, firm, and unmoved
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;
Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage
With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
Breathing united force with fixèd thought,
Moved on in silence to soft pipes that charmed
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil. And now
Advanced in view they stand — a horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old, with ordered spear and shield,
Awaiting what command their mighty Chief
Had to impose. He through the armèd files
Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse [4]
The whole battalion views — their order due,
Their visages and stature as of Gods;
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and, hardening in his strength,
Glories: for never, since created Man,

1 flushed.
2 For the allusions, see Genesis XIX, Judges XIX.
3 Uranus (Heaven) and Ge (earth) had as offspring the Titans. One of these, Cronos (Saturn in Roman mythology) dethroned his father, and was in turn dethroned by his son Zeus, whose mother was Rhea.
4 A part of Mt. Parnassus, the seat of the famous oracle of Apollo.
5 In Epirus, where there was an oracle of Zeus.
6 i.e. Celtic land — a Greek idiom.
7 depressed. 8 re-collecting.

1 bright, lustrous.
2 grave and stern, in contrast with the softer Lydian mode.
3 flageolets. 4 across.

Met such embodied force as, named with these,
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warred on by cranes[1] — though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra[2] with the heroic race were joined
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mixed with auxiliar gods; and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son,[3]
Begirt with British and Armoric knights;[4]
And all who since, baptized or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont,[5] or Montalban,
Damasco,[6] or Marocco, or Trebisond,
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore
When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed
Their dread Commander. He, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower. His form had yet not lost
All her original brightness, nor appeared
Less than Archangel ruined, and the excess
Of glory obscured: as when the sun new-risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams, or, from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so, yet shone
Above them all the Archangel: but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate[7] pride
Waiting revenge. Cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse[8] and passion,[9] to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
(Far other once beheld in bliss), condemned
For ever now to have their lot in pain —
Millions of Spirits for his fault amerced
Of Heaven, and from eternal splendors flung
For his revolt — yet faithful how they stood,[1]
Their glory withered; as, when heaven's fire
Hath scathed the forest oaks or mountain pines,
With singèd top their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
With all his peers: Attention held them mute.
Thrice he assayed, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears, such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last
Words interwove with sighs found out their way: —
"O myriads of immortal Spirits! O Powers
Matchless, but with the Almighty! — and that strife
Was not inglorious, though the event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change,
Hateful to utter. But what power of mind,
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have feared
How such united force of gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to reascend,
Self-raised, and re-possess their native seat?
For me, be witness all the host of Heaven,
If counsels different, or danger shunned
By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
Monarch in Heaven till then as one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent or custom, and his regal state
Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed —
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war provoked: our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not; that he no less
At length from us may find, Who overcomes

1 The pygmies of Ethiopia were said to fight with the cranes who invaded their country.
2 The wars of the giants and the gods were fought at Phlegra in Macedon.
3 King Arthur.
4 Armoric knights are knights of Brittany.
5 Aspramont, in Provence; Montalban, in Languedoc; Trebisond, in Cappadocia; are all famous in the annals of chivalry.
6 Damascus, the scene of many combats during the Crusades.
7 thoughtful. 8 pity.
9 strong feeling, not anger.

1 "To behold," from line 605 is understood in this construction.

By force hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new Worlds; whereof so rife
There went a fame in Heaven that He ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation whom his choice regard
Should favor equal to the Sons of Heaven.
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
Our first eruption — thither, or elsewhere;
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor the Abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full counsel must mature. Peace is despaired;
For who can think submission? War, then, war
Open or understood, must be resolved."
He spake; and, to confirm his words, outflew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumined Hell. Highly they raged
Against the Highest and fierce with graspèd arms
Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.
There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
Belched fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
Shone with a glossy scurf — undoubted sign
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
The work of sulphur.[1] Thither, winged with speed,
A numerous brigad hastened: as when bands
Of pioneers, with spade and pickaxe armed,
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on —
Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell
From Heaven; for even in Heaven his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of Heaven's pavement, trodden gold,
Than aught divine or holy else enjoyed
In vision beatific. By him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
Ransacked the Centre,[2] and with impious hands
Rifled the bowels of their mother Earth
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Opened into the hill a spacious wound,
And digged out ribs of gold. Let none admire
That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,[1]
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
And strength, and art, are easily outdone
By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour
What in an age they, with incessant toil
And hands innumerable, scarce perform.
Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepared,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude
With wondrous art founded the massy ore,
Severing each kind, and scummed the bullion-dross.
A third as soon had formed within the ground
A various mould, and from the boiling cells
By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook;
As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet —
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave; nor did there want
Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven:
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon
Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
Equalled in all their glories, to enshrine
Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile
Stood fixed her stately highth; and straight the doors,
Opening their brazen folds, discover, wide
Within, her ample spaces o'er the smooth
And level pavement: from the archèd roof,
Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky. The hasty multitude
Admiring entered; and the work some praise,

1 In the seventeenth century and earlier, sulphur was believed to be the formative element of metals.
2 Here, as elsewhere, the earth, the center of the universe, according to the Ptolemaic system of astronomy.

1 The Pyramids.

And some the Architect. His hand was known
In Heaven by many a towered structure high,
Where sceptred Angels held their residence,
And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
Each in his hierarchy, the Orders [1] bright.
Nor was his name [2] unheard or unadored
In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell
From Heaven they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements: from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A summer's day, and with the setting sun
Dropt from the zenith, like a falling star,
On Lemnos, the Ægæan isle. Thus they relate,
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
Fell long before; nor aught availed him now
To have built in Heaven high towers; nor did he scape
By all his engines, but was headlong sent,
With his industrious crew, to build in Hell.
Meanwhile the wingèd Haralds, by command
Of sovran power, with awful ceremony
And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
A solemn council forthwith to be held
At Pandæmonium, the high capital
Of Satan and his peers. Their summons called
From every band and squarèd regiment
By place or choice the worthiest: they anon
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came
Attended. All access was thronged; the gates
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
(Though like a covered field, where champions bold
Wont ride in armed, and at the Soldan's chair
Defied the best of Panim chivalry
To mortal combat, or career with lance),
Thick swarmed, both on the ground and in the air,
Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
In spring-time, when the Sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothèd plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New rubbed with balm, expatiate, and confer
Their state-affairs: so thick the aerie crowd
Swarmed and were straitened; till, the signal given,
Behold a wonder! They but now who seemed
In bigness to surpass Earth's giant sons,
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless — like that pygmean race
Beyond the Indian mount; or faery elves,
Whose midnight revels, by a forest-side
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while overhead the Moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the Earth
Wheels her pale course: they, on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms
Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,
Though without number still, amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimensions like themselves,
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim
In close recess [1] and secret conclave sat,
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
Frequent [2] and full. After short silence then,
And summons read, the great consult began.

1 The mediæval division of all celestial beings into three Hierarchies, each comprising three Orders, or Choirs, made the lowest Hierarchy include Angels, Archangels, Principalities; the next higher, Powers, Virtues, and Dominions; the highest included Thrones, Cherubim, and Seraphim.

2 Vulcan

## BOOK II

### THE ARGUMENT

The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be to be hazarded for the recovery of Heaven: some advise it, others dissuade. A third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan — to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in Heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature, equal, or not much inferior, to themselves, about this time to be created. Their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search: Satan, their chief, undertakes alone the voyage; is honored and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to Hell-gates; finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them; by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between Hell and Heaven. With what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the Power of that place, to the sight of this new World which he sought.

1 retirement. 2 crowded.

High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus [1] and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit raised
To that bad eminence; and, from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
Vain war with Heaven; and, by success [2] untaught,
His proud imaginations thus displayed: —
"Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heaven! —
For, since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigor, though oppressed and fallen,
I give not Heaven for lost: from this descent
Celestial Virtues rising will appear
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate! —
Me though just right, and the fixed laws of Heaven,
Did first create your leader — next, free choice,
With what besides in council or in fight
Hath been achieved of merit — yet this loss,
Thus far at least recovered, hath much more
Established in a safe, unenvied throne,
Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In Heaven, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior; but who here
Will envy whom the highest place exposes
Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
Of endless pain? Where there is, then, no good
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
From faction: for none sure will claim in Hell
Precedence; none whose portion is so small
Of present pain that with ambitious mind
Will covet more! With this advantage, then,
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in Heaven, we now return
To claim our just inheritance of old,
Surer to prosper than prosperity
Could have assured us; and by what best way,
Whether of open war or covert guile,
We now debate. Who can advise may speak."
He ceased; and next him Moloch, sceptred king,
Stood up — the strongest and the fiercest Spirit
That fought in Heaven, now fiercer by despair.
His trust was with the Eternal to be deemed
Equal in strength, and rather than be less
Cared not to be at all; with that care lost
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse,
He recked not, and these words thereafter spake: —
"My sentence is for open war. Of wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those
Contrive who need, or when they need; not now.
For, while they sit contriving, shall the rest —
Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait
The signal to ascend — sit lingering here,
Heaven's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
The prison of His tyranny who reigns
By our delay? No! let us rather choose,
Armed with Hell-flames and fury, all at once
O'er Heaven's high towers to force resistless way,
Turning our tortures into horrid arms
Against the Torturer; when, to meet the noise
Of his almighty engine, he shall hear
Infernal thunder, and, for lightning, see
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his Angels, and his throne itself
Mixed with Tartarean sulphur and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But perhaps
The way seems difficult, and steep to scale
With upright wing against a higher foe!
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,
That in our proper motion we ascend
Up to our native seat; descent and fall
To us is adverse. [1] Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursued us through the Deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low? The ascent is easy, then;
The event is feared! Should we again provoke

1 An island in the Persian Gulf. 2 outcome.

1 Refers to the mediæval conception that angels are not subject to natural laws, such as that of gravitation. Their tendency is upward, not downward.

Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction, if there be in Hell
Fear to be worse destroyed! What can be worse
Than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, condemned
In this abhorrèd deep to utter woe;
Where pain of unextinguishable fire
Must exercise us without hope of end
The vassals of his anger, when the scourge
Inexorably, and the torturing hour,
Calls us to penance? More destroyed than thus,
We should be quite abolished, and expire.
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
His utmost ire? which, to the highth enraged,
Will either quite consume us, and reduce
To nothing this essential — happier far
Than miserable to have eternal being! —
Or, if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel
Our power sufficient to disturb his Heaven,
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
Though inaccessible, his fatal Throne:
Which, if not victory, is yet revenge."
He ended frowning, and his look denounced [1]
Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous
To less than gods. On the other side up rose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane.
A fairer person lost not heaven; he seemed
For dignity composed, and high exploit.
But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low —
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful. Yet he pleased the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began: —
"I should be much for open war, O Peers,
As not behind in hate, if what was urged
Main reason to persuade immediate war
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success;
When he who most excels in fact of arms,
In what he counsels and in what excels
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.

1 threatened.

First, what revenge? The towers of Heaven are filled
With armèd watch, that render all access
Impregnable: oft on the bordering Deep
Encamp their legions, or with obscure wing
Scout far and wide into the realm of Night,
Scorning surprise. Or, could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise
With blackest insurrection to confound
Heaven's purest light, yet our great Enemy
All incorruptible, would on his throne
Sit unpolluted, and the ethereal mould,
Incapable of stain, would soon expel
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
Victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope
Is flat despair: we must exasperate
The Almighty Victor to spend all his rage;
And that must end us; that must be our cure —
To be no more. Sad cure! for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, swallowed up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated Night,
Devoid of sense and motion? And who knows,
Let this be good, whether our angry Foe
Can give it, or will ever? [1] How he can
Is doubtful; that he never will is sure.
Will He, so wise, let loose at once his ire,
Belike through impotence or unaware,
To give his enemies their wish, and end
Them in his anger whom his anger saves
To punish endless? 'Wherefore cease we, then?'
Say they who counsel war; 'we are decreed,
Reserved, and destined to eternal woe;
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse?' Is this, then, worst —
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
What when we fled amain, pursued and strook
With Heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought
The Deep to shelter us? This Hell then seemed
A refuge from those wounds. Or when we lay
Chained on the burning lake? That sure was worse.

1 The meaning here is "even granted that death is to be desired, who knows whether God has the power or the will to destroy angelic substances?"

What if the breath that kindled those grim fires,
Awaked, should blow them into sevenfold rage,
And plunge us in the flames; or from above
Should intermitted vengeance arm again
His red right hand to plague us? What if all
Her stores were opened, and this firmament
Of Hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
Impendent horrors, threatening hideous fall
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps,
Designing or exhorting glorious war,
Caught in a fiery tempest, shall be hurled,
Each on his rock transfixed, the sport and prey
Of racking whirlwinds, or for ever sunk
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains,
There to converse with everlasting groans,
Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,
Ages of hopeless end? This would be worse.
War, therefore, open or concealed, alike
My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
With Him, or who deceive His mind, whose eye
Views all things at one view? He from Heaven's highth
All these our motions vain sees and derides,
Not more almighty to resist our might
Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
Shall we, then, live thus vile — the race of Heaven
Thus trampled, thus expelled, to suffer here
Chains and these torments? Better these than worse,
By my advice; since fate inevitable
Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
The Victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
Our strength is equal; nor the law unjust
That so ordains. This was at first resolved,
If we were wise, against so great a foe
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
I laugh when those who at the spear are bold
And venturous, if that fail them, shrink, and fear
What yet they know must follow — to endure
Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
The sentence of their conqueror. This is now
Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
Our Supreme Foe in time may much remit
His anger, and perhaps, thus far removed,
Not mind us not offending, satisfied
With what is punished; whence these raging fires
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
Our purer essence then will overcome
Their noxious vapor; or, inured, not feel;
Or, changed at length, and to the place conformed
In temper and in nature, will receive
Familiar the fierce heat; and, void of pain,
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light;
Besides what hope the never-ending flight
Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
Worth waiting — since our present lot appears
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,
If we procure not to ourselves more woe."
Thus Belial, with words clothed in reason's garb,
Counselled ignoble ease and peaceful sloth,
Not peace; and after him thus Mammon spake: —
"Either to disenthrone the King of Heaven
We war, if war be best, or to regain
Our own right lost. Him to unthrone we then
May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife.
The former, vain to hope, argues as vain
The latter; for what place can be for us
Within Heaven's bound, unless Heaven's Lord Supreme
We overpower? Suppose he should relent,
And publish grace to all, on promise made
Of new subjection; with what eyes could we
Stand in his presence humble, and receive
Strict laws imposed, to celebrate his throne
With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
Forced Halleluiahs, while he lordly sits
Our envied sovran, and his altar breathes
Ambrosial odors and ambrosial flowers,
Our servile offerings? This must be our task
In Heaven, this our delight. How wearisome
Eternity so spent in worship paid
To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue,
By force impossible, by leave obtained
Unacceptable, though in Heaven, our state
Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek
Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
Free and to none accountable, preferring
Hard liberty before the easy yoke
Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
Then most conspicuous when great things of small,

Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse,
We can create, and in what place soe'er
Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain
Through labor and endurance. This deep world
Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
Thick clouds and dark doth Heaven's all-ruling Sire
Choose to reside, his glory unobscured,
And with the majesty of darkness round
Covers his throne, from whence deep thunders roar,
Mustering their rage, and Heaven resembles Hell!
As He our darkness, cannot we His light
Imitate when we please? This desert soil
Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;
Nor want we skill or art from whence to raise
Magnificence; and what can Heaven shew more?
Our torments also may, in length of time,
Become our elements, these piercing fires
As soft as now severe, our temper changed
Into their temper; which must needs remove
The sensible[1] of pain. All things invite
To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
Of order, how in safety best we may
Compose our present evils, with regard
Of what we are and where, dismissing quite
All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise."
He scarce had finished, when such murmur filled
The assembly as when hollow rocks retain
The sound of blustering winds, which all night long
Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
Seafaring men o'erwatched, whose bark by chance,
Or pinnace, anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest. Such applause was heard
As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleased,
Advising peace: for such another field[2]
They dreaded worse than Hell; so much the fear
Of thunder and the sword of Michaël
Wrought still within them; and no less desire
To found this nether empire, which might rise,
By policy and long process' of time,
In emulation opposite to Heaven.
Which when Beëlzebub perceived — than whom,
Satan except, none higher sat — with grave
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seemed
A pillar of state. Deep on his front engraven
Deliberation sat, and public care;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestic, though in ruin. Sage he stood,
With Atlantean shoulders, fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
Drew audience and attention still as night
Or summer's noontide air, while thus he spake: —
"Thrones and Imperial Powers, Offspring of Heaven,
Ethereal Virtues! or these titles now
Must we renounce, and, changing style, be called
Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
Inclines — here to continue, and build up here
A growing empire; doubtless! while we dream,
And know not that the King of Heaven hath doomed
This place our dungeon — not our safe retreat
Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
From Heaven's high jurisdiction, in new league
Banded against his throne, but to remain
In strictest bondage, though thus far removed,
Under the inevitable curb, reserved
His captive multitude. For He, be sure,
In highth or depth, still first and last will reign
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part
By our revolt, but over Hell extend
His empire, and with iron sceptre rule
Us here, as with his golden those in Heaven.
What[1] sit we then projecting peace and war?
War hath determined[2] us and foiled with loss
Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
Vouchsafed or sought; for what peace will be given
To us enslaved, but custody severe,
And stripes and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted? and what peace can we return,
But, to our power, hostility and hate,
Untamed reluctance, and revenge, though slow,
Yet ever plotting how the Conqueror least
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
In doing what we most in suffering feel?
Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
With dangerous expedition to invade

1 sense. 2 battle.

1 to what end, why. 2 undone, made an end of.

eaven, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,
r ambush from the Deep. What if we find
me easier enterprise? There is a place
f ancient and prophetic fame in Heaven
rr not) — another World, the happy seat
f some new race, called Man, about this time
o be created like to us, though less
n power and excellence, but favored more
f Him who rules above; so was His will
ronounced among the gods, and by an oath
hat shook Heaven's whole circumference confirmed.
hither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
hat creatures there inhabit, of what mould
r substance, how endued, and what their power
nd where their weakness: how attempted best,
y force or subtlety. Though Heaven be shut,
nd Heaven's high Arbitrator sit secure
n his own strength, this place may lie exposed,
he utmost border of his kingdom, left
o their defence who hold it: here, perhaps,
ome advantageous act may be achieved
y sudden onset — either with Hell-fire
o waste his whole creation, or possess
ll as our own, and drive, as we are driven,
he puny habitants; or, if not drive,
educe them to our party, that their God
lay prove their foe, and with repenting hand
bolish his own works. This would surpass
ommon revenge, and interrupt His joy
n our confusion, and our joy upraise
n His disturbance; when his darling sons,
urled headlong to partake with us, shall curse
heir frail original, and faded bliss —
aded so soon! Advise if this be worth
ttempting, or to sit in darkness here
atching vain empires." Thus Beëlzebub
leaded his devilish counsel — first devised
y Satan, and in part proposed: for whence,
ut from the author of all ill, could spring
o deep a malice, to confound the race
f mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell
o mingle and involve, done all to spite
he great Creator? But their spite still serves
is glory to augment. The bold design
leased highly those Infernal States, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes: with full assent
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews: —
"Well have ye judged, well ended long debate,
Synod of Gods, and, like to what ye are,
Great things resolved, which from the lowest deep
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
Nearer our ancient Seat — perhaps in view
Of those bright confines, whence, with neighboring arms,
And opportune excursion, we may chance
Re-enter Heaven; or else in some mild zone
Dwell, not unvisited of Heaven's fair light,
Secure, and at the brightening orient beam
Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air,
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
Shall breathe her balm. But, first, whom shall we send
In search of this new World? whom shall we find
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandering feet
The dark, unbottomed, infinite Abyss,
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth way, or spread his aerie flight,
Upborne with indefatigable wings
Over the vast Abrupt,[1] ere he arrive
The happy Isle? What strength, what art, can then
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
Through the strict senteries and stations thick
Of Angels watching round? Here he had need
All circumspection: and we now no less
Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send
The weight of all, and our last hope, relies."
This said, he sat; and expectation held
His look suspense, awaiting who appeared
To second, or oppose, or undertake
The perilous attempt. But all sat mute,
Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each
In other's countenance read his own dismay,
Astonished. None among the choice and prime
Of those Heaven-warring champions could be found
So hardy as to proffer or accept,
Alone, the dreadful voyage; till, at last,
Satan, whom now transcendent glory raised

1 That portion of chaos separating earth from Hell, which space is apparently conceived as a sort of chasm or gulf.

Above his fellows, with monarchal pride
Conscious of highest worth, unmoved thus spake: —
"O Progeny of Heaven! Empyreal Thrones!
With reason hath deep silence and demur
Seized us, though undismayed. Long is the way
And hard, that out of Hell leads up to Light.
Our prison strong, this huge convex of fire,
Outrageous to devour, immures us round
Ninefold; and gates of burning adamant,
Barred over us, prohibit all egress.
These passed, if any pass, the void profound
Of unessential Night[1] receives him next,
Wide-gaping, and with utter loss of being
Threatens him, plunged in that abortive gulf.
If thence he scape, into whatever world,
Or unknown region, what remains him less
Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?
But I should ill become this throne, O Peers,
And this imperial sovranty, adorned
With splendor, armed with power, if aught proposed
And judged of public moment in the shape
Of difficulty or danger, could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume
These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
Refusing to accept as great a share
Of hazard as of honor, due alike
To him who reigns, and so much to him due
Of hazard more as he above the rest
High honored sits? Go, therefore, mighty Powers,
Terror of Heaven, though fallen; intend[2] at home,
While here shall be our home, what best may ease
The present misery, and render Hell
More tolerable; if there be cure or charm
To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion: intermit no watch
Against a wakeful Foe, while I abroad
Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek
Deliverance for us all. This enterprise
None shall partake with me." Thus saying, rose
The Monarch, and prevented all reply;
Prudent lest, from his resolution raised,[3]
Others among the chief might offer now,
Certain to be refused, what erst they feared,

1 having no real essence, or being. 2 consider.
3 encouraged by his resolute spirit.

And, so refused, might in opinion stand
His rivals, winning cheap the high repute
Which he through hazard huge must earn
But they
Dreaded not more the adventure than his voice
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose.
Their rising all at once was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
With awful reverence prone, and as a God
Extol him equal to the Highest in Heaven.
Nor failed they to express how much they praised
That for the general safety he despised
His own: for neither do the Spirits damned
Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast
Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,
Or close ambition varnished o'er with zeal.
Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
Ended, rejoicing in their matchless Chief:
As, when from mountain-tops the dusky clouds
Ascending, while the North-wind sleeps o'erspread
Heaven's cheerful face, the louring element
Scowls o'er the darkened landscape snow or shower,
If chance the radiant sun, with farewel sweet,
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
O shame to men! Devil with devil damned
Firm concord holds; men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heavenly grace, and, God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
That day and night for his destruction wait!
The Stygian council thus dissolved; and forth
In order came the grand Infernal Peers:
Midst came their mighty Paramount,[2] and seemed

1 lord, chief.

Alone the Antagonist of Heaven, nor less
Than Hell's dread Emperor, with pomp supreme,
And god-like imitated state: him round
A globe of fiery Seraphim inclosed
With bright emblazonry, and horrent [1] arms.
Then of their session ended they bid cry
With trumpet's regal sound the great result:
Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim
Put to their mouths the sounding alchymy,
By harald's voice explained; [2] the hollow Abyss
Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell
With deafening shout returned them loud acclaim.
Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat raised
By false presumptuous hope, the rangèd Powers
Disband; and, wandering, each his several way
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
Leads him perplexed, where he may likeliest find
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
The irksome hours, till his great Chief return.
Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,
Upon the wing or in swift race contend,
As at the Olympian games or Pythian fields;
Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigads form:
As when, to warn proud cities, war appears
Waged in the troubled sky, and armies rush
To battle in the clouds; before each van
Prick forth the aerie knights, and couch their spears,
Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms
From either end of heaven the welkin burns.
Others, with vast Typhœan [3] rage, more fell,
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air
In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar: —
As when Alcides, from Œchalia crowned
With conquest, felt the envenomed robe, and tore
Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,
And Lichas from the top of Œta threw
Into the Euboic sea. Others, more mild,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing
With notes angelical to many a harp
Their own heroic deeds, and hapless fall
By doom of battle, and complain that Fate
Free Virtue should enthrall to Force or Chance.
Their song was partial; but the harmony
(What could it less when Spirits immortal sing?)
Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet
(For Eloquence the Soul, Song charms the Sense)
Others apart sat on a hill retired,
In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
Of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will, and Fate —
Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute —
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame:
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy! —
Yet, with a pleasing sorcery, could charm
Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm the obdurèd [1] breast
With stubborn patience as with triple steel.
Another part, in squadrons and gross bands,
On bold adventure to discover wide
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
Might yield them easier habitation, bend
Four ways their flying march, along the banks
Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge
Into the burning lake their baleful streams —
Abhorrèd Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;
Cocytus, named of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegeton,
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks
Forthwith his former state and being forgets —
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Beyond this flood a frozen continent
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems
Of ancient pile; all else deep snow and ice,
A gulf profound as that Serbonian [2] bog

1 bristling. 2 filled. 3 See Book I, l. 199.

1 hardened.

2 Lake Serbonis, between Damiata and Mount Casius, was sometimes so covered with sand that armies advanced upon it as upon solid ground.

Betwixt Damiata and Mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
Burns frore, and cold performs the effect of fire.
Thither, by harpy-footed Furies haled,
At certain revolutions all the damned
Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
From beds of raging fire to starve in ice
Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
Immovable, infixed, and frozen round
Periods of time, — thence hurried back to fire.
They ferry over this Lethean sound
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
All in one moment, and so near the brink;
But Fate withstands, and, to oppose the attempt,
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards
The ford, and of itself the water flies
All taste of living wight, as once it fled
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
In confused march forlorn, the adventrous bands,
With shuddering horror pale, and eyes aghast,
Viewed first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest. Through many a dark and dreary vale
They passed, and many a region dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp,
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death —
A universe of death, which God by curse
Created evil, for evil only good;
Where all life dies, death lives, and Nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feigned or fear conceived,
Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras dire.
Meanwhile the Adversary of God and Man,
Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest design,
Puts on swift wings, and toward the gates of Hell
Explores his solitary flight: sometimes
He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left;
Now shaves with level wing the Deep, then soars
Up to the fiery concave towering high.
As when far off at sea a fleet descried
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs; they on the trading flood,
Through the wide Ethiopian [1] to the Cape,
Ply stemming nightly toward the pole: so seemed
Far off the flying Fiend. At last appear
Hell-bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,
And thrice threefold the gates; three folds were brass,
Three iron, three of adamantine rock,
Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire,
Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat
On either side a formidable Shape.
The one seemed woman to the waist, and fair,
But ended foul in many a scaly fold,
Voluminous and vast — a serpent armed
With mortal sting. About her middle round
A cry of Hell-hounds never-ceasing barked
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,
If aught disturbed their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there; yet there still barked and howled
Within unseen. Far less abhorred than these
Vexed Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore;
Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, called
In secret, riding through the air she comes,
Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland [2] witches, while the laboring moon
Eclipses at their charms. The other Shape —
If shape it might be called that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,
For each seemed either — black it stood as Night,
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,

1 Ethiopian Sea, or the Indian Ocean.
2 Lapland was long held to be the home and especial meeting-place of witches.

nd shook a dreadful dart: what seemed his head
he likeness of a kingly crown had on.
atan was now at hand, and from his seat
he monster moving onward came as fast
Vith horrid strides; Hell trembled as he strode.
he undaunted Fiend what this might be admired —
dmired, not feared (God and his Son except,
reated thing naught valued he nor shunned),
nd with disdainful look thus first began: —
"Whence and what art thou, execrable Shape,
hat dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance
hy miscreated front athwart my way
o yonder gates? Through them I mean to pass,
hat be assured, without leave asked of thee.
etire; or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
ell-born, not to contend with Spirits of Heaven."
To whom the Goblin,[1] full of wrath, replied: —
Art thou that Traitor-Angel, art thou he,
Vho first broke peace in Heaven and faith, till then
nbroken, and in proud rebellious arms
rew after him the third part of Heaven's sons,
onjured[2] against the Highest — for which both thou
nd they, outcast from God, are here condemned
o waste eternal days in woe and pain?
nd reckon'st thou thyself with Spirits of Heaven,
ell-doomed, and breath'st defiance here and scorn,
Vhere I reign king, and, to enrage thee more,
hy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,
alse fugitive; and to thy speed add wings,
est with a whip of scorpions I pursue
hy lingering, or with one stroke of this dart
trange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before."
So spake the grisly Terror, and in shape,
o speaking and so threatening, grew tenfold
lore dreadful and deform. On the other side,
Incensed with indignation, Satan stood
Unterrified, and like a comet burned,
That fires the length of Ophiuchus[1] huge
In the arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
Levelled his deadly aim; their fatal hands
No second stroke intend; and such a frown
Each cast at the other as when two black clouds,
With heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caspian, — then stand front to front
Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow
To join their dark encounter in mid-air.
So frowned the mighty combatants that Hell
Grew darker at their frown; so matched they stood;
For never but once more was either like
To meet so great a foe. And now great deeds
Had been achieved, whereof all Hell had rung,
Had not the snaky Sorceress, that sat
Fast by Hell-gate and kept the fatal key,
Risen, and with hideous outcry rushed between.
"O father, what intends thy hand," she cried,
"Against thy only son? What fury, O son,
Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
Against thy father's head? And know'st for whom?
For Him who sits above, and laughs the while
At thee, ordained his drudge to execute
Whate'er his wrath, which He calls justice, bids —
His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both!"
She spake, and at her words the hellish Pest
Forbore: then these to her Satàn returned: —
"So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand,
Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds
What it intends, till first I know of thee
What thing thou art, thus double-formed, and why,
In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st
Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son.
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable than him and thee."
To whom thus the Portress of Hell-gate replied: —
"Hast thou forgot me, then; and do I seem

1 Used in the generic sense of demon or fiend.
2 bound by oath.

1 A large constellation of the northern hemisphere.

Now in thine eye so foul? — once deemed so fair
In Heaven, when at the assembly, and in sight
Of all the Seraphim with thee combined
In bold conspiracy against Heaven's King,
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surprised thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth, till on the left side opening wide,
Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,
Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess armed,
Out of thy head I sprung. Amazement seized
All the host of Heaven; back they recoiled afraid
At first, and called me *Sin*, and for a sign
Portentous held me; but, familiar-grown,
I pleased, and with attractive graces won
The most averse — thee chiefly, who, full oft
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing,
Becam'st enamored; and such joy thou took'st
With me in secret that my womb conceived
A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose,
And fields were fought in Heaven: wherein remained
(For what could else?) to our Almighty Foe
Clear victory; to our part loss and rout
Through all the Empyrean. Down they fell,
Driven headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down
Into this Deep; and in the general fall
I also: at which time this powerful Key
Into my hands was given, with charge to keep
These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
Without my opening. Pensive here I sat
Alone; but long I sat not, till my womb,
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,
Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes.
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way,
Tore through my entrails, that, with fear and pain
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
Transformed: but he my inbred enemy
Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart,
Made to destroy. I fled, and cried out *Death!*
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sighed
From all her caves, and back resounde *Death!*
I fled; but he pursued (though more, i seems,
Inflamed with lust than rage), and, swifte far,
Me overtook, his mother, all dismayed,
And, in embraces forcible and foul
Engendering with me, of that rape begot
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseles cry
Surround me, as thou saw'st — hourly con ceived
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
To me: for, when they list, into the womb
That bred them they return, and howl, an gnaw
My bowels, their repast; then, burstin forth
Afresh, with conscious terrors vex me round
That rest or intermission none I find.
Before mine eyes in opposition sits
Grim Death, my son and foe, who sets then on,
And me, his parent, would full soon de vour
For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involved, and knows that
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
Whenever that shall be: so Fate pronounced
But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, shun
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
Though tempered heavenly; for that morta dint,
Save He who reigns above, none can resist."
She finished; and the subtle Fiend his lore
Soon learned, now milder, and thus answere smooth: —
"Dear daughter — since thou claim'st m for thy sire,
And my fair son here show'st me, the dea pledge
Of dalliance had with thee in Heaven, an joys
Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change
Befallen us unforeseen, unthought-of — know,
I come no enemy, but to set free
From out this dark and dismal house of pai
Both him and thee, and all the Heavenly hos
Of Spirits that, in our just pretence armed,
Fell with us from on high. From them I g
This uncouth errand sole, and one for all
Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread

he unfounded Deep, and through the void immense
o search, with wandering quest, a place foretold
hould be — and, by concurring signs, ere now
reated vast and round — a place of bliss
n the purlieues of Heaven; and therein placed
race of upstart creatures, to supply
erhaps our vacant room, though more removed,
est Heaven, surcharged with potent multitude,
light hap to move new broils. Be this, or aught
han this more secret, now designed, I haste
o know; and, this once known, shall soon return,
nd bring ye to the place where thou and Death
hall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
Ving silently the buxom,[1] air, imbalmed
Vith odors. There ye shall be fed and filled
mmeasurably; all things shall be your prey."
He ceased; for both seemed highly pleased, and Death
Grinned horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
His famine should be filled, and blessed his maw
Destined to that good hour. No less rejoiced
His mother bad, and thus bespake her Sire:—
"The key of this infernal Pit, by due
And by command of Heaven's all-powerful King,
I keep, by Him forbidden to unlock
These adamantine gates; against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatched by living might.
But what owe I to His commands above,
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful office here confined,
Inhabitant of Heaven and heavenly-born
Here in perpetual agony and pain,
With terrors and with clamors compassed round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
My being gav'st me; whom should I obey
But thee? whom follow? Thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliss, among
The gods who live at ease, where I shall reign
At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end."
Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
And, toward the gate rolling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge porcullis high up-drew,
Which, but herself, not all the Stygian Powers
Could once have moved; then in the keyhole turns
The intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
Unfastens. On a sudden open fly,
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She opened; but to shut
Excelled her power: the gates wide open stood,
That with extended wings a bannered host,
Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through
With horse and chariots ranked in loose array;
So wide they stood, and like a furnace-mouth
Cast forth redounding[1] smoke and ruddy flame.
Before their eyes in sudden view appear
The secrets of the hoary Deep — a dark
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension; where length, breadth, and highth,
And time, and place, are lost; where eldest Night
And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
For Hot, Cold, Moist, and Dry, four champions fierce,
Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring
Their embryon atoms: they around the flag
Of each his faction, in their several clans,
Light-armed or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,
Swarm populous, unnumbered as the sands
Of Barca or Cyrene's[2] torrid soil,
Levied to side with warring winds, and poise
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere
He rules a moment: Chaos umpire sits,

1 bending, or yielding.

1 rolling in billows. 2 Cities of northern Africa.

And by decision more imbroils the fray
By which he reigns: next him, high arbiter,
Chance governs all. Into this wild Abyss,
The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave,
Of neither Sea, nor Shore, nor Air, nor Fire,
But all these in their pregnant causes mixed
Confusedly, and which thus must ever fight,
Unless the Almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more worlds —
Into this wild Abyss the wary Fiend
Stood on the brink of Hell and looked a while,
Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith
He had to cross. Nor was his ear less pealed
With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
Great things with small) than when Bellona storms
With all her battering engines, bent to rase
Some capital city; or less than if this frame
Of heaven were falling, and these elements
In mutiny had from her axle torn
The steadfast Earth. At last his sail-broad vans[1]
He spreads for flight, and, in the surging smoke
Uplifted, spurns the ground; thence many a league,
As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides
Audacious; but, that seat soon failing, meets
A vast vacuity. All unawares,
Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb-down he drops
Ten thousand fadom deep, and to this hour
Down had been falling, had not, by ill chance,
The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
As many miles aloft. That fury stayed —
Quenched in a boggy Syrtis,[2] neither sea,
Nor good dry land — nigh foundered, on he fares,
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.
As when a gryphon through the wilderness
With wingèd course, o'er hill or moory dale,
Pursues the Arimaspian,[3] who by stealth
Had from his wakeful custody purloined
The guarded gold; so eagerly the Fiend
O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps or flies.
At length a universal hubbub wild
Of stunning sounds, and voices all confused
Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
With loudest vehemence. Thither he plies
Undaunted, to meet there whatever Power
Or Spirit of the nethermost Abyss
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies
Bordering on light; when straight behold the throne
Of *Chaos*, and his dark pavilion spread
Wide on the wasteful Deep! With him enthroned
Sat sable-vested *Night*, eldest of things,
The consort of his reign; and by them stood
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
Of Demogorgon; Rumor next, and Chance,
And Tumult, and Confusion, all embroiled,
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

To whom Satan, turning boldly, thus: — "Ye Powers
And Spirits of this nethermost Abyss,
Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy
With purpose to explore or to disturb
The secrets of your realm; but, by constraint
Wandering this darksome desert, as my way
Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
Alone and without guide, half lost, I seek,
What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
Confine with Heaven; or, if some other place
From your dominion won, the Ethereal King
Possesses lately, thither to arrive
I travel this profound. Direct my course:
Directed, no mean recompense it brings
To your behoof, if I that region lost,
All usurpation thence expelled, reduce
To her original darkness and your sway
(Which is my present journey), and once more
Erect the standard there of ancient Night.
Yours be the advantage all, mine the revenge!"

Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,
With faltering speech and visage incomposed,
Answered: — "I know thee, stranger, who thou art —
That mighty leading Angel, who of late

1 wings.
2 Sandbanks and quick-sands off the Mediterranean coast of Africa.
3 The Arimaspians were a one-eyed people of Scythia, according to legend, who fought constantly with griffins for the gold guarded by these monsters.

Made head against Heaven's King, though overthrown.
I saw and heard; for such a numerous host
Fled not in silence through the frighted Deep,
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
Confusion worse confounded; and Heaven-gates
Poured out by millions her victorious bands,
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
Keep residence; if all I can will serve
That little which is left so to defend,
Encroached on still through our intestine broils
Weakening the sceptre of old Night: first, Hell,
Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;
Now lately Heaven and Earth, another world
Hung o'er my realm, linked in a golden chain
To that side Heaven from whence your legions fell!
If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger. Go, and speed;
Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain."
He ceased; and Satan staid not to reply,
But, glad that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity and force renewed
Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,
Into the wild expanse, and through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round
Environed, wins his way; harder beset
And more endangered than when Argo passed [1]
Through Bosporus betwixt the justling rocks,[2]
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunned
Charybdis, and by the other Whirlpool steered.
So he with difficulty and labor hard
Moved on. With difficulty and labor he;
But, he once passed, soon after, when Man fell,
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain,
Following his track (such was the will of Heaven)
Paved after him a broad and beaten way
Over the dark Abyss, whose boiling gulf
Tamely endured a bridge of wondrous length,
From Hell continued, reaching the utmost Orb [3]
Of this frail World; by which the Spirits perverse
With easy intercourse pass to and fro
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
God and good Angels guard by special grace.
But now at last the sacred influence
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heaven
Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night
A glimmering dawn. Here Nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire,
As from her outmost works, a broken foe,
With tumult less and with less hostile din;
That Satan with less toil, and now with ease,
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,
And, like a weather-beaten vessel, holds [1]
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn;
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
Far off the empyreal Heaven, extended wide
In circuit, undetermined square or round,
With opal towers and battlements adorned
Of living sapphire, once his native seat,
And, fast by, hanging in a golden chain,
This pendent World, in bigness as a star
Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.
Thither, full fraught with mischievous revenge,
Accurst, and in a cursèd hour, he hies.

1 An allusion to Jason and his search in the Argo for the golden fleece.

2 The Sympleglades, which moved together to crush boats sailing between.

3 The outermost of the ten concentric spheres surrounding the earth.

## AREOPAGITICA

1644

Milton turned to pamphleteering in the service of his countrymen on his return from Italy. Recognizing as he says that there were three forms of liberty, ecclesiastical, domestic, and civil, he directed his efforts toward securing the first through the reform of the Church. Then occurred his unfortunate marriage, which brought to his mind strongly the necessity of the second. He published a series of pamphlets on the subject of divorce in which he discussed the relation of the individual and the State, arguing for large freedom of the former in matters concerning his own welfare and happiness. On account of the disturbed condition of the times the control of the press by the authorities had lapsed. In August, 1644, however, Parliament ordered that a new ordinance providing for the censorship of the press by the Stationers' Company should be prepared and directed that search should be made for the author and publisher of the divorce tracts. Upon this Milton published on November 24, 1644, his famous *Areopagitica*. It is in the form of an oration

1 makes for.

such as might have been delivered by one of the orators of Athens to the Areopagus, a representative assembly. In it Milton puts forth the arguments for individual freedom of opinion and expression, which are the basis of the liberal faith and the democratic theory of government. It will be noticed that Milton shows great and implicit faith in the individual, a faith which was stimulated by the example of his fellow citizens of London during the early, trying days of the Civil War, when the capture of the city was threatened by the royal forces. Later experience with the difficulties of government led Milton to modify his views of democracy and individual liberty. The *Areopagitica*, however, is a splendid monument to the English nation at a great moment of its history, and to Milton's own genius. The intellectual power of the argument and the sonorous style, formed on the model of the classical writers, mark it as one of the greatest examples of English prose.

The *Areopagitica* is edited by J. W. Hales, published by the Clarendon Press. Another edition by Laura E. Lockwood is published in the Riverside College Classics by Houghton Mifflin Company.

### A SPEECH FOR THE LIBERTY OF UNLICENSED PRINTING, TO THE PARLIAMENT OF ENGLAND

> This is true liberty, when free-born men,
> Having to advise the public, may speak free,
> Which he who can, and will, deserves high praise;
> Who neither can nor will, may hold his peace;
> What can be juster in a State than this?
> EURIPIDES, *The Suppliants.*

They who to states and governors of the Commonwealth direct their speech, High Court of Parliament, or, wanting such access in a private condition, write that which they foresee may advance the public good; I suppose them, as at the beginning of no mean endeavor, not a little altered [1] and moved inwardly in their minds: some with doubt of what will be the success,[2] others with fear of what will be the censure;[3] some with hope, others with confidence of what they have to speak. And me perhaps each of these dispositions, as the subject was whereon I entered, may have at other times variously affected; and likely might in these foremost expressions now also disclose which of them swayed most, but that the very attempt of this address thus made, and the thought of whom it hath recourse to, hath got the power within me to a passion, far more welcome than incidental to a preface.

Which though I stay not [4] to confess, ere any ask, I shall be blameless, if it be no other than the joy and gratulation which it brings to all who wish and promote their country's liberty; whereof this whole discourse proposed will be a certain testimony, if not a trophy. For this is not the liberty which we can hope, that no grievance ever should arise in the Commonwealth — that let no man in this world expect; but when complaints are freely heard, deeply considered, and speedily reformed, then is the utmost bound of civil liberty attained, that wise men look for. To which, if I now manifest by the very sound of this which I shall utter, that we are already in good part arrived, and yet from such a steep disadvantage of tyranny and superstition grounded into our principles as was beyond the manhood of a Roman recovery; [1] it will be attributed first, as is most due, to the strong assistance of God our deliverer, next to your faithful guidance and undaunted wisdom, Lords and Commons of England.

Neither is it, in God's esteem, the diminution of his glory, when honorable things are spoken of good men and worthy magistrates; which if I now first should begin to do, after so fair a progress of your laudable deeds, and such a long obligement upon the whole realm to [2] your indefatigable virtues, I might be justly reckoned among the tardiest and the unwillingest of them that praise ye.

Nevertheless, there being three principal things, without which all praising is but courtship and flattery: first, when that only is praised which is solidly worth praise; next, when greatest likelihoods are brought that such things are truly and really in those persons to whom they are ascribed; the other, when he who praises, by showing that such his actual persuasion is of whom he writes, can demonstrate that he flatters not; the former two of these I have heretofore endeavored, rescuing the employment from him [3] who went about to impair your merits with a trivial and malignant encomium; the latter, as belonging chiefly to mine own acquittal, that whom I so extolled I did not flatter, hath been reserved opportunely to this occasion. For he who freely magnifies what hath been nobly done, and fears not to declare as freely what might be done better, gives ye the best covenant of his fidelity; and that his loyalest affection and his hope waits on your proceedings. His highest praising is not flattery, and his plainest advice is a kind

1 disturbed. 2 outcome.
3 opinion. 4 hasten.

1 Rome failed to recover from conditions under the Emperors no worse than those under the Stuarts from which the English had just recovered.

2 for.

3 Joseph Hall (1574–1656), Bishop of Exeter and later of Norwich, a loyal Churchman, who wrote, at the request of Laud, in 1640, *Episcopacy by Divine Right Asserted.*

praising; for though I should affirm and ld by argument, that it would fare better th truth, with learning, and the Common- alth, if one of your published orders, which hould name, were called in; yet at the same me it could not but much redound to the stre of your mild and equal government, enas private persons are hereby animated think ye better pleased with public advice, an other statists [1] have been delighted here- fore with public flattery. And men will en see what difference there is between the agnanimity of a triennial [2] Parliament, and at jealous haughtiness of prelates and Cabin ounsellors [3] that usurped of late, whenas ey shall observe ye in the midst of your ctories and successes more gently brooking ritten exceptions against a voted order than her courts, which had produced nothing orth memory but the weak ostentation of ealth, would have endured the least signified slike at any sudden proclamation.

If I should thus far presume upon the eek demeanor of your civil and gentle reatness, Lords and Commons, as what your blished order hath directly said, that to ainsay, I might defend myself with ease, if ay should accuse me of being new or inso- nt, did they but know how much better I nd ye esteem it to imitate the old and ele- nt humanity of Greece, than the barbaric ride of a Hunnish and Norwegian statelі- ess. And out of those ages, to whose polite isdom and letters we owe that we are not et Goths and Jutlanders, I could name im [4] who from his private house wrote that iscourse to the Parliament of Athens, that ersuades them to change the form of de- nocraty which was then established. Such onor was done in those days to men who rofessed the study of wisdom and eloquence, ot only in their own country, but in other nds, that cities and seignories heard them adly, and with great respect, if they had ught in public to admonish the state. Thus id Dion [5] Prusæus, a stranger and a private rator, counsel the Rhodians against a former dict; and I abound with other like examples, hich to set here would be superfluous. But from the industry of a life wholly dedicated o studious labors, and those natural endow- ents haply not the worst for two and fifty degrees of northern latitude,[1] so much must be derogated, as to count me not equal to any of those who had this privilege, I would obtain to be thought not so inferior, as your- selves are superior to the most of them who received their counsel: and how far you excel them, be assured, Lords and Commons, there can no greater testimony appear, than when your prudent spirit acknowledges and obeys the voice of reason from what quarter soever it be heard speaking; and renders ye as willing to repeal any act of your own set- ting forth, as any set forth by your prede- cessors.

If ye be thus resolved, as it were injury to think ye were not, I know not what should withhold me from presenting ye with a fit instance wherein to show both that love of truth which ye eminently profess, and that uprightness of your judgment which is not wont to be partial to yourselves; by judging over again that Order which ye have ordained "to regulate Printing: that no book, pamph- let, or paper shall be henceforth printed, unless the same be first approved and licensed by such," or at least one of such as shall be thereto appointed. For that part which preserves justly every man's copy [2] to himself, or provides for the poor, I touch not, only wish they be not made pretences to abuse and persecute honest and painful [3] men, who offend not in either of these partic- ulars. But that other clause of Licensing Books, which we thought had died with his [4] brother quadragesimal [5] and matrimonial [6] when the prelates expired,[7] I shall now at- tend with such a homily, as shall lay before ye, first the inventors of it, to be those whom ye will be loth to own; next what is to be thought in general of reading, whatever sort the books be; and that this Order avails nothing to the suppressing of scandalous, seditious, and libellous books, which were mainly intended to be suppressed. Last, that it will be primely to the discouragement of all learning, and the stop of truth, not only by the disexercising and blunting our abilities in what we know already, but by hindering and cropping the discovery that might be yet further made both in religious and civil wisdom.

1 statesmen.
2 An act providing that Parliament should meet at ast once every three years was passed February 15, 1641.
3 A group of the King's favorites known, at that time, the Cabinet Council.
4 Isocrates.
5 Called Chrysostomus (the golden-tongued) because his eloquence; born at Prusa in Bithynia about 56 B.C.

1 Milton's opinion was that a cold climate is unfavor- able to literary production.
2 copyright. 3 painstaking. 4 its.
5 Lenten; referring to the observance of fast days during Lent.
6 Milton considered marriage a civil contract, entirely outside the church's jurisdiction.
7 The bill for the Exclusion of Bishops from Parlia- ment, passed February 5, 1642.

I deny not but that it is of greatest concernment in the Church and Commonwealth, to have a vigilant eye how books demean themselves as well as men; and thereafter to confine, imprison, and do sharpest justice on them as malefactors. For books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book: who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were, in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. 'Tis true, no age can restore a life, whereof perhaps there is no great loss; and revolutions of ages do not oft recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole nations fare the worse. We should be wary, therefore, what persecution we raise against the living labors of public men, how we spill that seasoned life of man, preserved and stored up in books; since we see a kind of homicide may be thus committed, sometimes a martyrdom; and if it extend to the whole impression, a kind of massacre, whereof the execution ends not in the slaying of an elemental life, but strikes at that ethereal and fifth essence,[1] the breath of reason itself, slays an immortality rather than a life. But lest I should be condemned of introducing licence, while I oppose licensing, I refuse not the pains to be so much historical, as will serve to show what hath been done by ancient and famous commonwealths against this disorder, till the very time that this project of licensing crept out of the Inquisition,[2] was caught up by our prelates, and hath caught some of our presbyters.[3]

In Athens, where books and wits were ever busier than in any other part of Greece, I find but only two sorts of writings which the magistrate cared to take notice of; those either blasphemous and atheistical, or libellous. Thus the books of Protagoras[1] were by the judges of Areopagus commanded to be burnt, and himself banished the territory for a discourse begun with his confessing not to know "whether there were gods, or whether not." And against defaming, it was agreed that none should be traduced by name, as was the manner of Vetus Comœdia,[2] whereby we may guess how they censured libelling; and this course was quick[3] enough, as Cicero writes,[4] to quell both the desperate wits of other atheists, and the open way of defaming, as the event showed. Of other sects and opinions, though tending to voluptuousness, and the denying of divine Providence, they took no heed. Therefore we do not read that either Epicurus, or that libertine school of Cyrene,[5] or what the Cynic impudence[6] uttered, was ever questioned by the laws. Neither is it recorded that the writings of those old comedians were suppressed, though the acting of them were forbid; and that Plato commended the reading of Aristophanes, the loosest of them all, to his royal scholar Dionysius,[7] is commonly known, and may be excused, if holy Chrysostom,[8] as is reported, nightly studied so much the same author, and had the art to cleanse a scurrilous vehemence into the style of a rousing sermon.

That other leading city of Greece, Lacedæmon, considering that Lycurgus their lawgiver was so addicted to elegant learning, as to have been the first that brought out of Ionia the scattered works of Homer, and sent the poet Thales[9] from Crete to prepare and mollify the Spartan surliness with his smooth songs and odes, the better to plant among them law and civility, it is to be wondered how museless and unbookish they were, minding nought but the feats of war. There needed no licensing of books among them, for they disliked all but their own

1 To the four elements known to the senses, Earth, Flood, Air, Fire, Aristotle added a fifth, ether, extending from the heaven of fixed stars to the moon.

2 From its early history, the Church of Rome encouraged a close supervision of all activities. At the Council of Toulouse in 1229 the Inquisition was organized.

3 Presbyterian elders, now in power, who were sponsoring this act.

1 Protagoras (c. 490 B.C.) of Thrace, one of the first sophists and teachers of rhetoric.

2 Classic Greek comedy, in which at first the comedians were licensed by law to make personal attacks.

3 powerful.

4 In *De Natura Deorum*, I, 23.

5 Aristippus (435?–399? B.C.) founded a school of philosophy at Cyrene which taught that pleasure was the highest good.

6 Antisthenes (b. 444 B.C.) founded the Cynic school at Athens which held that virtue, which consisted in a return to a state of nature, was the highest good.

7 Dionysius the elder (430?–367 B.C.), Tyrant of Syracuse.

8 John (347–407 A.D.), called Chrysostom (golden-tongued) on account of his eloquence, was Archbishop of Constantinople.

9 Thales, native of Crete, founded the second of the musical schools of Sparta.

ronic apothegms, and took a slight occa-
on to chase Archilochus [1] out of their city,
rhaps for composing in a higher strain than
eir own soldierly ballads and roundels could
ach to; or if it were for his broad verses,
ey were not therein so cautious, but they
re as dissolute in their promiscuous con-
rsing; [2] whence Euripides affirms, in *An-
omache*, that their women were all un-
aste. Thus much may give us light after [3]
at sort of books were prohibited among
e Greeks.

The Romans also, for many ages trained
only to a military roughness, resembling
st of the Lacedæmonian guise, knew of
rning little but what their Twelve Tables,[4]
d the Pontific College with their augurs
d flamens [5] taught them in religion and
w; so unacquainted with other learning,
at when Carneades and Critolaus,[6] with the
oic Diogenes coming ambassadors to Rome,
ok thereby occasion to give the city a taste
their philosophy, they were suspected for
ducers by no less a man than Cato the
nsor, who moved it in the Senate to dis-
iss them speedily, and to banish all such
ttic babblers out of Italy. But Scipio and
hers of the noblest senators withstood him
d his old Sabine austerity; honored and ad-
ired the men; and the censor himself at
st, in his old age, fell to the study of that
hereof before he was so scrupulous. And
t at the same time, Nævius and Plautus,
e first Latin comedians, had filled the city
ith all the borrowed scenes of Menander
d Philemon.

Then began to be considered there also
hat was to be done to libellous books and
thors; for Nævius was quickly cast into
ison for his unbridled pen, and released by
e tribunes upon his recantation; we read
so that libels were burnt, and the makers
nished by Augustus. The like severity,
doubt, was used, if aught were impiously
ritten against their esteemed gods. Except
these two points, how the world went in
oks, the magistrate kept no reckoning.
nd therefore Lucretius [7] without impeach-
ent versifies his Epicurism to Memmius,
and had the honor to be set forth the second time by Cicero, so great a father of the commonwealth; although himself disputes [1] against that opinion in his own writings. Nor was the satirical sharpness or naked plainness of Lucilius, or Catullus, or Flaccus, by any order prohibited.

And for matters of state, the story [2] of Titus Livius, though it extolled that part which Pompey held, was not therefore suppressed by Octavius Cæsar of the other faction. But that Naso [3] was by him banished in his old age, for the wanton poems of his youth, was but a mere covert of state over some secret cause: and besides, the books were neither banished nor called in. From hence we shall meet with little else but tyranny in the Roman empire, that we may not marvel, if not so often bad as good books were silenced. I shall therefore deem to have been large enough, in producing what among the ancients was punishable to write, save only which, all other arguments were free to treat on.

By this time the emperors were become Christians,[4] whose discipline in this point I do not find to have been more severe than what was formerly in practice. The books of those whom they took to be grand heretics were examined, refuted, and condemned in the general councils; and not till then were prohibited, or burnt, by authority of the emperor. As for the writings of heathen authors, unless they were plain invectives against Christianity, as those of Porphyrius [5] and Proclus,[6] they met with no interdict that can be cited, till about the year 400, in a Carthaginian Council, wherein bishops themselves were forbid to read the books of Gentiles, but heresies they might read: while others long before them, on the contrary, scrupled more the books of heretics than of Gentiles. And that the primitive councils and bishops were wont only to declare what books were not commendable, passing no further, but leaving it to each one's conscience to read or to lay by, till after the year 800, is observed already by Padre Paolo,[7] the

1 Archilochus (c. 714–676 B.C.) one of the earliest lyric ets of Ionia.
2 conviviality. 3 as to.
4 Laws of Rome, engraved on bronze about 450 B.C., d studied in the schools until the time of Cicero.
5 Under the direction of the Pontific College, the prin- al college of priests in Rome, were the flamens, priests voted to the service of some particular deity, and the gurs, priests who foretold future events.
6 To protest against a fine imposed on the Athenians the destruction of Oropus.
7 In *De Rerum Natura*, a poem exalting Epicureanism d freedom from superstition.

1 In *De Natura Deorum*.
2 history.
3 Publius Ovidius Naso (43 B.C.–18 A.D.), the poet, known as Ovid, exiled from Rome in 8 A.D. for secret cause.
4 With Constantine, who issued the edict of toleration in 313.
5 *Against the Christians* by Porphyrius (233?–304?) was burned by order of the Emperor Theodosius in 435.
6 Proclus (411–495), like Porphyrius, one of the Neo-Platonists.
7 Padre Paolo (1552–1623), the name taken as a Servite monk by Pietro Sarpi. His *History of the Council of Trent* was published by Nathaniel Brent in London, 1620.

great unmasker of the Trentine Council.[1] After which time the Popes of Rome, engrossing what they pleased of political rule into their own hands, extended their dominion over men's eyes, as they had before over their judgments, burning and prohibiting to be read what they fancied not; yet sparing in their censures, and the books not many which they so dealt with; till Martin V,[2] by his bull, not only prohibited, but was the first that excommunicated the reading of heretical books; for about that time Wyclif and Huss growing terrible, were they who first drove the Papal Court to a stricter policy of prohibiting. Which course Leo X and his successors followed, until the Council of Trent and the Spanish Inquisition, engendering together, brought forth, or perfected those catalogues, and expurging indexes, that rake through the entrails of many an old good author, with a violation worse than any could be offered to his tomb.

Nor did they stay in matters heretical, but any subject that was not to their palate, they either condemned in a Prohibition,[3] or had it straight into the new Purgatory of an Index.[4] To fill up the measure of encroachment, their last invention was to ordain that no book, pamphlet, or paper should be printed (as if St. Peter had bequeathed them the keys of the press also out of Paradise) unless it were approved and licensed under the hands of two or three glutton friars. For example:

> Let the Chancellor Cini be pleased to see if in this present work be contained aught that may withstand the printing.
>
> Vincent Rabbatta, Vicar of Florence.
>
> I have seen this present work, and find nothing athwart the Catholic faith and good manners: in witness whereof I have given, &c.
>
> Nicolo Cini, Chancellor of Florence.
>
> Attending the precedent relation, it is allowed that this present work[5] of Davanzati may be printed.
>
> Vincent Rabatta, &c.
>
> It may be printed, July 15.
>
> Friar Simon Mompei d'Amelia,
>
> Chancellor of the Holy Office in Florence.

Sure they have a conceit, if he of the bottomless pit had not long since broke prison, that this quadruple exorcism would bar him down. I fear their next design will be to get into their custody the licensing of that which they say Claudius intended, but went not through with. Vouchsafe to see another of their forms, the Roman stamp:

> Imprimatur,[1] If it seem good to the reverend Master of the Holy Palace,
>
> Belcastro, Vicegerent.
>
> Imprimatur,
>
> Friar Nicolo Rodolphi,
>
> Master of the Holy Palace.

Sometimes five Imprimaturs are seen together, dialoguewise, in the piazza of one title-page, complimenting and ducking each to other with their shaven reverences, whether the author, who stands by in perplexity at the foot of his epistle, shall to the press or to the sponge. These are the prettie responsories, these are the dear antiphonies that so bewitched of late our prelates and their chaplains, with the goodly echo they made; and besotted us to the gay imitation of a lordly Imprimatur, one from Lambeth House,[2] another from the west end of Paul's; so apishly Romanising, that the word of command still was set down in Latin; as if the learned grammatical pen that wrote it would cast no ink without Latin; or perhaps, as they thought, because no vulgar[4] tongue was worthy to express the pure conceit[5] of an Imprimatur; but rather, as I hope, for that our English, the language of men, ever famous and foremost in the achievements of liberty, will not easily find servile letters enow to spell such a dictatory presumption English.

And thus ye have the inventors and the original of book-licensing ripped up and drawn as lineally as any pedigree. We have it not, that can be heard of, from any ancient state, or polity, or church, nor by any statute left us by our ancestors elder or later; nor from the modern custom of any reformed city or church abroad; but from the most anti-christian council and the most tyrannous inquisition that ever inquired.

Till then books were ever as freely admitted into the world as any other birth; the issue of the brain was no more stifled than the issue of the womb; no envious Juno[6] sat

1 The Council of Trent (1545–63).

2 Martin V. was Pope from 1417 to 1431.

3 The *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, the list of books a Roman Catholic is forbidden to read.

4 The *Index Expurgatorius*, containing passages to be expurgated from books otherwise permitted to be read.

5 This was *Dello Scismo d'Inghilterra*, a history of the Church in England from 1501 to the death of Henry VIII.

1 "Let it be printed." The official licenser's mark.

2 The London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

3 The palace of the Bishop of London, near St. Paul's Church.

4 other than Latin, the language of the learned.

5 idea, thought.

6 Alcmena was about to give birth to Heracles, son of Zeus, when jealous Hera attempted to hinder the birth for seven days, so that Eurystheus might be born first and win the powers that Jove had promised to the first descendant of Perseus.

oss-legged over the nativity of any man's
ellectual offspring; but if it proved a mon-
r, who denies but that it was justly burnt,
sunk into the sea. But that a book, in
rse condition than a peccant soul, should
to stand before a jury ere it be born to the
rld, and undergo yet in darkness the judg-
ent of Radamanth [1] and his colleagues, ere
can pass the ferry backward into light, was
ver heard before, till that mysterious ini-
ity,[2] provoked and troubled at the first
trance of reformation, sought out new
nbos and new hells wherein they might
clude our books also within the number of
eir damned. And this was the rare morsel
officiously snatched up, and so ill-favoredly
itated by our inquisiturient [3] bishops, and
e attendant minorities,[4] their chaplains.
hat ye like not now these most certain
thors of this licensing order, and that all
nister intention was far distant from your
oughts, when ye were importuned the pass-
g it, all men who know the integrity of
ur actions, and how ye honor truth, will
ar ye readily.

But some will say, what though the in-
ntors were bad, the thing for all that may
good. It may so; yet if that thing be no
ch deep invention, but obvious and easy
r any man to light on, and yet best and
isest commonwealths through all ages and
casions have forborne to use it, and falsest
ducers and oppressors of men were the first
ho took it up, and to no other purpose but
obstruct and hinder the first approach of
formation; I am of those who believe, it
ill be a harder alchymy than Lullius [5] ever
ew, to sublimate any good use out of such
invention. Yet this only is what I re-
uest to gain from this reason, that it may be
eld a dangerous and suspicious fruit, as
rtainly it deserves, for the tree that bore
, until I can dissect one by one the prop-
ties it has. But I have first to finish, as
as propounded, what is to be thought in
eneral of reading books, whatever sort they
e, and whether be more the benefit or the
arm that thence proceeds?

Not to insist upon the examples of Moses,
aniel, and Paul, who were skilful in all the learning of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Greeks, which could not probably be without reading their books of all sorts; in Paul especially, who thought it no defilement to insert into Holy Scripture the sentences of three Greek poets, and one of them a tragedian; the question was notwithstanding sometimes controverted among the primitive doctors, but with great odds on that side which affirmed it both lawful and profitable, as was then evidently perceived, when Julian the Apostate and subtlest enemy to our faith, made a decree forbidding Christians the study of heathen learning; for, said he, they wound us with our own weapons, and with our own arts and sciences they overcome us. And, indeed, the Christians were put so to their shifts by this crafty means, and so much in danger to decline into all ignorance, that the two Apollinarii were fain, as a man may say, to coin all the seven liberal sciences [1] out of the Bible, reducing it into divers forms of orations, poems, dialogues, even to the calculating of a new Christian grammar. But, saith the historian Socrates,[2] the providence of God provided better than the industry of Apollinarius and his son, by taking away that illiterate law with the life of him who devised it.

So great an injury they then held it to be deprived of Hellenic learning; and thought it a persecution more undermining, and secretly decaying the Church, than the open cruelty of Decius or Diocletian. And perhaps it was the same politic drift that the devil whipped St. Jerome in a Lenten dream, for reading Cicero; or else it was a phantasm bred by the fever which had then seized him. For had an angel been his discipliner, unless it were for dwelling too much upon Ciceronianisms, and had chastised the reading, not the vanity, it had been plainly partial; first to correct him for grave Cicero, and not for scurril Plautus, whom he confesses to have been reading, not long before; next to correct him only, and let so many more ancient fathers wax old in those pleasant and florid studies without the lash of such a tutoring apparition; insomuch that Basil [3] teaches how some good use may be made of Margites, a sportful poem, not now extant, writ by Homer; and why not then of Morgante,[4] an

1 Son of Zeus and Europa, one of the judges of the lower orld.

2 The woman of Revelations XVII, identified with the apacy by sixteenth century Church reformers.

3 Of an inquisitorial tendency.

4 Friars Minor, or Franciscans. The position of the aplains Milton makes analogous to that of the Minorites in the Inquisition.

5 Raymond Lully (1235?–1315), inventor of a mechanical system of logic by which an answer to any uestion could be obtained.

1 These, the requirements of a liberal education, were then the Trivium: Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric; and the Quadrivium: Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy, Music.

2 Socrates Scholasticus (385?–440?), whose *History* embraces the period from 306 to 439.

3 Bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, 370–79.

4 *Morgante Maggiore*, by Luigi Pulci (1431–87) a satirical romance, burlesquing romantic poetry.

Italian romance much to the same purpose?

But if it be agreed we shall be tried by visions, there is a vision recorded by Eusebius,[1] far ancienter than this tale of Jerome to the nun Eustochium, and, besides, has nothing of a fever in it. Dionysius[2] Alexandrinus was, about the year 240, a person of great name in the church for piety and learning, who had wont to avail himself much against heretics by being conversant in their books; until a certain presbyter laid it scrupulously to his conscience, how he durst venture himself among those defiling volumes. The worthy man, loth to give offence,[3] fell into a new debate with himself what was to be thought; when suddenly a vision sent from God (it is his own epistle that so avers it) confirmed him in these words: "Read any books whatever come to thy hands, for thou art sufficient both to judge aright, and to examine each matter." To this revelation he assented the sooner, as he confesses, because it was answerable to that of the Apostle to the Thessalonians: "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

And he might have added another remarkable saying of the same author: "To the pure, all things are pure"; not only meats and drinks, but all kind of knowledge whether of good or evil; the knowledge cannot defile, nor consequently the books, if the will and conscience be not defiled. For books are as meats and viands are; some of good, some of evil substance; and yet God in that unapocryphal vision, said without exception, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat,"[4] leaving the choice to each man's discretion. Wholesome meats to a vitiated stomach differ little or nothing from unwholesome; and best books to a naughty mind are not unappliable to occasions of evil. Bad meats will scarce breed good nourishment in the healthiest concoction;[5] but herein the difference is of bad books, that they to a discreet and judicious reader serve in many respects to discover, to confute, to forewarn, and to illustrate.

Whereof what better witness can ye expect I should produce, than one of your own now sitting in Parliament, the chief of learned men reputed in this land, Mr. Selden;[6] whose volume of natural and national laws proves, not only by great authorities brought together, but by exquisite reasons and theorems almost mathematically demonstrative, that all opinions, yea errors, known, read, and collated, are of main service and assistance toward the speedy attainment of what is truest.

I conceive, therefore, that when God did enlarge the universal diet of man's body saving ever the rules of temperance, he then also, as before, left arbitrary the dieting and repasting of our minds; as wherein every mature man might have to exercise his own leading capacity. How great a virtue is temperance, how much of moment through the whole life of man! Yet God commits the managing so great a trust, without particular law or prescription, wholly to the demeanor[1] of every grown man. And therefore, when he himself tabled the Jews from heaven, that omer,[2] which was every man's daily portion of manna, is computed to have been more than might have well sufficed the heartiest feeder thrice as many meals. For those actions which enter into a man, rather than issue out of him, and therefore defile not, God uses not to captivate under a perpetual childhood of prescription, but trusts him with the gift of reason to be his own chooser; there were but little work left for preaching, if law and compulsion should grow so fast upon those things which heretofore were governed only by exhortation. Solomon informs us, that much reading is a weariness to the flesh; but neither he nor other inspired author tells us that such or such reading is unlawful, yet certainly had God thought good to limit us herein, it had been much more expedient to have told us what was unlawful, than what was wearisome.

As for the burning of those Ephesian books by St. Paul's converts; 'tis replied the books were magic, the Syriac so renders them. It was a private act, a voluntary act, and leaves us to a voluntary imitation: the men in remorse burnt those books which were their own; the magistrate by this example is not appointed;[3] these men practised the books, another might perhaps have read them in some sort usefully.

Good and evil we know in the field of this world grow up together almost inseparably; and the knowledge of good is so involved and interwoven with the knowledge of evil, and in so many cunning resemblances hardly to be discerned, that those confused seeds which were imposed upon Psyche as an incessant

1 Bishop of Cæsarea, 314–340, sometimes called the *Father of Ecclesiastical History*.
2 Bishop of Alexandria, 247–265.
3 be the cause of sin. 4 Acts x, 9–16.
5 digestion.
6 *John Selden* (1584–1654), lawyer and member of Parliament.

1 management. 2 Cf. Exodus xvi, 16–36.
3 determined.

bor to cull out, and sort asunder, were not ore intermixed. It was from out the rind one apple tasted, that the knowledge of od and evil as two twins cleaving together, aped forth into the world. And perhaps is is that doom which Adam fell into of nowing good and evil, that is to say, of nowing good by evil.

As, therefore, the state of man now is; hat wisdom can there be to choose, what ntinence to forbear without the knowledge evil? He that can apprehend and consider ce with all her baits and seeming pleasures, nd yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet efer that which is truly better, he is the ue wayfaring Christian. I cannot praise a gitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised nd unbreathed, that never sallies out and es her adversary, but slinks out of the race, here that immortal garland is to be run for, ot without dust and heat. Assuredly we ring not innocence into the world; we bring npurity much rather; that which purifies s is trial, and trial is by what is contrary. hat virtue, therefore, which is but a young- ng in the contemplation of evil, and knows ot the utmost that vice promises to her fol- wers, and rejects it, is but a blank virtue, ot a pure; her whiteness is but an excre- ental [1] whiteness; which was the reason why ur sage and serious poet Spenser, whom I are be known to think a better teacher than cotus [2] or Aquinas, describing true temper- nce under the person of Guion, brings him with his palmer through the cave of Mam- ion,[3] and the bower of earthly bliss, that he ight see and know, and yet abstain.

Since, therefore, the knowledge and survey f vice is in this world so necessary to the onstituting of human virtue, and the scan- ing of error to the confirmation of truth, ow can we more safely, and with less dan- er, scout into the regions of sin and falsity, han by reading all manner of tractates and earing all manner of reason? And this is he benefit which may be had of books pro- miscuously read.

But of the harm that may result hence, hree kinds are usually reckoned. First, is eared the infection that may spread; but hen all human learning and controversy in eligious points must remove out of the vorld, yea the Bible itself; for that ofttimes relates blasphemy not nicely, it describes the carnal sense of wicked men not unelegantly, it brings in holiest men passionately murmuring against Providence through all the arguments of Epicurus; in other great disputes it answers dubiously and darkly to the common reader; and asks a Talmudist what ails the modesty of his marginal Keri,[1] that Moses and all the prophets cannot persuade him to pronounce the textual Chetiv.[2] For these causes we all know the Bible itself put by the Papist into the first rank of prohibited books. The ancientest fathers must be next removed, as Clement of Alexandria,[3] and that Eusebian book of Evangelic preparation [4] transmitting our ears through a hoard of heathenist obscenities to receive the Gospel. Who finds not that Irenæus, Epiphanius,[5] Jerome, and others discover more heresies than they well confute, and that oft for heresy which is the truer opinion?

Nor boots it to say for these, and all the heathen writers of greatest infection, if it must be thought so, with whom is bound up the life of human learning, that they writ in an unknown tongue, so long as we are sure those languages are known as well to the worst of men, who are both most able and most diligent to instil the poison they suck, first into the courts of princes, acquainting them with the choicest delights, and criticisms [6] of sin. As perhaps did that Petronius whom Nero called his Arbiter, the master of his revels; and the notorious ribald of Arezzo,[7] dreaded and yet dear to the Italian courtiers. I name not him for posterity's sake, whom Henry VIII named in merriment his Vicar of hell.[8] By which compendious way all the contagion that foreign books can infuse, will find a passage to the people far easier and shorter than an Indian voyage, though it could be sailed either by the north of Cathay eastward, or of Canada westward, while our Spanish licensing gags the English press never so severely.

1 superficial. Hair, mustaches, finger nails, were referred to in this period as excrement.

2 John Duns Scotus (1265?–1308), a Franciscan, and Thomas Aquinas (1225?–74), famous teachers and theologians, and founders of the opposing schools of Scotists and Thomists.

3 Cf. Spenser's *Faerie Queen*, II, VII.

1 That which is read.

2 That which is written. In the Talmud, if a passage seemed unfit to read, a gloss (Keri) was written in the margin.

3 Clement of Alexandria (about 200 A.D.), in order to convert the Greeks, described in his *Horiatory Address to the Greeks* the obscenity of many of their religious practices.

4 The *Preparatio Evangelica*, a collection of quotations from pagan philosophers.

5 Irenæus (140?–202?), Bishop of Lyons, and Epiphanius (315–403), Bishop of Constantia, both wrote works describing and confuting heresies.

6 subtle points.

7 Pietro Aretino (1492–1557), banished from Arezzo and later from Rome for his satires.

8 The allusion here is uncertain, possibly to Wolsey or to Thomas Cromwell.

But, on the other side, that infection which is from books of controversy in religion, is more doubtful and dangerous to the learned than to the ignorant; and yet those books must be permitted untouched by the licenser. It will be hard to instance where any ignorant man hath been ever seduced by papistical book in English, unless it were commended and expounded to him by some of that clergy; and indeed all such tractates, whether false or true, are as the prophecy of Isaiah was to the eunuch,[1] "not to be understood without a guide." But of our priests and doctors how many have been corrupted by studying the comments of Jesuits and Sorbonists,[2] and how fast they could transfuse that corruption into the people, our experience is both late and sad. It is not forgot, since the acute and distinct Arminius[3] was perverted merely by the perusing of a nameless[4] discourse written at Delft, which at first he took in hand to confute.

Seeing, therefore, that those books, and those in great abundance, which are likeliest to taint both life and doctrine, cannot be suppressed without the fall of learning, and of all ability in disputation; and that these books of either sort are most and soonest catching to the learned, from whom to the common people whatever is heretical or dissolute may quickly be conveyed; and that evil manners are as perfectly learned without books a thousand other ways which cannot be stopped; and evil doctrine not with books can propagate, except a teacher guide, which he might also do without writing, and so beyond prohibiting: I am not able to unfold, how this cautelous[5] enterprise of licensing can be exempted from the number of vain and impossible attempts. And he who were pleasantly disposed, could not well avoid to liken it to the exploit of that gallant man, who thought to pound up the crows by shutting his park gate.

Besides another inconvenience, if learned men be the first receivers out of books and dispreaders both of vice and error, how shall the licensers themselves be confided in, unless we can confer upon them, or they assume to themselves above all others in the land, the grace of infallibility and uncorruptedness? And again, if it be true, that a wise man, like a good refiner, can gather gold out of the drossiest volume, and that a fool will be a fool with the best book, yea or without book, there is no reason that we should deprive a wise man of any advantage to his wisdom, while we seek to restrain from a fool that which being restrained will be no hindrance to his folly. For if there should be so much exactness always used to keep that from him which is unfit for his reading, we should, in the judgment of Aristotle not only, but of Solomon and of our Saviour, not vouchsafe him good precepts, and by consequence not willingly admit him to good books; as being certain that a wise man will make better use of an idle pamphlet, than a fool will do of sacred Scripture.

'Tis next alleged we must not expose ourselves to temptations without necessity, and next to that, not employ our time in vain things. To both these objections one answer will serve, out of the grounds already laid; that to all men such books are not temptations nor vanities, but useful drugs and materials wherewith to temper, and compose effective and strong medicines, which man's life cannot want.[1] The rest, as children and childish men, who have not the art to qualify[2] and prepare these working minerals, well may be exhorted to forbear, but hindered forcibly they cannot be by all the licensing that sainted Inquisition could ever yet contrive. Which is what I promised to deliver next: that this order of licensing conduces nothing to the end for which it was framed and hath almost prevented me by being clear already, while thus much hath been explaining. See the ingenuity[3] of Truth, who, when she gets a free and willing hand, opens herself faster than the pace of method and discourse can overtake her.

It was the task which I began with, to show that no nation, or well instituted state, if they valued books at all, did ever use this way of licensing; and it might be answered that this is a piece of prudence lately discovered. To which I return, that as it was a thing slight and obvious to think on, so if it had been difficult to find out, there wanted not among them long since who suggested such a course; which they not following, leave us a pattern of their judgment that it was not the not knowing, but the not approving, which was the cause of their not using it.

Plato, a man of high authority indeed, but least of all for his commonwealth, in the book

1 Acts VIII, 28–35.

2 Students at the school founded in 1252 by Robert de Sorbon especially for poor students.

3 Arminius (1560–1609), a Dutch theologian, who, during his studies to defend the doctrine of predestination, lost his own conviction, and finally rejected it.

4 anonymous. 5 deceitful.

1 be without. 2 moderate the strength of.
3 ingenuousness. 4 reasoning.

his laws, which no city ever yet received, il his fancy with making many edicts to his ry burgomasters, which they who otherse admire him, wish had been rather buried d excused in the genial cups of an Acamic [1] night sitting. By which laws [2] he ems to tolerate no kind of learning, but by alterable decree, consisting most of practal traditions, to the attainment whereof a rary of smaller bulk than his own dialogues uld be abundant. And there also enacts, at no poet should so much as read to any ivate man what he had written, until the lges and law-keepers had seen it, and alved it; but that Plato meant this law pecurly to that commonwealth which he had agined, and to no other, is evident. Why s he not else a lawgiver to himself, but a nsgressor, and to be expelled by his own agistrates; both for the wanton epigrams d dialogues which he made, and his pertual reading of Sophron [3] Mimus, and ristophanes, books of grossest infamy; and so for commending the latter of them, ough he were the malicious libeller of his ief friends, to be read by the tyrant Dionys, who had little need of such trash to end his time on? But that he knew this censing of poems had reference and dendence to many other provisos there set wn in his fancied republic, which in this orld could have no place; and so neither he mself, nor any magistrate, or city ever imited that course, which, taken apart from ose other collateral injunctions, must needs e vain and fruitless.

For if they fell upon [4] one kind of strictss, unless their care were equal to regulate l other things of like aptness to corrupt the ind, that single endeavor they knew would e but a fond labor; to shut and fortify one ate against corruption, and be necessitated leave others round about wide open. If e think to regulate printing, thereby to ctify manners, we must regulate all recretions and pastimes, all that is delightful to an. No music must be heard, no song be et or sung, but what is grave and Doric.[5] here must be licensing dancers, that no sture, motion, or deportment be taught ur youth, but what by their allowance shall e thought honest; for such Plato was pro-

1 Plato founded the famous Academy at Athens in 387 B.C.

2 Plato: *Laws*, VII, 808–12.

3 Of Syracuse (5th century B.C.), whose *Mimes*, or mimic dialogues, are supposed to have been very coarse and lively, and were studied by Plato to give animation to his own dialogues.

4 decided on. 5 severe.

vided of. It will ask more than the work of twenty licensers to examine all the lutes, the violins, and the guitars in every house; they must not be suffered to prattle as they do, but must be licensed what they may say. And who shall silence all the airs and madrigals that whisper softness in chambers? The windows also, and the balconies must be thought on; these are shrewd [1] books, with dangerous frontispieces, set to sale; who shall prohibit them, shall twenty licensers? The villages also must have their visitors [2] to inquire what lectures the bagpipe and the rebeck reads even to the ballatry,[3] and the gamut of every municipal fiddler, for these are the countryman's Arcadias,[4] and his Monte Mayors.[5]

Next, what more national corruption, for which England hears ill [6] abroad, than household gluttony? Who shall be the rectors of our daily rioting? And what shall be done to inhibit the multitudes that frequent those houses where drunkenness is sold and harbored? Our garments also should be referred to the licensing of some more sober workmasters, to see them cut into a less wanton garb. Who shall regulate all the mixed conversation [7] of our youth, male and female together, as is the fashion of this country? Who shall still appoint what shall be discoursed, what presumed, and no further? Lastly, who shall forbid and separate all idle resort,[8] all evil company? These things will be, and must be; but how they shall be least hurtful, how least enticing, herein consists the grave and governing wisdom of a state.

To sequester out of the world into Atlantic [9] and Utopian [10] polities, which never can be drawn into use, will not mend our condition; but to ordain wisely as in this world of evil, in the midst whereof God hath placed us unavoidably. Nor is it Plato's licensing of books will do this, which necessarily pulls along with it so many other kinds of licensing, as will make us all both ridiculous and weary, and yet frustrate; but those unwritten, or at least unconstraining, laws of virtuous education, religious and civil nurture,

1 mischievous.

2 An odious word in England since Laud's visitors were sent out to oversee the morals of the people.

3 ballad poetry.

4 Sidney's *Arcadia*, published 1590.

5 Jorge de Montemayor (1520?–61), whose *Diana Enamorada* started the vogue of the prose pastoral romance.

6 is reputed ill.

7 conviviality.

8 those frequenting a certain place.

9 Bacon's *New Atlantis*, the story of an ideal commonwealth.

10 Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*.

which Plato there mentions[1] as the bonds and ligaments of the commonwealth, the pillars and the sustainers of every written statute; these they be which will bear chief sway in such matters as these, when all licensing will be easily eluded. Impunity and remissness, for certain, are the bane of a commonwealth; but here the great art lies, to discern in what the law is to bid restraint and punishment, and in what things persuasion only is to work. If every action which is good or evil in man at ripe years, were to be under pittance and prescription and compulsion, what were virtue but a name, what praise could be then due to well-doing, what gramercy[2] to be sober, just, or continent?

Many there be that complain of divine Providence for suffering Adam to transgress. Foolish tongues! when God gave him reason, he gave him freedom to choose, for reason is but choosing; he had been else a mere artificial Adam, such an Adam as he is in the motions.[3] We ourselves esteem not of that obedience, or love, or gift, which is of force; God, therefore, left him free, set before him a provoking[4] object, ever almost in his eyes; herein consisted his merit, herein the right of his reward, the praise of his abstinence. Wherefore did he create passions within us, pleasures round about us, but that these rightly tempered are the very ingredients of virtue? They are not skilful considerers of human things, who imagine to remove sin by removing the matter of sin; for, besides that it is a huge heap increasing under the very act of diminishing, though some part of it may for a time be withdrawn from some persons, it cannot from all, in such a universal thing as books are; and when this is done, yet the sin remains entire. Though ye take from a covetous man all his treasure, he has yet one jewel left, ye cannot bereave him of his covetousness. Banish all objects of lust, shut up all youth into the severest discipline that can be exercised in any hermitage, ye cannot make them chaste, that came not thither so: such great care and wisdom is required to the right managing of this point.

Suppose we could expel sin by this means; look how much we thus expel of sin, so much we expel of virtue: for the matter of them both is the same; remove that, and ye remove them both alike. This justifies the high providence of God, who, though he commands us temperance, justice, continence, yet pours out before us, even to a profuseness, all desirable things, and gives [illegible] minds that can wander beyond all limit and satiety. Why should we then affect a rigor contrary to the manner of God and of nature by abridging or scanting those means, which books freely permitted are, both to the trial of virtue, and the exercise of truth?

It would be better done, to learn that the law must needs be frivolous,[1] which goes to restrain things, uncertainly and yet equally working to good and to evil. And were I the chooser, a dram of well doing should be preferred before many times as much the forcible hindrance of evil doing. For God sure esteems the growth and completing of one virtuous person, more than the restraint of ten vicious. And albeit whatever thing we hear or see, sitting, walking, travelling, or conversing, may be fitly called our book, and is of the same effect that writings are; yet grant the thing to be prohibited were only books, it appears that this order hitherto is far insufficient to the end which it intends. Do we not see, not once or oftener, but weekly that continued court-libel[2] against the Parliament and City, printed, as the wet sheets can witness, and dispersed among us, for all that licensing can do? Yet this is the prime service a man would think, wherein this Order should give proof of itself. If it were executed, you'll say. But certain, if execution be remiss or blindfold now, and in this particular, what will it be hereafter and in other books?

If then the Order shall not be vain and frustrate, behold a new labor, Lords and Commons; ye must repeal and proscribe all scandalous and unlicensed books already printed and divulged; [3] after ye have drawn them up into a list, that all may know which are condemned, and which not; and ordain that no foreign books be delivered out of custody, till they have been read over. This office will require the whole time of not a few overseers, and those no vulgar men. There be also books which are partly useful and excellent, partly culpable and pernicious; this work will ask as many more officials, to make expurgations and expunctions, that the commonwealth of learning be not damnified.[4] In fine, when the multitude of books increase upon their hands, ye must be fain to catalogue all those printers who are found fre-

1 Plato, *Republic*, IV, 424; *Laws*, I, 643.
2 thanks. 3 puppet shows. 4 provocative.

1 unimportant.
2 Refers to the *Mercurius Aulicus*, a weekly newspaper published by Sir John Birkenhead (1616–79) virulently Royalist in policy, and attacking Parliament in every possible way.
3 published. 4 injured.

iently offending, and forbid the importa-
on of their whole suspected typography.
a word, that this your Order may be exact,
d not deficient, ye must reform it perfectly
cording to the model of Trent and Seville,
nich I know ye abhor to do.

Yet, though ye should condescend [1] to this,
nich God forbid, the Order still would be
t fruitless and defective to that end
nereto ye meant it. If to prevent sects and
hisms, who is so unread or so uncatechized
story, that hath not heard of many sects
fusing books as a hindrance, and preserving
eir doctrine unmixed for many ages, only
unwritten traditions? The Christian
ith, for that was once a schism, is not un-
own to have spread all over Asia, ere any
ospel or Epistle was seen in writing. If
e amendment of manners be aimed at, look
to Italy and Spain, whether those places be
e scruple the better, the honester, the
ser, the chaster, since all the inquisitional
gor that hath been executed upon books.

Another reason, whereby to make it plain
at this Order will miss the end it seeks,
nsider by the quality which ought to be in
ery licenser. It cannot be denied but that
e who is made judge to sit upon the birth or
eath of books, whether they may be wafted
to this world or not, had need to be a man
ove the common measure, both studious,
arned, and judicious; there may be else no
ean mistakes in the censure of what is pass-
le or not; which is also no mean injury. If
e be of such worth as behoves him, there
nnot be a more tedious and unpleasing
urney-work,[2] a greater loss of time levied
on his head, than to be made the perpetual
ader of unchosen books and pamphlets,
ttimes huge volumes. There is no book
at is acceptable unless at certain seasons;
t to be enjoined the reading of that at all
mes, and in a hand scarce legible, whereof
ree pages would not down at any time in
e fairest print, is an imposition which I can-
ot believe how he that values time and his
n studies, or is but of a sensible[3] nostril,
ould be able to endure.

In this one thing I crave leave of the present
ensers to be pardoned for so thinking; who
oubtless took this office up, looking on it
rough their obedience to the Parliament,
hose command perhaps made all things
em easy and unlaborious to them; but that
is short trial hath wearied them out al-
eady, their own expressions and excuses to
them who make so many journeys to solicit their license, are testimony enough. Seeing, therefore, those who now possess the employment, by all evident signs wish themselves well rid of it, and that no man of worth, none that is not a plain unthrift of his own hours is ever likely to succeed them, except he mean to put himself to the salary of a press corrector, we may easily foresee what kind of licensers we are to expect hereafter, either ignorant, imperious, and remiss, or basely pecuniary. This is what I had to show, wherein this Order cannot conduce to that end, whereof it bears the intention.

I lastly proceed from the no good it can do, to the manifest hurt it causes, in being first the greatest discouragement and affront that can be offered to learning and to learned men.

It was the complaint and lamentation of prelates, upon every least breath of a motion to remove pluralities, and distribute more equally church revenues, that then all learning would be for ever dashed and discouraged. But as for that opinion, I never found cause to think that the tenth part of learning stood or fell with the clergy; nor could I ever but hold it for a sordid and unworthy speech of any churchman who had a competency left him. If, therefore, ye be loth to dishearten heartily and discontent, not the mercenary crew of false pretenders to learning, but the free and ingenuous sort of such as evidently were born to study, and love learning for itself, not for lucre, or any other end, but the service of God and of truth, and perhaps that lasting fame and perpetuity of praise which God and good men have consented shall be the reward of those whose published labors advance the good of mankind; then know, that so far to distrust the judgment and the honesty of one who hath but a common repute in learning, and never yet offended, as not to count him fit to print his mind, without a tutor and examiner, lest he should drop a schism, or something of corruption, is the greatest displeasure and indignity to a free and knowing spirit that can be put upon him.

What advantage is it to be a man over it is to be a boy at school, if we have only escaped the ferula to come under the fescue [1] of an Imprimatur; if serious and elaborate writings, as if they were no more than the theme of a grammar-lad under his pedagogue, must not be uttered without the cursory eyes of a

1 agree. 2 work of a journeyman.
3 sensitive.

1 A twig; it came to mean the pointer used in pointing out letters to children learning to read.

temporizing and extemporizing licenser? He who is not trusted with his own actions, his drift not being known to be evil, and standing to [1] the hazard of law and penalty, has no great argument to think himself reputed, in the commonwealth wherein he was born, for other than a fool or a foreigner. When a man writes to the world, he summons up all his reason and deliberation to assist him; he searches, meditates, is industrious, and likely consults and confers with his judicious friends; after all which done he takes himself to be informed in what he writes, as well as any that writ before him; if in this the most consummate act of his fidelity and ripeness, no years, no industry, no former proof of his abilities can bring him to that state of maturity, as not to be still mistrusted and suspected, unless he carry all his considerate [2] diligence, all his midnight watchings, and expense of Palladian oil,[3] to the hasty view of an unleisured licenser, perhaps much his younger, perhaps far his inferior in judgment, perhaps one who never knew the labor of book-writing; and if he be not repulsed, or slighted, must appear in print like a puny [4] with his guardian, and his censor's hand on the back of his title to be his bail and surety, that he is no idiot, or seducer; it cannot be but a dishonor and derogation to the author, to the book, to the privilege and dignity of learning.

And what if the author shall be one so copious of fancy, as to have many things well worth the adding, come into his mind after licensing, while the book is yet under the press, which not seldom happens to the best and diligentest writers; and that perhaps a dozen times in one book. The printer dares not go beyond his licensed copy; so often then must the author trudge to his leave-giver, that those his new insertions may be viewed; and many a jaunt will be made, ere that licenser, for it must be the same man, can either be found, or found at leisure; meanwhile, either the press must stand still, which is no small damage, or the author lose his accuratest thoughts, and send the book forth worse than he had made it, which to a diligent writer is the greatest melancholy [5] and vexation that can befall.

And how can a man teach with authority, which is the life of teaching, how can he be a doctor in his book as he ought to be, or else had better be silent, whenas all he teaches, all he delivers, is but under the tuition, under the correction of his patriarchal licenser to blot or alter what precisely accords not with the hide-bound humor which he calls his judgment? When every acute reader upon the first sight of a pedantic license, will be ready with these like words to ding [1] the book a quoit's distance from him; "I hate a pupil teacher, I endure not an instructor that comes to me under the wardship of an overseeing fist.[2] I know nothing of the licenser, but that I have his own hand here for his arrogance; who shall warrant me his judgment?"

"The State, sir," replies the stationer,[3] but has a quick return: "The State shall be my governors, but not my critics; they may be mistaken in the choice of a licenser, as easily as this licenser may be mistaken in an author; this [4] is some common stuff"; and he might add from Sir Francis Bacon, "That such authorized books are but the language of the times." For though a licenser should happen to be judicious more than ordinary, which will be a great jeopardy of the next succession,[5] yet his very office, and his commission enjoins him to let pass nothing but what is vulgarly [6] received already.

Nay, which is more lamentable, if the works of any deceased author, though never so famous in his lifetime, and even to this day, come to their hands for licence to be printed or reprinted; if there be found in his book one sentence of a venturous edge, uttered in the height of zeal, and who knows whether it might not be the dictate of a divine spirit, yet not suiting with every low, decrepit humor of their own, though it were Knox himself, the reformer of a kingdom, that spake it, they will not pardon him their dash; the sense of that great man shall to all posterity be lost, for the fearfulness, or the presumptuous rashness, of a perfunctory licenser. And to what an author this violence hath been lately done, and in what book of greatest consequence to be faithfully published, I could now instance, but shall forbear till a more convenient season.

Yet if these things be not resented seriously and timely by them who have the remedy in their power, but that such iron

1 taking the chance of. 2 careful.
3 Pallas, to whom the olive was sacred, taught mortals the means of extracting the oil. The phrase implies wisdom in both words, since Pallas was the goddess of wisdom, and oil the light by which men read.
4 a minor. 5 humiliation.

1 Not an English word; probably, to throw.
2 handwriting. 3 publisher, bookseller.
4 "particular book" implied.
5 Implying that if one licenser is very good the succeeding one will appear very bad in comparison.
6 commonly, generally.
7 line drawn through censored material.

oulds[1] as these shall have authority to aw out the choicest periods of exquisite ooks, and to commit such a treacherous aud against the orphan remainders of rthiest men after death, the more sorrow ll belong to that hapless race of men, hose misfortune it is to have understand-g. Henceforth, let no man care to learn, care to be more than worldly wise; for rtainly in higher matters to be ignorant d slothful, to be a common steadfast nce, will be the only pleasant life, and only request.

And as it is a particular disesteem of every owing person alive, and most injurious to e written labors and monuments of the ead, so to me it seems an undervaluing and lifying of the whole nation. I cannot set light by all the invention, the art, the wit, e grave and solid judgment which is in ngland, that it can be comprehended in y twenty capacities how good soever; uch less that it should not pass except their perintendence be over it, except it be sifted nd strained with their strainers; that it hould be uncurrent without their manual amp. Truth and understanding are not ch wares as to be monopolised and traded by tickets[2] and statutes and standards. We must not think to make a staple com-odity of all the knowledge in the land, to ark and license it like our broadcloth and r woolpacks. What is it but a servitude ke that imposed by the Philistines,[3] not to allowed the sharpening of our own axes nd coulters,[4] but we must repair from all uarters to twenty licensing forges.

Had any one written and divulged erro-eous things and scandalous to honest life, isusing and forfeiting the esteem had of his eason among men; if, after conviction, this ly censure were adjudged him, that he hould never henceforth write, but what ere first examined by an appointed officer, hose hand should be annexed to pass his edit for him, that now he might be safely ead; it could not be apprehended less than disgraceful punishment.

Whence, to include the whole nation, and hose that never yet thus offended, under ch a diffident[5] and suspectful prohibition, ay plainly be understood what a disparage-ent it is. So much the more, whenas ebtors and delinquents may walk abroad ithout a keeper, but unoffensive books must not stir forth without a visible jailor in their title. Nor is it to the common people less than a reproach; for if we be so jealous[1] over them, as that we dare not trust them with an English pamphlet, what do we but censure them for a giddy, vicious, and ungrounded people; in such a sick and weak state of faith and discretion, as to be able to take nothing down but through the pipe[2] of a licenser. That this is care or love of them, we cannot pretend, whenas in those popish places where the laity are most hated and despised, the same strictness is used over them. Wisdom we cannot call it, because it stops but one breach of licence, nor that neither; whenas those corruptions which it seeks to prevent, break in faster at other doors which cannot be shut.

And in conclusion, it reflects to the disrepute of our ministers also, of whose labors we should hope better, and of the proficiency which their flock reaps by them, than that after all this light of the Gospel which is, and is to be, and all this continual preaching, they should be still frequented with such an unprincipled, unedified, and laic rabble, as that the whiff of every new pamphlet should stagger them out of their catechism and Christian walking. This may have much reason to discourage the ministers, when such a low conceit[3] is had of all their exhortations, and the benefiting of their hearers, as that they are not thought fit to be turned loose to three sheets of paper without a licenser; that all the sermons, all the lectures preached, printed, vented in such numbers, and such volumes, as have now well-nigh made all other books unsaleable, should not be armor enough against one single enchiridion, without the castle of St. Angelo of an Imprimatur.[4]

And lest some should persuade ye, Lords and Commons, that these arguments of learned men's discouragement at this your Order are mere flourishes, and not real, I could recount what I have seen and heard in other countries, where this kind of inquisition tyrannises; when I have sat among their learned men, for that honor I had, and been counted happy to be born in such a place of philosophic freedom, as they supposed England was, while themselves did nothing but bemoan the servile condition into which learning amongst them was brought; that

1 rust. 2 special permissions.
3 See I Sam XIII, 19–22.
4 plowshares. 5 distrustful.

1 suspicious. 2 tube for swallowing medicine.
3 conception, idea.
4 The phrase means: without the protection of a Papal license. The Castle of Saint Angelo, built in 136 A.D. by Hadrian, was used until 217 as the tomb of the Emperors. From 1389 to 1404 it was held by the Popes as a stronghold; in Milton's time it was the Papal prison.

this was it which had damped the glory of Italian wits; that nothing had been there written now these many years but flattery and fustian. There it was that I found and visited the famous Galileo,[1] grown old, a prisoner to the Inquisition, for thinking in astronomy otherwise than the Franciscan and Dominican licensers thought. And though I knew that England then[2] was groaning loudest under the prelatical yoke, nevertheless I took it as a pledge of future happiness, that other nations were so persuaded of her liberty.

Yet was it beyond my hope that those worthies were then breathing in her air, who should be her leaders to such a deliverance, as shall never be forgotten by any revolution of time that this world hath to finish. When that was once begun, it was as little in my fear, that what words of complaint I heard among learned men of other parts uttered against the Inquisition, the same I should hear by as learned men at home uttered in time of Parliament against an order of licensing; and that so generally, that when I had disclosed myself a companion of their discontent, I might say, if without envy,[3] that he whom an honest quæstorship had endeared to the Sicilians, was not more by them importuned against Verres,[4] than the favorable opinion which I had among many who honor ye, and are known and respected by ye, loaded me with entreaties and persuasions, that I would not despair to lay together that which just reason should bring into my mind, toward the removal of an undeserved thraldom upon learning.

That this is not, therefore, the disburdening of a particular fancy, but the common grievance of all those who had prepared their minds and studies above the vulgar pitch to advance truth in others, and from others to entertain it, thus much may satisfy. And in their name I shall for neither friend nor foe conceal what the general murmur is; that if it come to inquisitioning again and licensing, and that we are so timorous of ourselves, and so suspicious of all men, as to fear each book, and the shaking of every leaf, before we know what the contents are; if some who but of late were little better than silenced from preaching, shall come now to silence us from reading, except what they please, it cannot be guessed what is intended by some but a second tyranny over learning; and will soon put it out of controversy, that bishops and presbyters are the same to us both name and thing.

That those evils of prelaty which before from five or six and twenty sees were distributively charged upon the whole people will now light wholly upon learning, is not obscure to us; whenas now the pastor of a small unlearned parish, on the sudden, shall be exalted archbishop over a large diocese of books, and yet not remove, but keep his other cure too, a mystical[1] pluralist. He who but of late cried down the sole ordination of every novice bachelor of art, and denied sole jurisdiction over the simplest parishioner, shall now at home in his private chair assume both these over worthiest and excellentest books, and ablest authors that write them. This is not, ye covenants and protestations[2] that we have made! This is not to put down prelaty; this is but to chop[3] an episcopacy; this is but to translate the palace metropolitan from one kind of dominion into another; this is but an old canonical sleight of commuting our penance.[4] To startle thus betimes at a mere unlicensed pamphlet will after a while be afraid of every conventicle,[5] and a while after will make a conventicle of every Christian meeting.

But I am certain that a state governed by the rules of justice and fortitude, or a church built and founded upon the rock of faith and true knowledge, cannot be so pusillanimous. While things are yet not constituted[6] in religion, that freedom of writing should be restrained by a discipline imitated from the prelates, and learnt by them from the Inquisition, to shut us up all again into the breast of a licenser, must needs give cause of doubt and discouragement to all learned and religious men. Who cannot but discern the fineness of this politic drift, and who are

1 Galileo (1564–1642). Milton saw Galileo when he was living in retirement after 1632, when he had published his *Dialogo dei due Massimi Sistemi del Mondo* in defiance of an edict by which he was distrained from writing anything in accordance with the Copernican theory, as a result of which he was forced to recant before the Inquisition.

2 In 1638, under the domination of Laud.

3 without exciting malice.

4 C. Cornelius Verres, against whose bad government in Sicily Cicero directed his seven famous orations.

1 mysterious, or, perhaps, inexplicable.

2 Including the National Covenant, signed in Scotland in 1638, for the purpose of recovering the purity and liberty of the Gospel; the Solemn League and Covenant, between the English and Scottish nations, of 1643–44; the Protestation of the House of Commons in 1641, in which it was vowed "to maintain . . . the true Reformed Protestant Religion . . . against all Popery and Popish innovations."

3 exchange one episcopacy for another.

4 exchanging one penance for another, permitted by the Canon Law.

5 In Milton's time the significance of this word had been narrowed down from "meeting" to a meeting prohibited by law, of Nonconformists or Dissenters.

6 settled.

contrivers: that while bishops were to be ted down,[1] then all the presses might be n; it was the people's birthright and privi- e in time of Parliament, it was the break- forth of light?

But now, the bishops abrogated and voided of the Church, as if our reformation ght no more, but to make room for others their seats under another name, the scopal arts begin to bud again;[2] the se of truth must run no more oil;[3] liberty printing must be enthraled again under a latical commission of twenty,[4] the privi- e of the people nullified; and, which is rse, the freedom of learning must groan in, and to her old fetters: all this the Par- ment yet sitting. Although their own late uments and defences against the prelates ght remember[5] them, that this obstruct- violence meets for the most part with an ent utterly opposite to the end which it ves at; instead of suppressing sects and isms, it raises them and invests them with reputation: "The punishing of wits en- nces their authority," saith the Viscount Albans; "and a forbidden writing is ought to be a certain spark of truth that s up in the faces of them who seek to ad it out."[6]

This Order, therefore, may prove a nurs- mother to sects, but I shall easily show w it will be a stepdame to Truth; and first disenabling us to[7] the maintenance of at is known already.

Well knows he who uses to consider, that r faith and knowledge thrives by exercise, well as our limbs and complexion.[8] Truth compared in Scripture to a steaming foun- n; if her waters flow not in a perpetual gression, they sicken into a muddy pool conformity and tradition. A man may be heretic in the truth; and if he believe things ly because his pastor says so, or the As- mbly so determines, without knowing other ason, though his belief be true, yet the very ith he holds becomes his heresy. There is t any burden that some would gladlier st off to another, than the charge and care their religion. There be, who knows not at there be, of Protestants and professors[9] who live and die in as arrant an implicit faith,[1] as any lay Papist of Loreto.[2]

A wealthy man addicted to his pleasure and to his profits, finds religion to be a traffic so entangled, and of so many piddling accounts, that of all mysteries[3] he cannot skill to keep a stock going upon that trade. What should he do? Fain he would have the name to be religious; fain he would bear up with his neighbors in that. What does he, therefore, but resolves to give over toiling, and to find himself out some factor, to whose care and credit he may commit the whole managing of his religious affairs; some Divine of note and estimation that must be. To him he adheres, resigns the whole warehouse of his religion, with all the locks and keys into his custody; and indeed makes the very person of that man his religion; esteems his associating with him a sufficient evidence and commendatory of his own piety. So that a man may say his religion is now no more within himself, but is become a dividual[4] movable, and goes and comes near him, according as that good man frequents the house. He entertains him, gives him gifts, feasts him, lodges him; his religion comes home at night, prays, is liberally supped, and sumptuously laid to sleep, rises, is saluted, and after the malmsey, or some well-spiced brewage, and better breakfasted than he whose morning appetite would have gladly fed on green figs between Bethany and Jerusalem, his religion walks abroad at eight, and leaves his kind entertainer in the shop trading all day without his religion.

Another sort there be, who, when they hear that all things shall be ordered, all things regulated and settled, nothing written but what passes through the custom-house of certain publicans[5] that have the tonnaging and poundaging[6] of all free-spoken truth, will straight give themselves up into your hands, make 'em and cut 'em out what religion ye please; there be delights, there be recreations and jolly pastimes that will fetch the day about from sun to sun, and rock the tedious year as in a delightful dream. What need they torture their heads with that which others have taken so strictly, and so unalterably into their own purveying? These are the fruits which a dull ease and cessation

1 An expression taken from the sport of bear-baiting, pular in Elizabeth's time.
2 See Num. XVII, 6–8. 3 See I Kings XVII, 9–15.
3 Under the decree of the Star Chamber 1637, the num- r of printers in London was limited to twenty.
5 remind.
6 From *An Advertisement touching the Controversies of Church of England.*
7 in regard to. 8 state of physical health.
9 Protestants, or those who then professed religion enly, as opposed to Roman Catholics.

1 A faith resting on the authority of another, as opposed to a revealed belief.
2 The *Casa Santa* or Holy House, believed to be the birthplace of the Virgin Mary, carried by angels to Loreto.
3 arts, occupations.
4 that may be separated from him.
5 tax collectors.
6 the laying of duties on exports and imports.

of our knowledge will bring forth among the people. How goodly, and how to be wished, were such an obedient unanimity as this, what a fine conformity would it starch us all into! Doubtless a staunch and solid piece of framework, as any January could freeze together.

Nor much better will be the consequence even among the clergy themselves; it is no new thing never heard of before, for a parochial minister, who has his reward, and is at his Hercules pillars [1] in a warm benefice, to be easily inclinable, if he have nothing else that may rouse up his studies, to finish his circuit [2] in an English concordance and a topic folio,[3] the gatherings and savings of a sober graduateship,[4] a harmony [5] and a catena,[6] treading the constant round of certain common doctrinal heads, attended with their uses, motives, marks, and means; out of which, as out of an alphabet or sol-fa,[7] by forming and transforming, joining and disjoining variously a little bookcraft, and two hours' meditation, might furnish him unspeakably to the performance of more than a weekly charge of sermoning; not to reckon up the infinite helps of interlinearies, breviaries, synopses, and other loitering gear.[8]

But as for the multitude of sermons ready printed and piled up, on every text that is not difficult, our London trading Saint Thomas [9] in his vestry,[10] and add to boot Saint Martin and Saint Hugh, have not within their hallowed limits more vendible ware of all sorts ready made; so that penury he never need fear of pulpit provision, having where so plenteously to refresh his magazine. But if his rear and flanks be not impaled,[11] if his back door be not secured by the rigid licenser, but that a bold book may now and then issue forth, and give the assault to some of his old collections in their trenches; it will concern him then to keep waking, to stand in watch, to set good guards and sentinels about his received opinions, to walk the round and counter-round with his fellow inspectors, fearing lest any of his flock be seduced, who also then would be better instructed, better exercised and disciplined. And God fe that the fear of this diligence, which mu then be used, do not make us affect the la ness of a licensing church.

For if we be sure we are in the right, a do not hold the truth guiltily, which becom not, if we ourselves condemn not our o weak and frivolous teaching, and the peop for an untaught and irreligious, gaddi rout, what can be more fair, than when man judicious, learned, and of a conscienc for aught we know, as good as theirs th taught us what we know, shall not privil from house to house, which is more dange ous, but openly by writing, publish to th world what his opinion is, what his reason and wherefore that which is now thoug cannot be sound? Christ urged it as where with to justify himself, that he preached i public;[1] yet writing is more public tha preaching; and more easy to refutation, need be, there being so many whose busines and profession merely it is, to be the cham pions of truth; which if they neglect, wha can be imputed but their sloth, or unabil ity?

Thus much we are hindered and disinure by this course of licensing toward the tru knowledge of what we seem to know. Fo how much it hurts and hinders the licenser themselves in the calling of their ministry more than any secular employment, if they will discharge that office as they ought, s that of necessity they must neglect eithe the one duty or the other, I insist not, be cause it is a particular,[2] but leave it to thei own conscience, how they will decide i there.

There is yet behind of what I purposed t lay open, the incredible loss and detriment that this plot of licensing puts us to. More than if some enemy at sea should stop up al our havens, and ports, and creeks, it hinders and retards the importation of our richest merchandise, truth; nay, it was first established and put in practice by Antichristian malice and mystery,[3] on set purpose to extinguish, if it were possible, the light of reformation, and to settle [4] falsehood; little differing from that policy wherewith the Turk upholds his Alcoran, by the prohibition of printing. 'Tis not denied, but gladly confessed, we are to send our thanks and vows to Heaven, louder than most of nations, for that great measure of truth which we enjoy,

1 The rocks on either side of the Strait of Gibraltar, i.e., the far limits of the ancient world, came to signify the highest ambition or desire.
2 the course of his studies. 3 a notebook.
4 course at the University.
5 A work showing how the four gospels agree in their accounts of the life of Christ.
6 A series of extracts from the writings of the Fathers, arranged in the form of a commentary on the Scriptures.
7 scale, gamut. 8 help to idleness.
9 Saint Thomas, Saint Martin, and Saint Hugh refer to shopping districts of London.
10 clothes-press. 11 fenced in with stakes.

1 See John xviii, 19–21.
2 personal matter or concern.
3 underhand practices. 4 establish.

pecially in those main points between us d the Pope, with his appurtenances the elates; but he who thinks we are to pitch r tent here, and have attained the utmost lospect of reformation, that the mortal ass wherein we contemplate can show us, il we come to beatific vision,[1] that man by is very opinion declares, that he is yet far ort of truth.

Truth indeed came once into the world th her divine Master, and was a perfect ape most glorious to look on; but when he cended, and his apostles after him were d asleep, then straight arose a wicked race deceivers, who, as that story goes of the gyptian Typhon[2] with his conspirators, w they dealt with the good Osiris, took the rgin Truth, hewed her lovely form into a ousand pieces, and scattered them to the ur winds. From that time ever since, the d friends of Truth, such as durst appear, itating the careful[3] search that Isis made r the mangled body of Osiris, went up and wn gathering up limb by limb still as they uld find them. We have not yet found em all, Lords and Commons, nor ever shall , till her Master's second coming; he shall ing together every joint and member, and all mould them into an immortal feature[4] loveliness and perfection. Suffer not these ensing prohibitions to stand at every place opportunity, forbidding and disturbing em that continue seeking, that continue to our obsequies to the torn body of our artyred saint.

We boast our light; but if we look not isely on the sun itself, it smites us into dark- ess. Who can discern those planets that re oft combust,[5] and those stars of brightest agnitude that rise and set with the sun, ntil the opposite motion of their orbs bring em to such a place in the firmament, where ey may be seen evening or morning. The ght which we have gained, was given us, ot to be ever staring on, but by it to dis- over onward things more remote from our nowledge. It is not the unfrocking of a priest, the unmitring of a bishop, and the removing him from off the Presbyterian shoulders that will make us a happy nation; no, if other things as great in the Church, and in the rule of life both economical and political, be not looked into and reformed, we have looked so long upon the blaze that Zwinglius and Calvin hath beaconed up to us, that we are stark blind.

There be who perpetually complain of schisms and sects, and make it such a calamity that any man dissents from their maxims. 'Tis their own pride and ignorance which causes the disturbing, who neither will hear with meekness, nor can convince, yet all must be suppressed which is not found in their syntagma.[1] They are the troublers, they are the dividers of unity, who neglect and permit not others to unite those dissevered pieces which are yet wanting to the body of Truth. To be still searching[2] what we know not, by what we know, still closing up truth to truth as we find it (for all her body is homogeneal and proportional),[3] this is the golden rule[4] in theology as well as in arithmetic, and makes up the best harmony in a church; not the forced and outward union of cold and neutral and inwardly divided minds.

Lords and Commoners of England consider what nation it is whereof ye are, and whereof ye are the governors; a nation not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit, acute to invent, subtle and sinewy to discourse,[5] not beneath the reach of any point the highest that human capacity can soar to. Therefore the studies of learning in her deepest sciences have been so ancient, and so eminent among us, that writers of good antiquity, and ablest judgment have been persuaded that even the school of Pythagoras, and the Persian wisdom, took beginning from the old philosophy of this island. And that wise and civil Roman, Julius Agricola,[6] who governed once here for Cæsar, preferred the natural wits of Britain, before the labored studies of the French. Nor is it for nothing that the grave and frugal Transylvanian sends out yearly from as far as the mountainous borders of Russia, and beyond the Hercynian wilderness, not their

1 the face of God.

2 Typhon, the god of Evil; Osiris, the god of Good. hile Osiris was on a journey round the earth, Typhon d a beautiful chest made to the measurements of Osiris, d on the latter's return, offered to present it to the per- n who could lie down in it. It fitted nobody but Osiris, d when he was in it, Typhon and his conspirators ked him in, and threw the chest into the river. Isis, e sister and wife of Osiris, sought for the chest, and ter finding it, did it reverence. But Typhon managed seize it in her absence, and tore the body into fourteen eces and scattered them abroad.

3 anxious. 4 form, shape.

5 When within 8° 30′ of the sun, a planet is said to be mbust, or its influence destroyed. Venus, Mercury, d Vulcan are those most often combust.

1 handbooks. 2 investigating.

3 All the parts of the same kind, and each proportional to the whole.

4 the rule of three. 5 to reason.

6 Consul in Britain from 78 to 85, not under Cæsar, but under Emperors Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian. He is said by Tacitus to have provided "a liberal education for the sons of their chieftains, preferring the natural genius of the Britains to the attainments of the Gauls."

youth, but their staid men, to learn our language and our theologic arts.

Yet that which is above all this, the favor and the love of Heaven, we have great argument to think in a peculiar manner propitious and propending [1] towards us. Why else was this nation chosen before any other, that out of her as out of Sion should be proclaimed and sounded forth the first tidings and trumpet of reformation to all Europe? And had it not been the obstinate perverseness of our prelates against the divine and admirable spirit of Wyclif, to suppress him as a schismatic and innovator, perhaps neither the Bohemian Huss and Jerome, no, nor the name of Luther, or of Calvin, had been ever known; the glory of reforming all our neighbors had been completely ours. But now, as our obdurate clergy have with violence demeaned [2] the matter, we are become hitherto the latest and backwardest scholars, of whom God offered to have made us the teachers.

Now once again by all concurrence of signs, and by the general instinct of holy and devout men, as they daily and solemnly express their thoughts, God is decreeing to begin some new and great period in his Church, even to the reforming of reformation itself. What does he then but reveal himself to his servants, and, as his manner is, first to his Englishmen; I say, as his manner is, first to us, though we mark not the method of his counsels, and are unworthy. Behold now this vast city, a city of refuge, the mansion house of liberty, encompassed and surrounded with his protection; the shop of war hath not there more anvils and hammers waking, to fashion out the plates [3] and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleaguered truth, than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present, as with their homage and their fealty, the approaching reformation; others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the force of reason and convincement.

What could a man require more from a nation so pliant and so prone to seek after knowledge? What wants there to such a towardly and pregnant soil, but wise and faithful laborers, to make a knowing people, a nation of prophets, of sages, and of worthies? We reckon more than five months yet to harvest; there need not be five weeks, had we but eyes to lift up; the fields are whi already. Where there is much desire t learn, there of necessity will be much arg ing, much writing, many opinions; for opi ion in good men is but knowledge in th making. Under these fantastic terrors o sect and schism, we wrong the earnest an zealous thirst after knowledge and unde standing which God hath stirred up in th city. What some lament of, we rather shoul rejoice at, should rather praise this piou forwardness among men, to reassume the il deputed care of their religion into their ow hands again. A little generous prudence, a lit tle forbearance of one another, and some grai of charity might win all these diligences t join and unite in one general and brotherl search after truth; could we but forego thi prelatical tradition of crowding free con sciences and Christian liberties into canon and precepts of men. I doubt not, if som great and worthy stranger should come among us, wise to discern the mould and temper of a people, and how to govern it observing the high hopes and aims, the dili gent alacrity of our extended thoughts and reasonings in the pursuance of truth and freedom, but that he would cry out as Pyrrhus did, admiring the Roman docility and courage. "If such were my Epirots, I would not despair the greatest design that could be attempted to make a church or kingdom happy."

Yet these are the men cried out against for schismatics and sectaries; as if, while the temple [1] of the Lord was building, some cutting, some squaring the marble, others hewing the cedars, there should be a sort [2] of irrational men who could not consider there must be many schisms and many dissections made in the quarry and in the timber, ere the house of God can be built. And when every stone is laid artfully together, it cannot be united into a continuity, it can but be contiguous in this world; neither can every piece of the building be of one form; nay rather the perfection consists in this, that out of many moderate [3] varieties and brotherly dissimilitudes that are not vastly disproportional, arises the goodly and the graceful symmetry that commends the whole pile and structure.

Let us, therefore, be more considerate builders, more wise in spiritual architecture, when great reformation is expected. For now the time seems come, wherein Moses, the great prophet, may sit in heaven rejoic-

1 favorably inclined. 2 conducted.
3 breast-plates.

1 See II Chron. II, 5–9. 2 company.
3 not greatly different.

ng to see that memorable and glorious wish [1] f his fulfilled, when not only our seventy lders but all the Lord's people, are become rophets. No marvel then though some nen, and some good men too, perhaps, but oung in goodness, as Joshua then was, envy hem.[2] They fret, and out of their own veakness are in agony, lest those divisions nd subdivisions will undo us. The adver- ary [3] again applauds, and waits the hour, vhen they have branched themselves out, aith he, small enough into parties and par- itions, then will be our time. Fool! he sees ot the firm root, out of which we all grow, hough into branches; nor will beware until he see our small divided maniples [4] cutting hrough at every angle of his ill-united and nwieldy brigade. And that we are to hope etter of all these supposed sects and schisms, nd that we shall not need that solicitude, onest perhaps, though over-timorous, of hem that vex in this behalf, but shall laugh n the end at those malicious applauders of our differences, I have these reasons to per- uade me.

First, when a city shall be as it were be- ieged and blocked about,[5] her navigable iver infested, inroads and incursions round, lefiance and battle oft rumored to be marching up even to her walls and suburb renches; that then the people, or the greater part, more than at other times, wholly taken up with the study of highest and most im- portant matters to be reformed, should be disputing, reasoning, reading, inventing, dis- coursing, even to a rarity and admiration, things not before discoursed or written of, argues at first a singular goodwill, contented- ness and confidence in your prudent fore- sight, and safe government, Lords and Com- mons; and from thence derives itself [6] to a gallant bravery and well grounded contempt of their enemies, as if there were no small number of as great spirits among us, as his was, who, when Rome was nigh besieged by Hannibal, being in the city, bought that piece of ground at no cheap rate whereon Hannibal himself encamped his own regi- ment.

Next, it is a lively and cheerful presage of our happy success and victory. For as in a body, when the blood is fresh, the spirits pure and vigorous, not only to vital, but to rational faculties, and those in the acutest and the pertest [7] operations of wit and sub- tlety, it argues in what good plight and constitution the body is; so when the cheerful- ness of the people is so sprightly up, as that it has, not only wherewith to guard well its own freedom and safety, but to spare, and to bestow upon the solidest and sublimest points of controversy and new invention, it betokens us, not degenerated, nor drooping to a fatal decay, but casting off the old and wrinkled skin of corruption to outlive these pangs, and wax young again, entering the glorious ways of truth and prosperous virtue, destined to become great and honorable in these latter ages.

Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks; [1] methinks I see her as an eagle mew- ing [2] her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unscaling her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise [3] of timorous and flock- ing birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms.

What should ye do then, should ye sup- press all this flowery crop of knowledge and new light sprung up and yet springing daily in this city; should ye set an oligarchy of twenty engrossers [4] over it, to bring a famine upon our minds again, when we shall know nothing but what is measured to us by their bushel? Believe it, Lords and Commons, they who counsel ye to such a suppressing, do as good as bid ye suppress yourselves; and I will soon show how.

If it be desired to know the immediate cause of all this free writing and free speak- ing, there cannot be assigned a truer than your own mild and free and humane govern- ment; it is the liberty, Lords and Commons, which your own valorous and happy counsels have purchased [5] us, liberty which is the nurse of all great wits; this is that which hath rarefied and enlightened our spirits like the influence [6] of heaven; this is that which hath enfranchised, enlarged, and lifted up our ap- prehensions degrees above themselves. Ye cannot make us now less capable, less know- ing, less eagerly pursuing of the truth, unless

1 See Num. XI, 24–29. 2 bear them ill will.
3 The Church of Rome. 4 handfuls.
5 The situation of London, in 1642.
6 proceeds. 7 liveliest.

1 See Judges XVI, 13, 14, 19, and 20.
2 Perhaps "renewing by the process of moulting."
3 company, concert.
4 Those who buy in large quantities, in order to control trade: the modern Trust.
5 procured.
6 Referring to the belief of astrologers that the position of the planets affects human destiny.

ye first make yourselves, that made us so, less the lovers, less the founders of our true liberty. We can grow ignorant again, brutish, formal, and slavish, as ye found us; but you then must first become that which ye cannot be, oppressive, arbitrary, and tyrannous; as they were from whom ye have freed us. That our hearts are now more capacious, our thoughts more erected to the search and expectation of greatest and exactest things, is the issue of your own virtue propagated in us; ye cannot suppress that unless ye reinforce an abrogated and merciless law, that fathers may despatch at will their own children.[1] And who shall then stick closest to ye, and excite others? not he who takes up arms for coat and conduct,[2] and his four nobles[3] of Danegelt.[4] Although I dispraise not the defence of just immunities, yet love my peace better, if that were all. Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.

What would be best advised, then, if it be found so hurtful and so unequal[5] to suppress opinions for the newness, or the unsuitableness to a customary acceptance, will not be my task to say; I only shall repeat what I have learned from one of your own honorable number, a right noble and pious lord, who, had he not sacrificed his life and fortunes to the Church and Commonwealth, we had not now missed and bewailed a worthy and undoubted patron of this argument. Ye know him I am sure; yet I for honor's sake, and may it be eternal to him, shall name him the Lord Brook.[6] He, writing of Episcopacy, and by the way treating of sects and schisms, left ye his vote,[7] or rather now the last words of his dying charge, which I know will ever be of dear and honored regard with ye, so full of meekness and breathing charity, that next to his last testament, who bequeathed love and peace to his disciples, I cannot call to mind where I have read or heard words more mild and peaceful. He there exhorts us to hear with patience and humility those, however they be miscalled, that desire to live purely, in such a use of God's ordinances, as the best guidance of their conscience gives them, and to tolerate them, though in some disconformity to ourselves. The book itself will tell us more at large, being published to the world, and dedicated to the Parliament by him who, both for his life and for his death, deserves that what advice he left be not laid by without perusal.

And now the time in special is,[1] by privilege to write and speak what may help to the further discussing of matters in agitation. The temple of Janus[2] with his two controversal faces might now not unsignificantly be set open. And though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter? Her confuting[3] is the best and surest suppressing. He who hears what praying there is for light and clearer knowledge to be sent down among us, would think of other matters to be constituted beyond the discipline[4] of Geneva, framed and fabriced[5] already to our hands.

Yet when the new light which we beg for shines in upon us, there be who envy and oppose, if it come not first in at their casements. What a collusion is this, whenas we are exhorted by the wise man to use diligence, to seek for wisdom as for hidden treasures early and late, that another order shall enjoin us to know nothing but by statute? When a man hath been laboring the hardest labor in the deep mines of knowledge, hath furnished out his findings in all their equipage, drawn forth his reasons as it were a battle[6] ranged, scattered, and defeated all objections in his way, calls out his adversary into the plain, offers him the advantage of wind and sun, if he please; only that he may try the matter by dint of argument, for his opponents then to sculk, to lay ambushments, to keep a narrow bridge of licensing where the challenger should pass, though it be valor enough in soldiership, is but weakness and cowardice in the wars of Truth. For who knows not that Truth is strong, next to the Almighty; she needs no policies, no stratagems, nor licensings to make her victorious; those are the shifts and

1 A Roman law, not repealed until 318 A.D.
2 The tax levied for the clothing and transportation of the army was very unpopular.
3 A noble was an English coin current from the reign of Edward III, value, 6 *s.* 8 *d.*
4 money paid to buy the Danes off.
5 unfair.
6 Robert Greville, second Lord Brooke, greatly beloved in England, was general of the Parliamentary forces in the Civil War, and was killed in an attack on the royal forces, March 2, 1643.
7 earnest wish.

1 "fitting" understood.
2 Roman god with two faces. The gates of his temple in the Forum were closed in time of peace, open in time of war.
3 disproof.
4 the system by which the practices of a church are regulated.
5 fabricated. 6 army.

ne defences that error uses against her
ower: give her but room, and do not bind
r when she sleeps, for then she speaks not
ue, as the old Proteus [1] did, who spake
acles only when he was caught and bound,
ut then rather she turns herself into all
apes, except her own, and perhaps tunes
r voice according to the time, as Micaiah
d before Ahab,[2] until she be adjured into
r own likeness.

Yet is it not impossible that she may have
ore shapes than one. What else is all that
nk of things indifferent, wherein Truth
ay be on this side, or on the other, without
ing unlike herself? What but a vain
adow else is the abolition of those ordi-
nces, that hand-writing nailed to the cross;
hat great purchase [3] is this Christian lib-
ty which Paul so often boasts of? His
octrine is, that he who eats, or eats not, re-
rds a day, or regards it not, may do either
the Lord. How many other things might
tolerated in peace, and left to conscience,
d we but charity, and were it not the chief
ronghold of our hypocrisy to be ever judg-
g one another. I fear yet this iron yoke of
utward conformity hath left a slavish print
on our necks; the ghost of a linen decency
et haunts us. We stumble and are impa-
ent at the least dividing of one visible con-
regation from another, though it be not in
ndamentals; and through our forwardness
suppress, and our backwardness to re-
over, any enthralled piece of truth out of
ne gripe of custom, we care not to keep
uth separated from truth, which is the
ercest rent and disunion of all. We do not
e that while we still affect by all means a
gid external formality, we may as soon fall
gain into a gross conforming stupidity, a
ark and dead congealment of wood, and
ay, and stubble forced and frozen together,
hich is more to the sudden degenerating
a church than many subdichotomies [4] of
etty schisms.

Not that I can think well of every light
paration, or that all in a church is to be
xpected gold and silver and precious stones:
is not possible for man to sever the wheat
om the tares,[5] the good fish from the other
y; that must be the angels' ministry at the
d of mortal things. Yet if all cannot be of
ne mind, — as who looks they should be? —
this doubtless is more wholesome, more prudent, and more Christian, that many be tolerated, rather than all compelled. I mean not tolerated popery [1] and open superstition, which, as it extirpates all religions and civil supremacies, so itself should be extirpate; provided first that all charitable and compassionate means be used to win and regain the weak and the misled; that also which is impious or evil absolutely, either against faith or manners,[2] no law can possibly permit, that intends not to unlaw itself; but those neighboring differences, or rather indifferences, are what I speak of, whether in some point of doctrine or of discipline, which though they may be many, yet need not interrupt the unity of spirit, if we could but find among us the bond of peace.

In the meanwhile, if any one would write, and bring his helpful hand to the slow-moving reformation which we labor under, if truth have spoken to him before others, or but seemed at least to speak, who hath so bejesuited us that we should trouble that man with asking license to do so worthy a deed? And not consider this, that if it come to prohibiting, there is not aught more likely to be prohibited than truth itself; whose first appearance to our eyes bleared and dimmed with prejudice and custom, is more unsightly and unplausible than many errors, even as the person is of many a great man slight and contemptible to see to. And what do they tell us vainly of new opinions, when this very opinion of theirs, that none must be heard but whom they like, is the worst and newest opinion of all others; and is the chief cause why sects and schisms do so much abound, and true knowledge is kept at distance from us; besides yet a greater danger which is in it. For when God shakes a kingdom with strong and healthful commotions to a general reforming, 'tis not untrue that many sectaries and false teachers are then busiest in seducing; but yet more true it is, that God then raises to his own work men of rare abilities, and more than common industry, not only to look back, and revise what hath been taught heretofore, but to gain further, and go on some new enlightened steps in the discovery of truth.

For such is the order of God's enlightening his church, to dispense and deal out by degrees his beam, so as our earthly eyes may best sustain it. Neither is God appointed

1 The sea-god who tended the flocks of Poseidon. He
id the power of assuming any shape to avoid the neces-
ty of prophesying, but when caught and held, would tell
uly of the future.
2 See I Kings XXII, 1–28.
3 advantage. 4 subdivisions.
5 See Matt. XIII, 24–30, 37–43.

1 Milton's idea of religious toleration never included Catholicism.
2 conduct, in a moral sense.

and confined, where and out of what place these his chosen shall be first heard to speak; for he sees not as man sees, chooses not as man chooses, lest we should devote ourselves again to set places, and assemblies, and outward callings of men; planting our faith one while in the old Convocation house,[1] and another while in the Chapel[2] at Westminster; when all the faith and religion that shall be there canonized,[3] is not sufficient without plain convincement and the charity of patient instruction, to supple the least bruise of conscience, to edify the meanest Christian who desires to walk in the Spirit, and not in the letter of human trust, for all the number of voices that can be there made; no, though Harry VII himself there, with all his liege tombs[4] about him, should lend them voices from the dead, to swell their number.

And if the men be erroneous who appear to be the leading schismatics, what withholds us but our sloth, our self-will, and distrust in the right cause, that we do not give them gentle meetings and gentle dismissions, that we debate not and examine the matter thoroughly with liberal and frequent audience; if not for their sakes, yet for our own? Seeing no man who hath tasted learning, but will confess the many ways of profiting by those who, not contented with stale receipts, are able to manage, and set forth new positions to the world. And were they but as the dust and cinders of our feet, so long as in that notion[5] they may serve to polish and brighten the armory of Truth, even for that respect they were not utterly to be cast away. But if they be of those whom God hath fitted for the special use of these times with eminent and ample gifts, and those perhaps neither among the priests, nor among the pharisees, and we in the haste of a precipitant zeal shall make no distinction, but resolve to stop their mouths, because we fear they come with new and dangerous opinions, as we commonly forejudge them ere we understand them, no less than woe to us, while thinking thus to defend the Gospel, we are found the persecutors.

There have been not a few since the beginning of this Parliament, both of the Presbytery and others, who by their unlicensed books, to the contempt of an Imprimatur, first broke that triple ice clung about our hearts, and taught the people to see day; I hope that none of those were the persuaders to renew upon us this bondage which they themselves have wrought so much good by contemning. But if neither the check that Moses gave to young Joshua, nor the countermand which our Saviour gave to young John,[1] who was so ready to prohibit those whom he thought unlicensed, be not enough to admonish our elders how unacceptable to God their testy mood of prohibiting is; if neither their own remembrance what evil hath abounded in the church by this let[2] of licensing, and what good they themselves have begun by transgressing it, be not enough, but that they will persuade, and execute the most Dominican part of the Inquisition over us, and are already with one foot in the stirrup so active at suppressing, it would be no unequal distribution, in the first place, to suppress the suppressors themselves; whom the change of their condition hath puffed up, more than their late experience of harder times hath made wise.

¶ And as for regulating the press, let no man think to have the honor of advising ye better than yourselves have done in that order published next before this, "that no book be printed, unless the printer's and the author's name, or at least the printer's be registered." Those which otherwise come forth, if they be found mischievous and libellous, the fire and the executioner will be the timeliest and the most effectual remedy that man's prevention can use. For this authentic Spanish policy of licensing books, if I have said aught, will prove the most unlicensed book itself within a short while; and was the immediate image of a Star Chamber decree to that purpose made in those very times when that Court did the rest of those her pious works, for which she is now fallen from the stars with Lucifer. Whereby ye may guess what kind of state prudence, what love of the people, what care of religion or good manners there was at the contriving, although with singular hypocrisy it pretended to bind books to their good behavior. And how it got the upper hand of your precedent order so well constituted before, if we may believe those men whose profession gives them cause to inquire most, it may be doubted there was in it the fraud of some old patentees and monopolisers

1 The assembly of the clergy of the Church of England met in the Chapter House of Westminster Cathedral.

2 The Assembly of Divines of the Presbyterian Church, which supplanted the Convocation, met in Henry VII's Chapel.

3 admitted to the canon, or body of ecclesiastical laws.

4 Henry VII had buried near him his wife, Elizabeth of York, his mother, Margaret Beaufort, Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, Mary Queen of Scots, Prince Henry, Anne of Denmark, and King James I.

5 conception.

1 See Luke IX, 49, 50.

2 hindrance.

the trade of bookselling; who under pre-
nce of the poor in their Company not to be
frauded, and the just retaining of each man
s several copy, which God forbid should be
insaid, brought divers glosing colors to the
use, which were indeed but colors, and
rving to no end except it be to exercise a
periority over their neighbors; men who do
t, therefore, labor in an honest profession
which learning is indebted, that they
ould be made other men's vassals. Another
d is thought was aimed at by some of
em in procuring by petition this Order,
at having power in their hands, malignant
oks might the easier scape abroad, as the
ent shows.

But of these sophisms and elenchs [1] of merchandise I skill not. This I know, that errors in a good government and in a bad are equally almost incident; for what magistrate may not be misinformed, and much the sooner, if liberty of printing be reduced into the power of a few; but to redress willingly and speedily what hath been erred, and in highest authority to esteem a plain advertisement more than others have done a sumptuous bribe, is a virtue, honored Lords and Commons, answerable to your highest actions, and whereof none can participate but greatest and wisest men.

1 sophistical arguments.

# SAMUEL PEPYS (1633–1703)

The steadily increasing fame of Pepys as author of the famous diary has tended to obscure the ct that he was an able government official, especially as Secretary of the Admiralty during a time en Great Britain's sea-power was being strengthened considerably; that he was a discriminating llector of books and manuscripts, which he left to his college in Cambridge University; and that was esteemed highly enough as a scholar to be elected president of the Royal Society.

Still, it is for the vivid pictures of the times and his fascinating personality as disclosed in the ary that Pepys is famous. This diary he kept from January 1, 1660, to May 31, 1669, in shortnd. It was not published until 1825, when Lord Braybrooke first issued the diary, cut to about lf its size by omissions. The extract given below is from this well-known version.

The best edition of the complete diary is H. B. Wheatley's in eight volumes (G. Bell and Sons). xcellent biographical studies of Pepys have been written by Gamaliel Bradford, *The Soul of muel Pepys* (Houghton Mifflin Company), and by Jean Lucas-Dubreton (Putnam.)

## DIARY OF SAMUEL PEPYS

### 1665–66

January 1st. Called up by five o'clock by r. Tooker, who wrote, while I dictated to m, my business of the Pursers; and so, ithout eating or drinking, till three in the ternoon, to my great content, finished it.[1] 2d. Up by candle-light again, and my siness being done, to my Lord Brouncker's, d there find Sir J. Minnes and all his comany, and Mr. Boreman and Mrs. Turner, t, above all, my dear Mrs. Knipp, with hom I sang, and in perfect pleasure I was hear her sing, and especially her little otch song of "Barbary Allen"; and to ake our mirth the completer, Sir J. Minnes as in the highest pitch of mirth, and his mimicall tricks, that ever I saw, and most excellent pleasant company he is, and the best musique that ever I saw, and certainly would have made an excellent actor, and now would be an excellent teacher of actors. Then, it being past night, against my will, took leave.

3d. I to the Duke of Albemarle and back again: and, at the Duke's, with great joy, I received the good news of the decrease of the plague this week to 70, and but 253 in all; which is the least Bill hath been known these twenty years in the City, though the want of people in London is it, that must make it so low, below the ordinary number for Bills. So home, and find all my good company I had bespoke, as Colman and his wife, and Laneare, Knipp and her surly husband; and good musick we had, and among other things, Mr. Coleman sang my words I set, of "Beauty, retire," and they praise it mightily. Then to dancing and supper, and mighty merry till Mr. Rolt come in, whose pain of the toothache made him no company, and spoilt ours: so he away, and then my wife's teeth fell of

1 This document is in the British Museum (Harleian S., 6287), and is entitled, "A letter from Mr. Pepys, ted at Greenwich, 1st Jan., 1665–6, which he calls his w Year's Gift to his hon. friend, Sir Wm. Coventry, erein he lays down a Method of securing his Majesty husbandly execution of the Victualling Part of the val Expence." It consists of nineteen closely written o pages, and is a remarkable specimen of Pepys's busiss habits. — (Braybrooke's note.)

aching, and she to bed. So forced to break up all with a good song, and so to bed.

5th. I with my Lord Brouncker and Mrs. Williams by coach with four horses to London, to my Lord's house in Covent Garden. But, Lord! what staring to see a nobleman's coach come to town! And porters every where bow to us; and such begging of beggars! And delightful it is to see the town full of people again; and shops begin to open, though in many places seven or eight together, and more, all shut; but yet the town is full, compared with what it used to be. I mean the City[1] end: for Covent Garden and Westminster are yet very empty of people, no Court nor gentry being there. Home, thinking to get Mrs. Knipp, but could not, she being busy with company, but sent me a pleasant letter, writing herself "Barbary Allen." Reading a discourse about the river of Thames, the reason of its being choked up in several places with shelfes: which is plain is, by the encroachments made upon the River, and running out of causeways into the River, at every wood-wharfe: which was not heretofore, when Westminster Hall and White Hall were built, and Redriffe Church, which now are sometimes overflown with water.

6th. To a great dinner and much company. Mr. Cuttle and his lady and I went, hoping to get Mrs. Knipp to us, having wrote a letter to her in the morning, calling myself "Dapper Dicky,"[2] in answer to her's of "Barbary Allen," but could not, and am told by the boy that carried my letter, that he found her crying; and I fear she lives a sad life with that ill-natured fellow her husband: so we had a great, but I a melancholy dinner. After dinner to cards, and then comes notice that my wife is come unexpectedly to me to town: so I to her. It is only to see what I do, and why I come not home; and she is in the right that I would have a little more of Mrs. Knipp's company before I go away. My wife to fetch away my things from Woolwich, and I back to cards, and after cards to choose King and Queene, and a good cake there was, but no marks found; but I privately found the clove, the mark of the knave, and privately put it into Captain Cocke's piece, which made some mirth, because of his lately being known by his buying of clove and mace of the East India prizes. At night home to my lodging, where I find my wife returned with my things. It being Twelfth-Night,[1] they had got the fiddler, and mighty merry they were; and I above, come not to them, leaving them dancing, and choosing King and Queene.

7th. (Lord's day.) The town talks of my Lord Craven being to come into Sir G. Carteret's place; but sure it cannot be true. But I do fear those two families, his and my Lord Sandwich's, are quite broken; and I must now stand upon my own legs. With my wife and Mercer took boat and away home; but in the evening, before I went, comes Mrs. Knipp, just to speak with me privately, to excuse her not coming to me yesterday, complaining how like a devil her husband treats her, but will be with us in town a week hence.

8th. To Bennett's, in Paternoster Row, few shops there being yet open, and there bought velvett for a coat, and camelott for a cloak for myself; and thence to a place to look over some fine counterfeit damasks to hang my wife's closet, and pitched upon one.

9th. To the office, where we met first since the plague, which God preserve us in! Pierce tells me how great a difference hath been between the Duke and Duchess, he suspecting her to be naught with Mr. Sidney. But some way or other the matter is made up; but he [Sidney] was banished the Court, and the Duke for many days did not speak to the Duchess at all. He tells me that my Lord Sandwich is lost there at Court, though the King is particularly his friend. But people do speak every where slightly of him; which is a sad story to me, but I hope it may be better again. And that Sir G. Carteret is neglected, and hath great enemies at work against him. That matters must needs go bad, while all the town, and every boy in the street, openly cries, "The King cannot go away till my Lady Castlemaine be ready to come along with him;" she being lately put to bed. And that he visits her and Mrs. Stewart every morning before he eats his breakfast.

10th. I do find Sir G. Downing to be a mighty talker, more than is true, which I now know to be so, and suspected it before. To my Lord Brouncker's house in Covent Garden. The plague is encreased this week from seventy to eighty-nine. We have also great fear of our Hambrough fleete, of their meeting with the Dutch; as also have certain

1 The "City" (still so called) is the old part of London lying east of Temple Bar. It is the business district.

2 A song called "Dapper Dick" is in the British Museum; it begins, "In a barren tree." It was printed in 1710. — (Braybrooke's note.)

1 i.e., the twelfth after Christmas.

ews, that by storms Sir Jer. Smith's [1] fleete scattered, and three of them come without asts back to Plymouth. Seeing and salut-g Mrs. Stokes, my little goldsmith's wife in aternoster Row, and there bespoke a silver afing-dish for warming plates. To the uke of Albemarle. Here I saw Sir W. oventry's kind letter to him concerning my aper, and among other of his letters, which saw all, and that is a strange thing, that hatever is writ to this Duke Albemarle, all ne world may see; for this very night he did ve me Mr. Coventry's letter to read soon as come to his hand, before he had read it imself, and bid me take out of it what con-erned the Navy, and many things there was it, which I should not have thought fit for im to have let anybody so suddenly see; ut, among other things, find him profess imself to the Duke a friend into the inquir-g further into the business of prizes, and dvises that it may be publick, for the right-g the King, and satisfying the people — ne blame to be rightly laid where it should e, which strikes very hard upon my Lord andwich, and troubles me to read it. Be-des, the Duchess cried mightily out against he having of gentlemen captains with eathers and ribbands, and wished the King ould send her husband to sea with the old lain sea Captains that he served with for-herly, that would make their ships swim ith blood, though they could not make agues as Captains now-a-days can.

11th. At noon to dinner all of us by invita-on to Sir W. Pen's, and much company. mong others, Lieutenant of the Tower, and room, his poet, and Dr. Whistler and his Sir William Pen's] son-in-law Lowther, ervant to Mrs. Margaret Pen, and Sir Ed-ard Spragg, a merry man, that sang a leasant song pleasantly.

12th. I and my Lord Brouncker by coach little way, for discourse sake, till our coach roke, and tumbled me over him quite down ne side of the coach, falling on the ground bout the stockes, but up again. To my oor wife, who works all day at home like a orse, at the making of her hangings for our hamber and the bed.

13th. Home with his Lordship to Mrs. Villiams's, in Covent Garden, to dinner, the rst time I ever was there, and there met aptain Cocke; and pretty merry, though ot perfectly so, because of the fear that there is of a great encrease again of the plague this week. And again my Lord Brouncker do tell us, that he hath it from Sir John Baber, who is related to my Lord Craven, that my Lord Craven do look after Sir G. Carteret's place, and do reckon himself sure of it.

14th. (Lord's day.) Long in bed, till raised by my new taylor, Mr. Penny, who comes and brings me my new velvet coat, very handsome, but plain. At noon eat the second of the two cygnets Mr. Shepley sent us for a new year's gift. This afternoon, after sermon, comes my dear fair beauty of the Exchange, Mrs. Batelier, brought by her sister, an acquaintance of Mercer's, to see my wife. I saluted her with as much pleasure as I had done any a great while. We sat and talked together an hour, with infinite pleasure to me, and so the fair creature went away, and proves one of the modestest women and pretty, that ever I saw in my life, and my wife judges her so, too.

15th. To Mrs. Pierce, to her new house in Covent Garden, a very fine place and fine house. Took her thence home to my house, and so by water to Boreman's by night, where the greatest disappointment that ever I saw in my life — much company, a good supper provided, and all come with expectation of excess of mirth, but all blank through the waywardnesse of Mrs. Knipp, who, though she had appointed the night, could not be got to come. Not so much as her husband could get her to come; but, which was a pleasant thing in all my anger, I asking him, while we were in expectation what answer one of our many messengers would bring, what he thought, whether she would come or no, he answered that, for his part, he could not so much as think. At last, very late, and supper done, she come undressed, but it brought me no mirth at all; only, after all being done, without singing, or very little, and no dancing, Pierce and I to bed together, and he and I very merry to find how little and thin clothes they give us to cover us, so that we were fain to lie in our stockings and drawers, and lay all our coats and clothes upon the bed.

16th. Mightily troubled at the news of the plague's being encreased, and was much the saddest news that the plague hath brought me from the beginning of it; because of the lateness of the year, and the fear we may with reason have of its continuing with us the next summer. The total being now 375, and the plague 158.

17th. After dinner, late took horse, and I

[1] Admiral Sir Jeremy Smith, mentioned October 13 1665 *ante*, commanded a fleet in the Streights at this time, and another in the Channel in 1668. — (Braybrooke's note.)

rode to Dagenhams in the dark. It was my Lord Crewe's desire that I should come, and chiefly to discourse with me of my Lord Sandwich's matters; and therein to persuade, what I had done already, that my Lord should sue out a pardon for his business of the prizes, as also for Bergen, and all he hath done this year past, before he begins his Embassy to Spain; for it is to be feared that the Parliament will fly out against him, and particular men, the next Session. He is glad also that my Lord is clear of his sea-imployment, though sorry, as I am, only in the manner of its bringing about. After supper, up to wait on my Lady Crewe, who is the same weak silly lady as ever, asking such saintly questions.

18th. To Captain Cocke's, where Mrs. Williams was, and Mrs. Knipp. I was not heartily merry, though a glass of wine did a little cheer me. After dinner to the office. Anon comes to me thither my Lord Brouncker, Mrs. Williams, and Knipp. I brought down my wife in her night-gown, she not being indeed very well, to the office to them. My wife and I anon and Mercer, by coach, to Pierce's, where mighty merry, and sing and dance with great pleasure; and I danced, who never did in company in my life.

19th. It is a remarkable thing how infinitely naked all that end of the town, Covent Garden, is, at this day, of people, while the City is almost as full again of people as ever it was.

20th. I sent my boy home for some papers, where, he staying longer than I would have him, I become angry, and boxed my boy when he come, that I do hurt my thumb so much, that I was not able to stir all the day after, and in great pain.

22d. At noon my Lord Brouncker did come, but left the keys of the chest we should open, at Sir G. Carteret's lodgings, of my Lord Sandwich's, wherein Howe's supposed jewels are; so we could not, according to my Lord Arlington's order, see them today: but we parted, resolving to meet here at night: my Lord Brouncker being going with Dr. Wilkins, Mr. Hooke, and others, to Colonel Blunt's, to consider again of the business of chariots, and to try their new invention, which I saw here my Lord Brouncker ride in; where the coachman sits astride upon a pole over the horse, but do not touch the horse, which is a pretty odde thing; but it seems it is most easy for the horse, and, as they say, for the man also. The first meeting of Gresham College[1] since the plague: Dr. Goddard did fill us with talk, in defence of his and his fellow physicians going out of town in the plague-time; saying, that their particular patients were most gone out of town, and they left at liberty; and a great deal more. But what, among other fine discourse, pleased me most, was Sir G. Ent,[2] about respiration; that it is not to this day known, or concluded on, among physicians, nor to be done either, how the action is managed by nature, or for what use it is.

23d. Good news beyond all expectation of the decrease of the plague, being now but 79, and the whole but 272. So home with comfort to bed. A most furious storme all night and morning.

24th. My Lord [Brouncker] and I, the weather being a little fairer, by water to Deptford, to Sir G. Carteret's house, where W. Howe met us, and there we opened the chests, and saw the poor sorry rubys which have caused all this ado to the undoing of W. Howe; though I am not much sorry for it, because of his pride and ill nature. About 200 of these very small stones, and a cod[3] of muske, which it is strange I was not able to smell, is all we could find; so locked them up again, and my Lord and I, the wind being again very furious, so as we durst not go by water, walked to London quite round the bridge, no boat being able to stirre; and, Lord! what a dirty walk we had, and so strong the wind, that in the fields we many times could not carry our bodies against it, but were driven backwards. We went through Horslydowne, where I never was since a boy, that I went to enquire after my father, whom we did give over for lost coming from Holland. It was dangerous to walk the streets, the bricks and tiles falling from the houses, that the whole streets were covered with them; and whole chimneys, nay, whole houses, in two or three places, blowed down. But, above all, the pales of London Bridge, on both sides, were blown away, so that we were fain to stoop very low for fear of blowing off of the bridge. We could see no boats in the Thames afloat, but what were broke loose, and carried through the bridge, it being ebbing water. And the greatest sight of all was, among other parcels of ships driven here and there in clusters together; one was quite overset, and lay with her

1 Founded in 1579 by Sir Thomas Gresham, to provide for lectures by seven professors.

2 Sir George Ent, F.R.S., President of the College of Physicians. He died in 1689. — (Braybrooke's note.)

3 sack.

sts all along in the water, and keel above ter.

25th. It is now certain that the King of ance hath publickly declared war against and God knows how little fit we are for

26th. Pleased mightily with what my poor e hath been doing these eight or ten days h her own hands, like a drudge, in fitting new hangings of our bedchamber of blue, d putting the old red ones into my ssing-room.

28th. (Lord's day.) Took coach, and to mpton Court, where we find the King, and ke, and Lords, all in council; so we walked and down: there being none of the ladies ne, and so much the more business I hope l be done. The Council being up, out nes the King, and I kissed his hand, and grasped me very kindly by the hand. The ke also, I kissed his, and he mighty kind, d Sir W. Coventry. I found my Lord ndwich there, poor man! I see with a lancholy face, and suffers his beard to w on his upper lip more than usual. I k him a little aside, to know when I ould wait on him, and where: he told me, at it would be best to meet at his lodgings, thout being seen to walk together, which I ed very well; and, Lord! to see in what fficulty I stand, that I dare not walk with W. Coventry, for fear my Lord or Sir Carteret should see me; nor with either of em, for fear Sir W. Coventry should. I nt down into one of the Courts, and there t the King and Duke; and the Duke lled me to him. And the King come to e of himself, and told me, "Mr. Pepys," ys he, "I do give you thanks for your good rvice all this year, and I assure you I am ry sensible of it." And the Duke of York d tell me with pleasure, that he had read er my discourse about pursers, and would ve it ordered in my way, and so fell from e discourse to another. I walked with em quite out of the Court into the fields, d then back, and to my Lord Sandwich's amber, where I find him very melancholy, d not well satisfied, I perceive, with my rriage to Sir G. Carteret, but I did satisfy m that I have a very hard game to play; d he told me that he was sorry to see it, d the inconveniences which likely may fall on me with him; but, for all that, I am not uch afraid, if I can but keep out of harm's ay. He hath got over the business of the izes, so far as to have a privy seal passed r all that was in his distribution to the officers, which I am heartily glad of; and, for the rest, he must be answerable for what he is proved to have. But for his pardon for anything else, he thinks it not seasonable to ask it, and not useful to him; because that will not stop a Parliament's mouth, and for the King, he is not sure of him. Took boat, and by water to Kingston, and so to our lodgings.

29th. Up, and to Court by coach, where to council before the Duke of York, the Duke of Albemarle with us. My Lord Sandwich come in, in the middle of the business, and, poor man, very melancholy, methought, and said little at all, or to the business, and sat at the lower end, just as he come, no room being made for him, only I did give him my stool, and another was reached me. Mr. Evelyn and I into my Lord Brouncker's coach, and rode together with excellent discourse till we come to Clapham, talking of the vanity and vices of the Court, which makes it a most contemptible thing; and, indeed, in all his discourse, I find him a most worthy person. Particularly he entertained me with discourse of an Infirmary, which he hath projected for the sick and wounded seamen against the next year, which I mightily approve of; and will endeavour to promote it, being a worthy thing, and of use, and will save money. He set me down at Mr. Gauden's, where I took a book and into the gardens, and there walked and read till dark. Anon come in Creed and Mr. Gauden, and his sons, and then they bring in three ladies, who were in the house, but I do not know them — his [Gauden's] daughter and two nieces, daughters of Dr. Whistler's, with whom and Creed mighty sport at supper, the ladies very pretty and mirthfull. After supper, I made the ladies sing, yet it was the saddest stuff I ever heard. However, we sat up late, and then I, in the best chamber, like a prince, to bed, and Creed with me, and, being sleepy, talked but little.

30th. Home, finding the town keeping the day solemnly, it being the day of the King's murther; and they being at church, I presently into the church. This is the first time I have been in the church since I left London for the plague, and it frighted me indeed to go through the church more than I thought it could have done, to see so many graves lie so high upon the churchyards, where people have been buried of the plague. I was much troubled at it, and do not think to go through it again a good while.

31st. I find many about the City that live

near the churchyards solicitous to have the churchyards covered with lime, and I think it is needfull, and ours, I hope, will be done. To my Lord Chancellor's new house which he is building, only to view it, hearing so much from Mr. Evelyn of it; and, indeed, it is the finest pile I ever did see in my life, and will be a glorious house. To White Hall and, to my great joy, people begin to bustle up and down there, the King holding his resolution to be in town to-morrow, and hath good encouragement, blessed be God! to do so, the plague being decreased this week to 56, and the total to 227.

## JOHN DRYDEN (1631–1700)

Dryden was the foremost literary man of his time, in verse, in prose, and in the drama. Much that he wrote was so wrapped up in the politics and religious discussions of the day that it is hard reading for one not thoroughly acquainted with the period; but there is enough besides of so universal a quality as to justify amply Dryden's high place in the literature of Great Britain.

He was born August 9 (?), 1631, in Northamptonshire and educated at Westminster and Trinity College, Cambridge, from which he received his B.A. in 1654. His literary career really began in 1658 with *Heroic Stanzas on the Death of Oliver Cromwell*. Two years later, he celebrated the return of King Charles in *Astræa Redux*. This apparently sudden shift in politics, and his going over to the Church of Rome later in life, have caused many readers to regard Dryden as a time-server, like the Vicar of Bray in the old song.

In 1663 Dryden began his career as a playwright. For over a score of years he was the chief dramatist of the Restoration. Among his many plays the most striking are *The Rival Ladies*, *The Indian Emperor*, *The Conquest of Granada*, and *All for Love*, his most representative tragedy, a version that he made in 1678 of Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. It is a typical "heroic play": in its setting, in its approximate employment of the unities of time and place, in its treatment of the love and ambition of titanic characters, and in the manner in which it was produced — in a large theater, with actresses (unlike the Elizabethan custom), with incidental music, with movable scenery, and whatever else would add to the spectacle. Unlike other heroic plays, however, it is written, not in couplets, but in blank verse. Dryden also made an operatic version of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* with D'Avenant and an alteration of *Troilus and Cressida*.

Of Dryden's many other works the following are the most significant: *Annus Mirabilis*, 1666, a vivid account of the year 1666, the year of the Dutch war, the plague, and the great fire of London; the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, 1668; *Absalom and Achitophel*, 1681, a political allegory attacking those who planned to put the Duke of Monmouth on the throne; *MacFlecknoe*, a literary satire in which he attacked Shadwell particularly; *Religio Laici*, 1683, a defense of his religion, followed four years later, after his conversion to Catholicism, by *The Hind and the Panther*, in which he defended the Church of Rome; his translation of Virgil, 1697; the incomparable lyrics, *The Ode for St. Cecilia's Day* and *Alexander's Feast;* and the *Fables*, 1700.

Dryden is distinctly a product of his time. As a writer of heroic couplets, a satirist and controversialist, he is supreme. As a critic, he followed the neo-classic rules, yet showed original insight into many literary problems. In the drama, for which he was temperamentally unfitted, he overshadowed all his contemporaries. His clear, crisp essays and prefaces were a new and vital influence in the development of prose style. He was the literary dictator of an age that worshiped reason and craftsmanship, often at the expense of imagination; but he can still be read with pleasure and profit by a modern reader who is willing and able to make the intellectual adjustment necessary.

The best one-volume edition of Dryden's poems is the Cambridge (Houghton Mifflin Company); of his plays, Noyes' (Scott Foresman). His complete works, with a biography, were edited by Sir Walter Scott, and revised by Professor Saintsbury. Dr. Johnson included him in his *Lives of the Poets*. The most recent studies of Dryden are by T. S. Eliot and Mark van Doren.

### MAC FLECKNOE

OR, A SATIRE UPON THE TRUE-BLUE-PROTESTANT POET

T. S.

BY THE AUTHOR OF ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL

After the charge of high treason against Shaftesbury (whom Dryden had attacked in *Absalom and Achitophel*) had been dropped, a medal was struck in honor of the event. Dryden wrote a satire on the proceedings, *The Medal* (1682), which Shadwell answered with a vitriolic and coarse poem, *The Medal of John Bayes*. Dryden's reply was the following poem, a good example of the personal satire of the times.

All human things are subject to decay,
And when fate summons, monarchs must
obey.

'his Flecknoe[1] found, who, like Augustus, young
las called to empire, and had governed long;
prose and verse, was owned, without dispute,
hro' all the realms of *Nonsense*, absolute.
his aged prince, now flourishing in peace,
d blest with issue of a large increase;
orn out with business, did at length debate
settle the succession of the State;
d, pond'ring which of all his sons was fit
reign, and wage immortal war with wit,
ied: "'Tis resolved; for nature pleads, that he
ould only rule, who most resembles me.
—— [2] alone my perfect image bears,
ature in dulness from his tender years:
—— alone, of all my sons, is he
ho stands confirmed in full stupidity.
e rest to some faint meaning make pretense,
t Sh—— never deviates into sense.
me beams of wit on other souls may fall,
rike thro', and make a lucid interval;
t Sh——'s genuine night admits no ray,
s rising fogs prevail upon the day.
sides, his goodly fabric[3] fills the eye,
d seems designed for thoughtless majesty;
oughtless as monarch oaks that shade the plain,
d, spread in solemn state, supinely reign.
eywood and Shirley[4] were but types of thee,
ou last great prophet of tautology.
en I, a dunce of more renown than they,
as sent before but to prepare thy way;
d, coarsely clad in Norwich drugget,[5] came
teach the nations in thy greater name.
y warbling lute, the lute I whilom strung,
hen to King John of Portugal I sung,[6]
as but the prelude to that glorious day,
hen thou on silver Thames didst cut thy way,
ith well-timed oars before the royal barge,
relled with the pride of thy celestial charge;
d big with hymn, commander of a host,
e like was ne'er in Epsom blankets[7] tossed.
Methinks I see the new Arion[1] sail,
The lute still trembling underneath thy nail.
At thy well-sharpened thumb from shore to shore
The treble squeaks for fear, the basses roar;
Echoes from Pissing Alley Sh—— call,
And Sh—— they resound from Aston Hall.
About thy boat the little fishes throng,
As at the morning toast that floats along.
Sometimes, as prince of thy harmonious band,
Thou wield'st thy papers in thy threshing hand.
St. André's[2] feet ne'er kept more equal time,
Not ev'n the feet of thy own *Psyche's*[3] rhyme;
Tho' they in number as in sense excel:
So just, so like tautology, they fell,
That, pale with envy, Singleton[4] forswore
The lute and sword, which he in triumph bore,
And vowed he ne'er would act Villerius[5] more."
Here stopped the good old sire, and wept for joy
In silent raptures of the hopeful boy.
All arguments, but most his plays, persuade,
That for anointed dulness he was made.
Close to the walls which fair Augusta[6] bind,
(The fair Augusta much to fears[7] inclined,)
An ancient fabric raised t' inform the sight,
There stood of yore, and Barbican it hight:
A watchtower once; but now, so fate ordains,
Of all the pile an empty name remains.
From its old ruins brothel-houses rise,
Scenes of lewd loves, and of polluted joys,
Where their vast courts the mother-strumpets keep,
And, undisturbed by watch, in silence sleep.
Near these a Nursery[8] erects its head,
Where queens are formed, and future heroes bred;
Where unfledged actors learn to laugh and cry,
Where infant punks their tender voices try,
And little Maximins[9] the gods defy.

[1] An insignificant miscellaneous writer (d. 1678), who is not as bad, however, as Dryden pictures him.
[2] Obviously, Shadwell, 1642?-92, poet and dramatist, who, in 1688, succeeded Dryden as Poet Laureate.
[3] Shadwell was a large man.
[4] Later Elizabethan dramatists; both, especially Heywood, were far better than Dryden admits.
[5] rough, woolen cloth.
[6] Flecknoe had actually been at the King of Portugal's court.
[7] Why the epithet "Epsom" is used is not clear, except as a poor allusion to Shadwell's play, *Epsom Wells*.

[1] The Greek musician of the seventh century B.C., saved from drowning, according to the fable, by a dolphin charmed by his music.
[2] A French dancing teacher.
[3] Psyche is a little-known play of Shadwell's.
[4] A contemporary actor.
[5] A character in Davenant's *The Siege of Rhodes*, 1656.
[6] London.
[7] i.e., of plots to put a Catholic on the throne.
[8] A school for actors.
[9] Maximin is a character in Dryden's *Tyrannic Love*, 1669.

Great Fletcher[1] never treads in buskins[2] here,
Nor greater Jonson dares in socks[3] appear;
But gentle Simkin[4] just reception finds
Amidst this monument of vanished minds:
Pure clinches[5] the suburbian Muse affords,
And Panton[6] waging harmless war with words.
Here Flecknoe, as a place to fame well known,
Ambitiously designed his Sh——'s throne;
For ancient Dekker[7] prophesied long since,
That in this pile should reign a mighty prince,
Born for a scourge of wit, and flail of sense;
To whom true dulness should some *Psyches* owe,
But worlds of *Misers*[8] from his pen should flow;
*Humorists* and hypocrites it should produce,
Whole Raymond families, and tribes of Bruce.
Now Empress Fame had published the renown
Of Sh——'s coronation thro' the town.
Roused by report of Fame, the nations meet,
From near Bunhill,[9] and distant Watling Street.[10]
No Persian carpets spread th' imperial way,
But scattered limbs of mangled poets lay;
From dusty shops neglected authors come,
Martyrs of pies, and relics of the bum.
Much Heywood, Shirley, Ogleby[11] there lay,
But loads of Sh—— almost choked the way.
Bilked[12] stationers for yeomen stood prepared,
And Herringman[13] was captain of the guard.
The hoary prince in majesty appeared,
High on a throne of his own labors reared.
At his right hand our young Ascanius[14] sate,
Rome's other hope, and pillar of the State.
His brows thick fogs, instead of glories, grace,
And lambent dulness played around his face.
As Hannibal did to the altars come,
Sworn by his sire a mortal foe to Rome;

1 Beaumont's collaborator. 2 i.e., in tragedy.
3 in comedy. 4 A low-comedy actor.
5 clenches, or puns. 6 A forgotten writer.
7 The Elizabethan dramatist.
8 *The Miser* and *The Humorists* are plays by Shadwell.
9 An old burial ground near the center of London.
10 A street, dating from Roman times, at the edge of the town.
11 A forgotten writer. 12 cheated.
13 A publisher of the day.
14 Æneas's son; the heir apparent.

So Sh—— swore, nor should his vow be vain,
That he till death true dulness would maintain;
And, in his father's right, and realm's defense,
Ne'er to have peace with wit, nor truce with sense.
The king himself the sacred unction made,
As king by office, and as priest by trade.
In his sinister hand, instead of ball,
He placed a mighty mug of potent ale;
*Love's Kingdom*[1] to his right he did convey,
At once his scepter, and his rule of sway;
Whose righteous lore the price had practice young,
And from whose loins recorded *Psyche* sprung.
His temples, last, with poppies were o'erspread,
That nodding seemed to consecrate his head.
Just at that point of time, if fame not lie,
On his left hand twelve reverend owls did fly.
So Romulus, 'tis sung, by Tiber's brook,
Presage of sway from twice six vultures took.
Th' admiring throng loud acclamations make,
And omens of his future empire take.
The sire then shook the honors of his head,
And from his brows damps of oblivion shed
Full on the filial dulness: long he stood,
Repelling from his breast the raging god;
At length burst out in this prophetic mood:
"Heavens bless my son, from Ireland let him reign
To far Barbadoes on the western main;
Of his dominion may no end be known,
And greater than his father's be his throne;
Beyond *Love's Kingdom* let him stretch his pen!"
He paused, and all the people cried "Amen."
Then thus continued he: "My son, advance
Still in new impudence, new ignorance.
Success let others teach, learn thou from me
Pangs without birth, and fruitless industry.
Let *Virtuosos*[2] in five years be writ;
Yet not one thought accuse thy toil of wit.
Let gentle George[3] in triumph tread the stage,
Make Dorimant betray, and Loveit rage;

1 A play by Shadwell.
2 Shadwell wrote a play *The Virtuoso*, 1676.
3 Sir George Etherege (1635?–91), the author of three popular, but excellent, comedies in prose.

et Cully, Cockwood, Fopling,[1] charm the pit,
nd in their folly shew the writer's wit.
et still thy fools shall stand in thy defense,
nd justify their author's want of sense.
et 'em be all by thy own model made
f dulness, and desire no foreign aid;
hat they to future ages may be known,
ot copies drawn, but issue of thy own.
ay, let thy men of wit too be the same,
ll full of thee, and differing but in name.
ut let no alien S—dl—y[2] interpose,
o lard with wit thy hungry *Epsom* prose.
nd when false flowers of rhetoric thou wouldst cull,
rust nature, do not labor to be dull;
ut write thy best, and top; and, in each line,
r Formal's[3] oratory will be thine:
r Formal, tho' unsought, attends thy quill,
nd does thy northern dedications fill.
or let false friends seduce thy mind to fame,
y arrogating Jonson's[4] hostile name.
et father Flecknoe fire thy mind with praise,
nd uncle Ogleby thy envy raise.
hou art my blood, where Jonson has no part:
/hat share have we in nature, or in art?
/here did his wit on learning fix a brand,
nd rail at arts he did not understand?
/here made he love in Prince Nicander's[5] vein,
r swept the dust in *Psyche's* humble strain?
/here sold he bargains, 'whip-stitch, kiss my arse,'
romis'd a play and dwindled to a farce?
/hen did his Muse from Fletcher scenes purloin,
s thou whole Eth'rege dost transfuse to thine?
ut so transfused, as oil on water's flow,
is always floats above, thine sinks below.
his is thy province, this thy wondrous way,
ew humors to invent for each new play:
his is that boasted bias of thy mind,
y which one way, to dulness, 'tis inclined;
/hich makes thy writings lean on one side still,
nd, in all changes, that way bends thy will.
or let thy mountain-belly make pretense
f likeness; thine's a tympany of sense.

A tun of man in thy large bulk is writ,
But sure thou'rt but a kilderkin[1] of wit.
Like mine, thy gentle numbers feebly creep;
Thy tragic Muse gives smiles, thy comic sleep,
With whate'er gall thou sett'st thyself to write,
Thy inoffensive satires never bite.
In thy felonious heart tho' venom lies,
It does but touch thy Irish pen, and dies.
Thy genius calls thee not to purchase fame
In keen iambics, but mild anagram.
Leave writing plays, and choose for thy command
Some peaceful province in acrostic land.
There thou may'st wings display and altars raise,
And torture one poor word ten thousand ways.
Or, if thou wouldst thy diff'rent talents suit,
Set thy own songs, and sing them to thy lute."

He said: but his last words were scarcely heard;
For Bruce and Longvil[2] had a trap prepared,
And down they sent the yet declaiming bard.

Sinking he left his drugget robe behind,
Borne upwards by a subterranean wind.
The mantle fell to the young prophet's part,
With double portion of his father's art.

1682

1 These are characters in contemporary plays.
2 Sir Charles Sedley, a witty courtier and minor writer, who is said to have helped Shadwell in his writing. He is the Lisideius of Dryden's *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*.
3 A character in Shadwell's *The Virtuoso*.
4 Shadwell was an admirer and follower of Ben Jonson.
5 A character in Shadwell's *Psyche*.

1 a small barrel. 2 Characters in *The Virtuoso*.

## A SONG FOR ST. CECILIA'S DAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1687

This ode, and the next, were written for a London musical society which celebrated every year the day of St. Cecilia, the patroness of music. Both odes were set to music and performed in public.

From harmony, from heavenly harmony
This universal frame began;
When Nature underneath a heap
Of jarring atoms lay,
And could not heave her head,
The tuneful voice was heard from high,
"Arise, ye more than dead."

Then cold and hot and moist and dry
In order to their stations leap,
And Music's power obey.
From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began:
From harmony to harmony

Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in Man.

What passion cannot Music raise and quell!
When Jubal[1] struck the chorded shell,
His listening brethren stood around,
And, wondering, on their faces fell
To worship that celestial sound:
Less than a god they thought there could not dwell
Within the hollow of that shell,
That spoke so sweetly, and so well.
What passion cannot Music raise and quell!

The trumpet's loud clangor
Excites us to arms
With shrill notes of anger
And mortal alarms.
The double, double, double beat
Of the thundering drum
Cries, "Hark! the foes come;
Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat!"

The soft complaining flute
In dying notes discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers,
Whose dirge is whispered by the warbling lute.

Sharp violins proclaim
Their jealous pangs and desperation,
Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pains and height of passion,
For the fair, disdainful dame.

But oh! what art can teach,
What human voice can reach
The sacred organ's praise?
Notes inspiring holy love,
Notes that wing their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above.

Orpheus could lead the savage race,
And trees unrooted left their place,
Sequacious[2] of the lyre;
But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher;
When to her organ vocal breath was given,
An angel heard, and straight appeared,
Mistaking earth for heaven.

GRAND CHORUS

As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,
And sung that great Creator's praise
To all the blessed above;
So, when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And Music shall untune the sky.

1687?; pub. 1693

## ALEXANDER'S FEAST; OR, THE POWER OF MUSIC

A SONG IN HONOR OF ST. CECILIA'S DAY, 1697

'Twas at the royal feast, for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son:[1]
Aloft in awful state
The godlike hero sate
On his imperial throne;
His valiant peers were placed around;
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound:
(So should desert in arms be crowned.)
The lovely Thais,[2] by his side,
Sate like a blooming Eastern bride,
In flower of youth and beauty's pride.
Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

CHORUS

Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

Timotheus,[3] placed on high
Amid the tuneful quire,
With flying fingers touched the lyre:
The trembling notes ascend the sky,
And heavenly joys inspire.
The song began from Jove,
Who left his blissful seats above,
(Such is the power of mighty love).
A dragon's fiery form belied the god:
Sublime on radiant spires he rode,
When he to fair Olympia[4] pressed;
And while he sought her snowy breast,
Then round her slender waist he curled,
And stamped an image of himself, a sovereign of the world.
The listening crowd admire the lofty sound,

1 See Gen. IV, 21. "He was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ."
2 following.

1 Alexander. 2 The Greek courtesan.
3 Alexander's favorite musician.
4 Alexander's mother.

"A present deity," they shout around;
"A present deity," the vaulted roofs rebound:
With ravished ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

CHORUS

With ravished ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung,
Of Bacchus ever fair, and ever young.
The jolly god in triumph comes;
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums;
Flushed with a purple grace
He shows his honest face:
Now give the hautboys breath; he comes, he comes.
Bacchus, ever fair and young,
Drinking joys did first ordain;
Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

CHORUS

Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

Soothed with the sound the king grew vain;
Fought all his battles o'er again;
And thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew the slain.
The master saw the madness rise,
His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;
And while he heaven and earth defied,
Changed his hand, and checked his pride.
He chose a mournful Muse,
Soft pity to infuse;
He sung Darius[1] great and good,
By too severe a fate,
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high estate,
And weltering in his blood;
Deserted at his utmost need
By those his former bounty fed;
On the bare earth exposed he lies,
With not a friend to close his eyes.

With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

CHORUS

Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.

The mighty master smiled to see
That love was in the next degree;
'Twas but a kindred sound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love.
Softly sweet, in Lydian[1] measures,
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.
"War," he sung, "is toil and trouble;
Honor but an empty bubble;
Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still, and still destroying:
If the world be worth thy winning,
Think, O think it worth enjoying:
Lovely Thais sits beside thee,
Take the good the gods provide thee."

The many rend the skies with loud applause;
So Love was crowned, but Music won the cause.
The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again;
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

CHORUS

The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again;
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

Now strike the golden lyre again;
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain.

1 Conquered by Alexander.

1 gentle, sensuous.

Break his bands of sleep asunder,
And rouse him, like a rattling peal of thunder.
Hark, hark, the horrid sound
Has raised up his head;
As awaked from the dead,
And, amazed, he stares around.
"Revenge, revenge!" Timotheus cries;
"See the Furies arise;
See the snakes that they rear,
How they hiss in their hair,
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes?
Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand!
Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain,
And unburied remain
Inglorious on the plain:
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew.
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes,
And glittering temples of their hostile gods!"
The princes applaud with a furious joy;
And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.

CHORUS

And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.

Thus long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
While organs yet were mute,
Timotheus, to his breathing flute
And sounding lyre,
Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With Nature's mother wit, and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown:
He raised a mortal to the skies;
She drew an angel down.

GRAND CHORUS

At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
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## AH, HOW SWEET IT IS TO LOVE!

This song is from the play, *Tyrannic Love.*

Ah, how sweet it is to love!
Ah, how gay is young Desire!
And what pleasing pains we prove
When we first approach Love's fire!
Pains of love be sweeter far
Than all other pleasures are.

Sighs which are from lovers blown
Do but gently heave the heart:
Ev'n the tears they shed alone
Cure, like trickling balm, their smart:
Lovers, when they lose their breath,
Bleed away in easy death.

Love and Time with reverence use,
Treat them like a parting friend;
Nor the golden gifts refuse,
Which in youth sincere they send:
For each year their price is more,
And they less simple than before.

Love, like spring-tides full and high,
Swells in every youthful vein;
But each tide does less supply,
Till they quite shrink in again:
If a flow in age appear,
'Tis but rain, and runs not clear.

## EPIGRAM ON MILTON

These lines were printed under the engraved portrait of Milton in the folio edition of *Paradise Lost*, 1688.

Three poets, in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.
The first [1] in loftiness of thought surpassed,
The next [2] in majesty, in both the last.
The force of Nature could no farther go;
To make a third she joined the former two.

1 Homer. 2 Virgil.

## AN ESSAY OF DRAMATIC POESY
## (1668)

This famous essay is one of the best that Dryden wrote. It is cast in the form of a conversation carried on by Eugenius (Lord Buckhurst), Crites (Sir Robert Howard), Lisideius (Sir Charles Sedley), and Neander (Dryden), while they are boating on the Thames. The passage below is the last third of the essay.

"But to return whence I [1] have digressed: I dare boldly affirm these two things of the English drama: — First, that we have many plays of ours as regular as any of theirs,[2] and which, besides, have more variety of plot and characters; and secondly, that in most of the regular plays of Shakespeare or Fletcher (for Ben Jonson's are for the most part regular), there is a more masculine fancy and greater spirit in the writing than there is in any of the French. I could produce, even in Shakespeare's and Fletcher's works, some plays which are almost exactly formed; as *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *The Scornful Lady:* but because (generally speaking) Shakespeare, who writ first, did not perfectly observe the laws of comedy, and Fletcher, who came nearer to perfection, yet through carelessness made many faults; I will take the pattern of a perfect play from Ben Jonson, who was a careful and learned observer of the dramatic laws, and from all his comedies I shall select *The Silent Woman;* of which I will make a short examen, according to those rules which the French observe."

As Neander was beginning to examine *The Silent Woman*, Eugenius, earnestly regarding him; "I beseech you, Neander," said he, "ratify the company, and me in particular, so far, as before you speak of the play, to give us a character of the author; and tell us frankly your opinion, whether you do not think all writers, both French and English, ought to give place to him."

"I fear," replied Neander, "that in obeying your commands I shall draw some envy upon myself. Besides, in performing them, it will be first necessary to speak somewhat of Shakespeare and Fletcher, his rivals in poesy; and one of them, in my opinion, at least his equal, perhaps his superior.

"To begin, then, with Shakespeare. He was the man who of all modern, and perhaps ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the images of nature were still present to him, and he drew them, not laboriously, but luckily; when he describes anything, you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation: he was naturally learned; he needed not the spectacles of books to read nature; he looked inwards, and found her there. I cannot say he is everywhere alike; were he so, I should do him injury to compare him with the greatest of mankind. He is many times flat, insipid; his comic wit degenerating into clenches,[1] his serious swelling into bombast. But he is always great, when some great occasion is presented to him; no man can say he ever had a fit subject for his wit, and did not then raise himself as high above the rest of poets,

Quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi.[2]

The consideration of this made Mr. Hales [3] of Eton say, that there was no subject of which any poet ever writ, but he would produce it much better done in Shakespeare; and however others are now generally preferred before him, yet the age wherein he lived, which had contemporaries with him Fletcher and Jonson, never equalled them to him in their esteem: and in the last king's [4] court, when Ben's reputation was at highest, Sir John Suckling, and with him the greater part of the courtiers, set our Shakespeare far above him.

"Beaumont and Fetcher, of whom I am next to speak, had, with the advantage of Shakespeare's wit, which was their precedent, great natural gifts, improved by study: Beaumont especially being so accurate a judge of plays, that Ben Jonson, while he lived, submitted all his writings to his censure, and, 'tis thought, used his judgment in correcting, if not contriving, all his plots. What value he had for him, appears by the verses he writ to him; and therefore I need speak no farther of it. The first play that brought Fletcher and him in esteem was their *Philaster:* for before that, they had written two or three very unsuccessfully, as the like is reported of Ben Jonson, before he writ *Every Man in his Humour.* Their plots were generally more regular than Shakespeare's, especially those which were made before Beaumont's death; and they understood and imitated the conversation of gentlemen much

1 Neander (Dryden). 2 The French.

1 A clench is a play on words, "false wit."
2 As cypresses are accustomed among bending shrubs.
3 John Hales, 1584–1656, learned theologian and fellow of Eton College, who, according to tradition, was present when Ben Jonson talked of Shakespeare's lack of learning.
4 Charles I.

better; whose wild debaucheries, and quickness of wit in repartees, no poet before them could paint as they have done. Humor, which Ben Jonson derived from particular persons, they made it not their business to describe: they represented all the passions very lively, but above all, love. I am apt to believe the English language in them arrived to its highest perfection: what words have since been taken in, are rather superfluous than ornamental. Their plays are now the most pleasant and frequent entertainments of the stage, two of theirs being acted through the year for one of Shakespeare's or Jonson's. The reason is, because there is a certain gaiety in their comedies, and pathos in their more serious plays, which suit generally with all men's humors. Shakespeare's language is likewise a little obsolete, and Ben Jonson's wit comes short of theirs.

"As for Jonson, to whose character I am now arrived, if we look upon him while he was himself (for his last plays were but his dotages), I think him the most learned and judicious writer which any theater ever had. He was a most severe judge of himself, as well as others. One cannot say he wanted wit, but rather that he was frugal of it. In his works you find little to retrench or alter. Wit, and language, and humor also in some measure, we had before him; but something of art was wanting to the drama till he came. He managed his strength to more advantage than any who preceded him. You seldom find him making love in any of his scenes, or endeavoring to move the passions; his genius was too sullen and saturnine to do it gracefully, especially when he knew he came after those who had performed both to such an height. Humor was his proper sphere; and in that he delighted most to represent mechanic people. He was deeply conversant in the ancients, both Greek and Latin, and he borrowed boldly from them. There is scarce a poet or historian among the Roman authors of those times whom he has not translated in *Sejanus* and *Catiline*. But he has done his robberies so openly, that one may see he fears not to be taxed by any law. He invades authors like a monarch; and what would be theft in other poets is only victory in him. With the spoils of these writers he so represents old Rome to us, in its rites, ceremonies, and customs, that if one of their poets had written either of his tragedies, we had seen less of it than in him. If there was any fault in his language, 'twas that he weaved it too closely and laboriously, in his comedies especially. Perhaps, too, he did a little too much Romanize our tongue, leaving the words which he translated almost as much Latin as he found them: wherein, though he learnedly followed their language, he did not enough comply with the idiom of ours. If I would compare him with Shakespeare, I must acknowledge him the more correct poet, but Shakespeare the greater wit. Shakespeare was the Homer, or father of our dramatic poets; Jonson was the Virgil, the pattern of elaborate writing; I admire him, but I love Shakespeare. To conclude of him, as he has given us the most correct plays, so in the precepts which he has laid down in his *Discoveries*, we have as many and profitable rules for perfecting the stage, as any where with the French can furnish us.

"Having thus spoken of the author, I proceed to the examination of his comedy, *The Silent Woman*.

. . . . . .

[Here follows a careful analysis of Jonson's play.]

. . . . . .

This was the substance of what was then spoken on that occasion; and Lisideius, I think, was going to reply, when he was prevented thus by Crites: "I am confident," said he, "that the most material things that can be said have been already urged on either side; if they have not, I must beg of Lisideius that he will defer his answer till another time: for I confess I have a joint quarrel to you both, because you have concluded, without any reason given for it, that rhyme is proper for the stage. I will not dispute how ancient it hath been among us to write this way; perhaps our ancestors knew no better till Shakespeare's time. I will grant it was not altogether left by him, and that Fletcher and Ben Jonson used it frequently in their Pastorals, and sometimes in other plays. Farther, — I will not argue whether we received it originally from our own countrymen, or from the French; for that is an inquiry of as little benefit, as theirs who, in the midst of the great plague, were not so solicitous to provide against it, as to know whether we had it from the malignity of our own air, or by transportation from Holland. I have therefore only to affirm, that it is not allowable in serious plays; for comedies, I find you already concluding with me. To prove this, I might satisfy myself to tell you, how much in vain it is for you to strive against the stream of the people's inclination; the greatest part of which are prepossessed so much

h those excellent plays of Shakespeare, tcher, and Ben Jonson, which have been tten out of rhyme, that except you could ng them such as were written better in it, l those too by persons of equal reputation h them, it will be impossible for you to n your cause with them, who will still be ges. This it is to which, in fine, all your sons must submit. The unanimous con- t of an audience is so powerful, that even ius Cæsar (as Macrobius reports of him), en he was perpetual dictator, was not able balance it on the other side; but when berius, a Roman Knight, at his request tended in the *Mime*[1] with another poet, was forced to cry out, *Etiam favente me tus es, Laberi.*[2] But I will not on this asion take the advantage of the greater nber, but only urge such reasons against yme, as I find in the writings of those who ve argued for the other way. First, then, m of opinion that rhyme is unnatural in a y, because dialogue there is presented as effect of sudden thought: for a play is imitation of nature; and since no man, thout premeditation, speaks in rhyme, ther ought he to do it on the stage. This ders not but the fancy may be there ele- ed to an higher pitch of thought than it is ordinary discourse; for there is a probabil- that men of excellent and quick parts y speak noble things *extempore:* but those oughts are never fettered with the numbers sound of verse without study, and there- e it cannot be but unnatural to present the st free way of speaking in that which is the st constrained. For this reason, says istotle, 'tis best to write tragedy in that d of verse which is the least such, or which nearest prose: and this amongst the an- nts was the Iambic, and with us is blank rse, or the measure of verse kept exactly thout rhyme. These numbers therefore e fittest for a play; the others for a paper of rses, or a poem; blank verse being as much low them as rhyme is improper for the ama. And if it be objected that neither e blank verses made *extempore*, yet, as near- nature, they are still to be preferred. — t there are two particular exceptions, hich many besides myself have had to rse; by which it will appear yet more ainly how improper it is in plays. And e first of them is grounded on that very ason for which some have commended rhyme; they say, the quickness of repartees in argumentative scenes receives an ornament from verse. Now what is more unreasonable than to imagine that a man should not only light upon the wit, but the rhyme too, upon the sudden? This nicking of him who spoke before both in sound and measure, is so great an happiness, that you must at least suppose the persons of your play to be born poets: *Arcades omnes, et cantare pares, et respondere parati:*[1] they must have arrived to the degree of *quicquid conabar dicere;*[2] — to make verses almost whether they will or no. If they are anything below this, it will look rather like the design of two, than the answer of one: it will appear that your actors hold intelligence together; that they perform their tricks like fortune-tellers, by confederacy. The hand of art will be too visible in it, against that maxim of all professions — *Ars est celare artem:*[3] that it is the greatest perfection of art to keep itself undiscovered. Nor will it serve you to object, that however you manage it, 'tis still known to be a play; and, consequently, the dialogue of two persons understood to be the labor of one poet. For a play is still an imitation of nature; we know we are to be deceived, and we desire to be so; but no man ever was deceived but with a probability of truth; for who will suffer a gross lie to be fastened on him? Thus we sufficiently understand that the scenes which represent cities and countries to us are not really such, but only painted on boards and canvas; but shall that excuse the ill painture or designment of them? Nay, rather ought they not be labored with so much the more diligence and exactness, to help the imagination? since the mind of man does naturally tend to truth; and therefore the nearer anything comes to the imitation of it, the more it pleases.

"Thus, you see, your rhyme is incapable of expressing the greatest thoughts naturally, and the lowest it cannot with any grace: for what is more unbefitting the majesty of verse, than to call a servant, or bid a door be shut in rhyme? and yet you are often forced on this miserable necessity. But verse, you say, circumscribes a quick and luxuriant fancy, which would extend itself too far on every subject, did not the labor which is required to well-turned and polished rhyme, set bounds

satiric play.

2 Even with me in your favor, you are defeated, berius.

1 Both young Arcadians, both alike inspired
To sing, and answer as the song required.
Virgil's *Seventh Eclogue*, Dryden's translation.

2 Whatever I tried to express [became poetry].
Ovid, *Tristia*, IV.

3 The business of art is to conceal art.

to it. Yet this argument, if granted, would only prove that we may write better in verse, but not more naturally. Neither is it able to evince that; for he who wants judgment to confine his fancy in blank verse, may want it as much in rhyme: and he who has it will avoid errors in both kinds. Latin verse was as great a confinement to the imagination of those poets as rhyme to ours; and yet you find Ovid saying too much on every subject. *Nescivit* (says Seneca) *quod bene cessit relinquere:* [1] of which he gives you one famous instance in his description of the deluge:

*Omnia pontus erat, deerant quoque litora ponto.*
Now all was sea, nor had that sea a shore.

Thus Ovid's fancy was not limited by verse, and Virgil needed not verse to have bounded his.

"In our own language we see Ben Jonson confining himself to what ought to be said, even in the liberty of blank verse; and yet Corneille,[2] the most judicious of the French poets, is still varying the same sense in hundred ways, and dwelling eternally on the same subject, though confined by rhyme. Some other exceptions I have to verse; but since these I have named are for the most part already public, I conceive it reasonable they should first be answered."

"It concerns me less than any," said Neander (seeing he had ended), "to reply to this discourse; because when I should have proved that verse may be natural in plays, yet I should always be ready to confess, that those which I have written in this kind [3] come short of that perfection which is required. Yet since you are pleased I should undertake this province, I will do it, though with all imaginable respect and deference, both to that person from whom you have borrowed your strongest arguments, and to whose judgment, when I have said all, I finally submit. But before I proceed to answer your objections, I must first remember you, that I exclude all comedy from my defence; and next that I deny not but blank verse may be also used; and content myself only to assert, that in serious plays where the subject and characters are great, and the plot unmixed with mirth, which might allay or divert these concernments which are produced, rhyme is there as natural and more effectual than blank verse.

"And now having laid down this as a foundation, — to begin with Crites, — I must crave leave to tell him, that some of his arguments against rhyme reach no farther than, from the faults or defects of ill rhyme, to conclude against the use of it in general. May not I conclude against blank verse by the same reason? If the words of some poets who write in it are either ill chosen, or ill placed, which makes not only rhyme, but all kind of verse in any language unnatural, shall I, for their vicious affectation, condemn those excellent lines of Fletcher, which are written in that kind? Is there anything in rhyme more constrained than this line in blank verse? — *I heaven invoke, and strong resistance make;* where you see both the clauses are placed unnaturally, that is, contrary to the common way of speaking, and that without the excuse of a rhyme to cause it: yet you would think me very ridiculous, if I should accuse the stubbornness of blank verse for this, and not rather the stiffness of the poet. Therefore, Crites, you must either prove that words, though well chosen, and duly placed, yet render not rhyme natural in itself; or that, however natural and easy the rhyme may be, yet it is not proper for a play. If you insist on the former part, I would ask you, what other conditions are required to make rhyme natural in itself, besides an election of apt words, and a right disposition of them? For the due choice of your words expresses your sense naturally, and the due placing them adapts the rhyme to it. If you object that one verse may be made for the sake of another, though both the words and rhyme be apt, I answer, it cannot possibly so fall out; for either there is a dependence of sense betwixt the first line and the second, or there is none: if there be that connection, then in the natural position of the words the latter line must of necessity flow from the former; if there be no dependence, yet still the due ordering of words makes the last line as natural in itself as the other: so that the necessity of a rhyme never forces any but bad or lazy writers to say what they would not otherwise. 'Tis true, there is both care and art required to write in verse. A good poet never establishes the first line till he has sought out such a rhyme as may fit the sense, already prepared to heighten the second: many times the close of the sense falls into the middle of the next verse, or farther off, and he may often prevail himself of the same advantages in English which Virgil had in Latin, — he may break off in the hemistich,[1]

1 He did not know when to leave off.
2 The well-known French tragic dramatist, 1606–84.
3 In Dryden's best play, *All for Love*, he abandoned heroic couplets, which he is here defending, in favor of blank verse.

1 half line.

and begin another line. Indeed, the not observing these two last things makes plays which are writ in verse so tedious: for though, most commonly, the sense is to be confined to the couplet, yet nothing that does *perpetuo tenore fluere*,[1] run in the same channel, can please always. 'Tis like the murmuring of a stream, which not varying in the fall, causes at first attention, at last drowsiness. Variety of cadences is the best rule; the greatest help to the actors, and refreshment to the audience.

"If, then, verse may be made natural in itself, how becomes it unnatural in a play? You say the stage is the representation of nature, and no man in ordinary conversation speaks in rhyme. But you foresaw when you said this, that it might be answered — neither does any man speak in blank verse, or in measure without rhyme. Therefore you concluded, that which is nearest nature is still to be preferred. But you took no notice that rhyme might be made as natural as blank verse, by the well placing of the words, etc. All the difference between them, when they are both correct, is, the sound in one, which the other wants; and if so, the sweetness of it, and all the advantage resulting from it, which are handled in the Preface to *The Rival Ladies*,[2] will yet stand good. As for that place of Aristotle, where he says, plays should be writ in that kind of verse which is nearest prose, it makes little for you; blank verse being properly but measured prose. Now measure alone, in any modern language, does not constitute verse; those of the ancients in Greek and Latin consisted in quantity of words, and a determinate number of feet. But when, by the inundation of the Goths and Vandals into Italy, new languages were introduced, and barbarously mingled with the Latin, of which the Italian, Spanish, French, and ours (made out of them and the Teutonic) are dialects, a new way of poesy was practised; new, I say, in those countries, for in all probability it was that of the conquerors in their own nations: at least we are able to prove, that the eastern people have used it from all antiquity. This new way consisted in measure or number of feet, and rhyme; the sweetness of rhyme, and observation of accent, supplying the place of quantity in words, which could neither exactly be observed by those barbarians, who knew not the rules of it, neither was it suitable to their tongues, as it had been to the Greek and Latin. No man is tied in modern poesy to observe any farther rule in the feet of his verse, but that they be dissyllables; whether Spondee, Trochee, or Iambic, it matters not; only he is obliged to rhyme: neither do the Spanish, French, Italian, or Germans, acknowledge at all, or very rarely, any such kind of poesy as blank verse amongst them. Therefore, at most 'tis but a poetic prose, a *sermo pedestris;* and as such, most fit for comedies, where I acknowledge rhyme to be improper. — Farther: as to that quotation of Aristotle, our couplet verses may be rendered as near prose as blank verse itself, by using those advantages I lately named, — as breaks in an hemistich, or running the sense into another line, — thereby making art and order appear as loose and free as nature: or not tying ourselves to couplets strictly, we may use the benefit of the Pindaric way practised in *The Siege of Rhodes*,[1] where the numbers vary, and the rhyme is disposed carelessly, and far from often chiming. Neither is that other advantage of the ancients to be despised, of changing the kind of verse when they please, with the change of the scene, or some new entrance; for they confine not themselves always to iambics, but extend their liberty to all lyric numbers, and sometimes even to hexameter. But I need not go so far to prove that rhyme, as it succeeds to all other offices of Greek and Latin verse, so especially to this of plays, since the custom of nations at this day confirms it; the French, Italian, and Spanish tragedies are generally writ in it; and sure the universal consent of the most civilised parts of the world, ought in this, as it doth in other customs, to include the rest.

"But perhaps you may tell me, I have proposed such a way to make rhyme natural, and consequently proper to plays, as is unpracticable; and that I shall scarce find six or eight lines together in any play, where the words are so placed and chosen as is required to make it natural. I answer, no poet need constrain himself at all times to it. It is enough he makes it his general rule; for I deny not but sometimes there may be a greatness in placing the words otherwise; and sometimes they may sound better; sometimes also the variety itself is excuse enough. But if, for the most part, the words be placed as they are in the negligence of prose, it is sufficient to denominate the way practicable; for we esteem that to be such, which in the trial oftener succeeds than misses. And thus far you may find the practice made good in many

1 flow in an even stream.
2 One of Dryden's first plays, a tragicomedy.

1 Davenant's play, the first English opera, 1656.

plays: where you do not, remember still, that if you cannot find six natural rhymes together, it will be as hard for you to produce as many lines in blank verse, even among the greatest of our poets, against which I cannot make some reasonable exception.

"And this, Sir, calls to my remembrance the beginning of your discourse, where you told us we should never find the audience favorable to this kind of writing, till we could produce as good plays in rhyme as Ben Jonson, Fletcher, and Shakespeare had writ out of it. But it is to raise envy to the living, to compare them with the dead. They are honored, and almost adored by us, as they deserve; neither do I know any so presumptuous of themselves as to contend with them. Yet give me leave to say thus much, without injury to their ashes; that not only we shall never equal them, but they could never equal themselves, were they to rise and write again. We acknowledge them our fathers in wit; but they have ruined their estates themselves, before they came to their children's hands. There is scarce an humor, a character, or any kind of plot, which they have not used. All comes sullied or wasted to us: and were they to entertain this age, they could not now make so plenteous treatments out of such decayed fortunes. This therefore will be a good argument to us, either not to write at all, or to attempt some other way. There is no bays to be expected in their walks: *tentanda via est, qua me quoque possum tollere humo.*[1]

"This way of writing in verse they have only left free to us; our age is arrived to a perfection in it, which they never knew; and which (if we may guess by what of theirs we have seen in verse, as *The Faithful Shepherdess*,[2] and *Sad Shepherd*[3]) 'tis probable they never could have reached. For the genius of every age is different; and though ours excel in this, I deny not but to imitate nature in that perfection which they did in prose, is a greater commendation than to write in verse exactly. As for what you have added — that the people are not generally inclined to like this way, — if it were true, it would be no wonder, that betwixt the shaking off an old habit, and the introducing of a new, there should be difficulty. Do we not see them stick to Hopkins' and Sternhold's psalms,[4] and forsake those of David, I mean Sandys[1] his translation of them? If by the people you understand the multitude, the οἱ πολλοί,[2] 'tis no matter what they think; they are sometimes in the right, sometimes in the wrong: their judgment is a mere lottery. *Est ubi plebs recte putat, est ubi peccat.*[3] Horace says it of the vulgar, judging poesy. But if you mean the mixed audience of the populace and the noblesse, I dare confidently affirm that a great part of the latter sort are already favorable to verse; and that no serious plays written since the king's return have been more kindly received by them than *The Siege of Rhodes*,[4] the *Mustapha*,[5] *The Indian Queen*,[6] and *Indian Emperor*.[7]

"But I come now to the inference of your first argument. You said that the dialogue of plays is presented as the effect of sudden thought, but no man speaks suddenly, or *extempore*, in rhyme; and you inferred from thence, that rhyme, which you acknowledge to be proper to epic poesy, cannot equally be proper to dramatic, unless we could suppose all men born so much more than poets, that verses should be made in them, not by them.

"It has been formerly urged by you, and confessed by me, that since no man spoke any kind of verse *extempore*, that which was nearest nature was to be preferred. I answer you, therefore, by distinguishing betwixt what is nearest to the nature of comedy, which is the imitation of common persons and ordinary speaking, and what is nearest the nature of a serious play: this last is indeed the representation of nature, but 'tis nature wrought up to a higher pitch. The plot, the characters, the wit, the passions, the descriptions, are all exalted above the level of common converse, as high as the imagination of the poet can carry them, with proportion to verisimility. Tragedy, we know, is wont to image to us the minds and fortunes of noble persons, and to portray these exactly; heroic rhyme is nearest nature, as being the noblest kind of modern verse.

> Indignatur enim privatis et prope socco
> Dignis carminibus narrari cœna Thyestæ [8]

1 A path must be tried where I too can rise from the earth. (Virgil, *Georgics*, III.)

2 By Fletcher. 3 Jonson's last, uncompleted play.

4 Hopkins and Sternhold together translated the Psalms into verse in the first half of the sixteenth century.

1 Sandys, who for a while was connected with the Virginia colony, made a paraphrase in verse of the Psalms as well as of the Canticles.

2 literally, the many; the common people or multitude.

3 When the common people think correctly, it is then that they are wrong.

4 By Davenant.

5 By Roger Boyle, first Earl of Orrery.

6 By Dryden and Sir Robert Howard, the Crites in this essay.

7 By Dryden.

8 From Horace, *Ars Poetica:* The Thyestean feast no less disdains, The vulgar vehicle of comic strains. (Conington.)

ys Horace: and in another place,

Effutire leves indigna tragœdia versus.[1]

lank verse is acknowledged to be too low r a poem, nay more, for a paper of verses; it if too low for an ordinary sonnet, how uch more for tragedy, which is by Aristotle, the dispute betwixt the epic poesy and the ramatic, for many reasons he there alleges, nked above it?

"But setting this defence aside, your ar- ument is almost as strong against the use of yme in poems as in plays; for the epic way everywhere interlaced with dialogue, or scoursive scenes; and therefore you must ther grant rhyme to be improper there, hich is contrary to your assertion, or admit into plays by the same title which you have ven it to poems. For though tragedy be stly preferred above the other, yet there is great affinity between them, as may easily e discovered in that definition of a play hich Lisideius gave us. The *genus* of them the same — a just and lively image of uman nature, in its actions, passions, and raverses of fortune: so is the end — namely, r the delight and benefit of mankind. The naracters and persons are still the same, iz., the greatest of both sorts; only the man- er of acquainting us with those actions, pas- ons, and fortunes, is different. Tragedy erforms it *viva voce*, or by action, in dialogue; herein it excels the epic poem, which does chiefly by narration, and therefore is not lively an image of human nature. How- ver, the agreement betwixt them is such, hat if rhyme be proper for one, it must be r the other. Verse, 'tis true, is not the fect of sudden thought; but this hinders ot that sudden thought may be represented n verse, since those thoughts are such as ust be higher than nature can raise them ithout premeditation, especially to a con- inuance of them, even out of verse; and con- quently you cannot imagine them to have een sudden either in the poet or in the ctors. A play, as I have said, to be like ature, is to be set above it; as statues which re placed on high are made greater than the fe, that they may descend to the sight in heir just proportion.

"Perhaps I have insisted too long on this bjection; but the clearing of it will make my tay shorter on the rest. You tell us, Crites, hat rhyme appears most unnatural in re- partees, or short replies: when he who an- swers (it being presumed he knew not what the other would say, yet) makes up that part of the verse which was left incomplete, and supplies both the sound and measure of it. This, you say, looks rather like the confed- eracy of two, than the answer of one.

"This, I confess, is an objection which is in every man's mouth, who loves not rhyme: but suppose, I beseech you, the repartee were made only in blank verse, might not part of the same argument be turned against you? for the measure is as often supplied there as it is in rhyme; the latter half of the hemi- stich as commonly made up, or a second line subjoined as a reply to the former; which any one leaf in Jonson's plays will sufficiently clear to you. You will often find in the Greek tragedians, and in Seneca, that when a scene grows up into the warmth of repartees which is the close fighting of it, the latter part of the trimeter is supplied by him who answers; and yet it was never observed as a fault in them by any of the ancient or modern critics. The case is the same in our verse, as it was in theirs; rhyme to us being in lieu of quantity to them. But if no latitude is to be allowed a poet, you take from him not only his licence of *quidlibet audendi*,[1] but you tie him up in a straiter compass than you would a philosopher. This is indeed *Musas colere severiores*.[2] You would have him fol- low nature, but he must follow her on foot: you have dismounted him from his Pegasus. But you tell us, this supplying the last half of a verse, or adjoining a whole second to the former, looks more like the design of two, than the answer of one. Suppose we ac- knowledge it: how comes this confederacy to be more displeasing to you, than in a dance which is well contrived? You see there the united design of many persons to make up one figure: after they have separated them- selves in many petty divisions, they rejoin one by one into a gross: the confederacy is plain amongst them, for chance could never produce anything so beautiful; and yet there is nothing in it that shocks your sight. I acknowledge the hand of art appears in re- partee, as of necessity it must in all kind of verse. But there is also the quick and poign- ant brevity of it (which is an high imitation of nature in those sudden gusts of passion) to mingle with it; and this, joined with the cadency and sweetness of the rhyme, leaves nothing in the soul of the hearer to desire. 'Tis an art which appears; but it appears only like the shadowings of painture, which being

1 Light verses, poured forth, are not befitting to tragedy.

1 of trying anything.
2 cultivating the very stern Muses.

to cause the rounding of it, cannot be absent; but while that is considered, they are lost: so while we attend to the other beauties of the matter, the care and labor of the rhyme is carried from us, or at least drowned in its own sweetness, as bees are sometimes buried in their honey. When a poet has found the repartee, the last perfection he can add to it, is to put it into verse. However good the thought may be, however apt the words in which 'tis couched, yet he finds himself at a little unrest, while rhyme is wanting: he cannot leave it till that comes naturally, and then is at ease, and sits down contented.

"From replies, which are the most elevated thoughts of verse, you pass to those which are most mean, and which are common with the lowest of household conversation. In these, you say, the majesty of verse suffers. You instance in the calling of a servant, or commanding a door to be shut, in rhyme. This, Crites, is a good observation of yours, but no argument: for it proves no more but that such thoughts should be waived, as often as may be, by the address of the poet. But suppose they are necessary in the places where he uses them, yet there is no need to put them into rhyme. He may place them in the beginning of a verse, and break it off, as unfit, when so debased, for any other use: or granting the worst, — that they require more room than the hemistich will allow, yet still there is a choice to be made of the best words, and least vulgar (provided they be apt), to express such thoughts. Many have blamed rhyme in general, for this fault, when the poet with a little care might have redressed it. But they do it with no more justice than if English poesy should be made ridiculous for the sake of the Water-poet's[1] rhymes. Our language is noble, full, and significant; and I know not why he who is master of it may not clothe ordinary things in it as decently as the Latin, if he use the same diligence in his choice of words: *delectus verborum origo est eloquentiæ.*[2] It was the saying of Julius Cæsar, one so curious in his, that none of them can be changed but for a worse. One would think, *unlock the door*, was a thing as vulgar as could be spoken; and yet Seneca could make it sound high and lofty in his Latin:

> *Reserate clusos regii postes laris.*
> Set wide the palace gates.

"But in turn from this conception, both because it happens not above twice or thri in any play that those vulgar thoughts a used; and then too (were there no other ap logy to be made, yet), the necessity of ther which is alike in all kind of writing, may e cuse them. For if they are little and mea in rhyme, they are, of consequence, such i blank verse. Besides that the great eage ness and precipitation with which they ar spoken, makes us rather mind the substanc than the dress; that for which they ar spoken, rather than what is spoken. Fc they are always the effect of some hast concernment, and something of consequenc depends on them.

"Thus, Crites, I have endeavored to an swer your objections; it remains only tha I should vindicate an argument for verse which you have gone about to overthrow It had formerly been said that the easiness o blank verse renders the poet too luxuriant but that the labor of rhyme bounds and cir cumscribes an over-fruitful fancy; the sens there being commonly confined to the coup let, and the words so ordered that the rhym naturally follows them, not they the rhyme To this you answered, that it was no argu ment to the question in hand; for the dispute was not which way a man may write best but which is most proper for the subject or which he writes.

"First, give me leave, Sir, to remember you that the argument against which you raised this objection was only secondary: it was built on this hypothesis, — that to write in verse was proper for serious plays. Which supposition being granted (as it was briefly made out in that discourse, by showing how verse might be made natural), it asserted, that this way of writing was an help to the poet's judgment, by putting bounds to a wild overflowing fancy. I think, therefore, it will not be hard for me to make good what it was to prove on that supposition. But you add, that were this let pass, yet he who wants judgment in the liberty of his fancy, may as well show the defect of it when he is confined to verse; for he who has judgment will avoid errors, and he who has it not, will commit them in all kinds of writing.

"This argument, as you have taken it from a most acute person,[1] so I confess it carries much weight in it: but by using the word judgment here indefinitely, you seem to have put a fallacy upon us. I grant, he who has judgment, that is, so profound, so strong, or rather so infallible a judgment, that he needs

1 John Taylor (1580–1653), called the "Water Poet" because he had been a ferryman on the Thames.

2 Choice of words is the source of eloquence.

1 Sir Robert Howard.

helps to keep it always poised and upright, I commit no faults either in rhyme or out it. And on the other extreme, he who has udgment so weak and crazed that no helps n correct or amend it, shall write scurvily t of rhyme, and worse in it. But the first these judgments is nowhere to be found, d the latter is not fit to write at all. To ak therefore of judgment as it is in the st poets; they who have the greatest pro- rtion of it, want other helps than from it, thin. As for example, you would be loth say that he who is endued with a sound dgment has no need of history, geography, moral philosophy, to write correctly. dgment is indeed the master-workman in play; but he requires many subordinate nds, many tools to his assistance. And rse I affirm to be one of these; 'tis a rule d line by which he keeps his building com- ct and even, which otherwise lawless imag- nation would raise either irregularly or osely; at least, if the poet commits errors th this help, he would make greater and ore without it: 'tis, in short, a slow and inful, but the surest kind of working. vid, whom you accuse for luxuriancy in rse, had perhaps been farther guilty of it, d he writ in prose. And for your instance Ben Jonson, who, you say, writ exactly ithout the help of rhyme; you are to remem- r, 'tis only an aid to a luxuriant fancy, hich his was not: as he did not want imagination, so none ever said he had much to spare. Neither was verse then refined so much, to be an help to that age, as it is to ours. Thus then the second thoughts being usually the best, as receiving the maturest digestion from judgment, and the last and most mature product of those thoughts being artful and labored verse, it may well be inferred, that verse is a great help to a luxuriant fancy; and this is what that argument which you opposed was to evince."

Neander was pursuing this discourse so eagerly that Eugenius had called to him twice or thrice, ere he took notice that the barge stood still, and that they were at the foot of Somersetstairs, where they had appointed it to land. The company were all sorry to separate so soon, though a great part of the evening was already spent; and stood a-while looking back on the water, upon which the moonbeams played, and made it appear like floating quicksilver: at last they went up through a crowd of French people, who were merrily dancing in the open air, and nothing concerned for the noise of guns [1] which had alarmed the town that afternoon. Walking thence together to the Piazze, they parted there; Eugenius and Lisideius to some pleasant appointment they had made, and Crites and Neander to their several lodgings.

1 Dryden began his essay: "It was that memorable day, in the first summer of the late war, when our navy engaged the Dutch." The noise of the battle could be heard easily in London.

## JOHN BUNYAN (1628–1688)

John Bunyan, the son of a tinker, was born in the village of Elstow, in 1628. As a boy he took rt in the Civil War, undoubtedly on the Parliamentary side. His real life, however, was in his ligious experience, narrated in *Grace Abounding*. He married a pious woman who brought him her dowry certain religious books. Reading these brought Bunyan into that agony of soul hich, as with so many of his contemporaries, followed a conviction of sin and doubt as to salvaon. Under the ministrations of Mr. Gifford, pastor of a Baptist congregation at Bedford, he beme converted, and in turn began to preach the gospel. In 1660, after the Restoration, he was rrested under the law which prohibited religious meetings except those of the Established Church, nd held in somewhat loose confinement for twelve years. After his release he resumed preaching, hich he continued until his death in 1688.

Bunyan's writings are entirely concerned with what to him was the great reality of life, the relaon of the soul to God. He began to write tracts shortly after his conversion, among which *A Few ighs from Hell, or the Groans of a Damned Soul*, reminds us by its title of the fearful issue involved this relation. During his imprisonment he published *Grace Abounding* (1666). The great reigious allegory, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, followed in 1678; *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman* in 680; and a second allegory, *The Holy War*, in 1682. *Grace Abounding*, of which the first third is ere printed, is one of the most remarkable autobiographies ever written. It illustrates perfectly he spiritual excitement of the seventeenth century of which the Puritan character was the result. Bunyan's religious experience was intimate and personal, a quality reflected in his simple, realistic, omespun style. Woven through this groundwork, however, are strains of poetic splendor and eauty which Bunyan owed to his study of the King James Version of the Bible. This combina-

tion of naïve reflection of life and richness of imagination gives to *The Pilgrim's Progress* its pr eminence as an allegory.

*Grace Abounding* is edited by E. C. Baldwin in Ginn's Standard English Classics; *The Pilgrim Progress*, by W. V. Moody, in the Riverside Literature Series. Lives of Bunyan by Robe Southey, by John Brown, by J. A. Froude (English Men of Letters Series), and E. Venables (Gre Writers Series) are available. The essays by Macaulay, John Tulloch (*Puritanism and Its Leaders* and Edward Dowden (*Puritan and Anglican*) may be noted.

## GRACE ABOUNDING TO THE CHIEF OF SINNERS

OR,

A BRIEF RELATION OF THE EXCEEDING MERCY OF GOD IN CHRIST, TO HIS POOR SERVANT, JOHN BUNYAN

In this my relation of the merciful working of God upon my soul, it will not be amiss, if, in the first place, I do, in a few words, give you a hint of my pedigree, and manner of bringing up; that thereby the goodness and bounty of God towards me, may be the more advanced and magnified before the sons of men.

For my descent then, it was, as is well known by many, of a low and inconsiderable generation; my father's house being of that rank that is meanest, and most despised of all the families in the land. Wherefore I have not here, as others, to boast of noble blood, or of a high-born state, according to the flesh; though, all things considered, I magnify the heavenly Majesty, for that by this door he brought me into this world, to partake of the grace and life that is in Christ by the Gospel.

But yet, notwithstanding the meanness and inconsiderableness of my parents, it pleased God to put it into their hearts to put me to school, to learn both to read and write; the which I also attained, according to the rate of other poor men's children, though to my shame I confess, I did soon lose that little I learnt, even almost utterly, and that long before the Lord did work his gracious work of conversion upon my soul.

As for my own natural life, for the time that I was without God in the world, it was, indeed, "according to the course of this world, and the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."[1] It was my delight to be "taken captive by the devil at his will,"[2] being filled with all unrighteousness; the which did also so strongly work, and put forth itself, both in my heart and life, and that from a child, that I had but few equals (especially considering my years, which were tender, being few), both for cursin swearing, lying, and blaspheming the ho name of God.

Yea, so settled and rooted was I in the things, that they became as a second natu to me. The which, as I also have with sobe ness considered since, did so offend the Lor that even in my childhood he did scare a affright me with fearful dreams, and d terrify me with dreadful visions. For ofte after I had spent this and the other day sin, I have in my bed been greatly afflicte while asleep, with the apprehensions devils and wicked spirits, who still, as I th thought, labored to draw me away wi them, of which I could never be rid.

Also I should, at these years, be great afflicted and troubled with the thoughts the Day of Judgment, and that both nig and day, and should tremble at the thoug of the fearful torments of hell-fire; still fe ing that it would be my lot to be found last among those devils and hellish fien who are there bound down with the chai and bonds of darkness, unto the judgme of the great day.

These things, I say, when I was but child, about nine or ten years old, did so d tress my soul, that then, in the midst of r many sports and childish vanities, amic my vain companions, I was often much c down, and afflicted in my mind therewit yet could I not let go my sins. Yea, I was al then so overcome with despair of life a heaven, that I should often wish, either th there had been no hell, or that I had beer devil; supposing they were only tormento that if it must needs be, that I went thith I might be rather a tormentor, than be t mented myself.

A while after, these terrible dreams d leave me, which also I soon forgot; for n pleasures did quickly cut off the remei brance of them, as if they had never bee Wherefore with more greediness, accordi to the strength of nature, I did still let loo the reins to my lust, and delighted in transgression against the law of God: so th until I came to the state of marriage, was the very ringleader of all the youth th

1 Ephesians II, 2, 3. 2 II Timothy II, 26.

ot me company, in all manner of vice and godliness.

Yea, such prevalency had the lusts and its of the flesh in this poor soul of mine, t had not a miracle of precious grace prevented, I had not only perished by the stroke eternal justice, but had also laid myself en even to the stroke of those laws which ng some to disgrace and open shame ore the face of the world.

n these days the thoughts of religion were y grievous to me. I could neither endure myself, nor that any other should. So that en I have seen some read in those books t concerned Christian piety, it would be it were a prison to me. Then I said unto d, "Depart from me, for I desire not the owledge of thy ways."[1] I was now void all good consideration, heaven and hell re both out of sight and mind; and as for ring and damning, they were least in my oughts. "O Lord, thou knowest my life, d my ways were not hid from thee."

Yet this I well remember, that though I ild myself sin with the greatest delight d ease, and also take pleasure in the vileess of my companions; yet, even then, if I d at any time seen wicked things, by those o professed goodness, it would make my rit tremble. As once above all the rest, en I was in my heighth of vanity, yet hearg one to swear that was reckoned for a reious man, it had so great a stroke upon my rit, that it made my heart to ake.

But God did not utterly leave me, but folved me still, not now with convictions, but dgments; yet such as were mixed with rcy. For once I fell into a crick of the r, and hardly escaped drowning. Another ne I fell out of a boat into Bedford river, t mercy yet preserved me alive. Besides, other time, being in the field with one of y companions, it chanced that an adder ssed over the highway; so I having a stick my hand, struck her over the back, and ving stunned her, I forced open her mouth th my stick, and plucked her sting out th my fingers; by which act, had not God en merciful unto me, I might, by my desrateness, have brought myself to mine end. This also have I taken notice of with anksgiving. When I was a soldier, I, with hers, were drawn out to go to such a place besiege it; but when I was just ready to , one of the company desired to go in my om; to which, when I had consented, he ok my place; and coming to the siege, as he stood sentinel, he was shot into the head with a musket bullet, and died.

Here, as I said, were judgments and mercy, but neither of them did awaken my soul to righteousness; wherefore I sinned still, and grew more and more rebellious against God, and careless of mine own salvation.

Presently after this, I changed my condition into a married state, and my mercy was to light upon a wife whose father was counted godly. This woman and I, though we came together as poor as poor might be (not having so much household stuff as a dish or spoon betwixt us both), yet this she had for her part, *The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven*, and *The Practice of Piety*, which her father had left her when he died. In these two books I should sometimes read with her, wherein I also found some things that were somewhat pleasing to me; (but all this while I met with no conviction). She also would be often telling of me what a godly man her father was, and how he would reprove and correct vice, both in his house, and amongst his neighbors; what a strict and holy life he lived in his days, both in word and deed.

Wherefore these books, with this relation, though they did not reach my heart, to awaken it about my sad and sinful state, yet they did beget within me some desires to religion: so that, because I knew no better, I fell in very eagerly with the religion of the times; to wit, to go to church twice a day, and that too with the foremost; and there should very devoutly both say and sing as others did, yet retaining my wicked life. But withal, I was so overrun with the spirit of superstition, that I adored, and that with great devotion, even all things (both the high place, priest, clerk, vestments, service, and what else) belonging to the church; counting all things holy that were therein contained, and especially, the priest and clerk most happy, and without doubt greatly blessed, because they were the servants, as I then thought, of God, and were principal in the holy temple to do his work therein.

This conceit grew so strong in little time upon my spirit, that had I but seen a priest (though never so sordid and debauched in his life), I should find my spirit fall under him, reverence him, and knit unto him. Yea, I thought, for the love I did bear unto them (supposing they were the ministers of God) I could have lain down at their feet and have been trampled upon by them; their name, their garb, and work did so intoxicate and bewitch me.

[1] Job xxi. 14.

After I had been thus for some considerable time, another thought came in my mind; and that was, whether we were of the Israelites or no? For finding in the Scriptures that they were once the peculiar people of God, thought I, if I were once of this race, my soul must needs be happy. Now again, I found within me a great longing to be resolved about this question, but could not tell how I should. At last I asked my father of it, who told me, no, we were not. Wherefore, then I fell in my spirit as to the hopes of that and so remained.

But all this while, I was not sensible of the danger and evil of sin. I was kept from considering that sin would damn me, what religion soever I followed, unless I was found in Christ. Nay, I never thought of him, nor whether there was such an one, or not. "Thus man while blind doth wander, but wearieth himself with vanity, for he knoweth not the way to the city of God." [1]

But one day, amongst all the sermons our parson made, his subject was to treat of the sabbath-day, and of the evil of breaking that, either with labor, sports, or otherwise. Now I was, notwithstanding my religion, one that took much delight in all manner of vice, and especially, that was the day that I did solace myself therewith. Wherefore I fell in my conscience under his sermon, thinking and believing that he made that sermon on purpose to show me my evil-doing. And at that time I felt what guilt was, though never before, that I can remember. But then I was, for the present, greatly loaden therewith, and so went home when the sermon was ended, with a great burden upon my spirit.

This, for that instant, did benumb the sinews of my best delights, and did imbitter my former pleasures to me. But behold, it lasted not; for before I had well dined, the trouble began to go off my mind, and my heart returned to its old course. But oh! how glad was I, that this trouble was gone from me, and that the fire was put out, that I might sin again without control! Wherefore, when I had satisfied nature with my food, I shook the sermon out of my mind, and to my old custom of sports and gaming I returned with great delight.

But the same day, as I was in the midst of a game at Cat, and having struck it one blow from the hole, just as I was about to strike it the second time, a voice did suddenly dart from heaven into my soul, which said, "Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?" At this I was p to an exceeding maze. Wherefore, leav my cat upon the ground, I looked up heaven, and was as if I had, with the e of my understanding, seen the Lord Je looking down upon me, as being very ho displeased with me, and as if he did sever threaten me with some grievous punishm for these and other my ungodly practices.

I had no sooner thus conceived in my mi but suddenly this conclusion was fastened my spirit, (for the former hint did set sins again before my face) that I had be a great and grievous sinner, and that it w now too late for me to look after heaven; Christ would not forgive me, nor pardon transgressions. Then I fell to musing up this also. And while I was thinking of it, a fearing lest it should be so, I felt my he sink in despair, concluding it was too la and therefore I resolved in my mind I wo go on in sin. For, thought I, if the case thus, my state is surely miserable; misera if I leave my sins, and but miserable if I f low them. I can but be damned, and i must be so, I had as good be damned many sins, as be damned for a few.

Thus I stood in the midst of my play, b fore all that then were present; but yet I t them nothing. But I say, I having ma this conclusion, I returned desperately to sport again; and I well remember, th presently this kind of despair did so posse my soul, that I was persuaded I could ne attain to other comfort than what I shou get in sin; for heaven was gone already, that on that I must not think. Wherefo I found within me a great desire to take n fill of sin, still studying what sin was yet to committed, that I might taste the sweetne of it. And I made as much haste as I cou to fill my belly with its delicates, lest I shou die before I had my desire; for that I fear greatly. In these things, I protest befo God I lie not, neither do I feign this sort speech. These were really, strongly, a with all my heart, my desires. The goo Lord, whose mercy is unsearchable, forgi me my transgressions!

And I am very confident that this tempt tion of the devil is more usual amongst po creatures than many are aware of, even overrun their spirits with a scurfy and seare frame of heart, and benumbing of conscienc which frame he stilly and slyly supplie with such despair, that though not muc guilt attendeth souls, yet they continuall have a secret conclusion within them, tha

[1] Ecclesiastes x, 15.

ere is no hopes for them; for they have ved sins, therefore after them they will go.[1] Now therefore I went on in sin with great eedíness of mind, still grudging that I could t be so satisfied with it as I would. This did ntinue with me about a month, or more. it one day, as I was standing at a neigh-r's shop-window, and there cursing and earing, and playing the madman, after my nted manner, there sat within the woman the house, and heard me; who, though she s a very loose and ungodly wretch, yet otested that I swore and cursed at that most arful rate, that she was made to tremble hear me; and told me further, that I was e ungodliest fellow for swearing, that ever e heard in all her life; and that I, by thus ing, was able to spoil all the youth in the hole town, if they came but in my company. At this reproof I was silenced, and put to cret shame, and that too, as I thought, be-re the God of heaven. Wherefore, while I ood there, and hanging down my head, I ished with all my heart that I might be a tle child again, that my father might learn e to speak without this wicked way of earing; for, thought I, I am so accustomed it, that it is in vain for me to think of a formation, for I thought it could never be. But, how it came to pass I know not, I did om this time forward so leave my swearing, at it was a great wonder to myself to ob-rve it. And whereas before I knew not w to speak unless I put an oath before, and nother behind, to make my words have thority; now I could, without it, speak tter, and with more pleasantness, than er I could before. All this while I knew t Jesus Christ, neither did I leave my orts and plays.

But quickly after this, I fell in company ith one poor man that made profession of ligion; who, as I then thought, did talk easantly of the Scriptures, and of the mat-rs of religion; wherefore, falling into some ve and liking to what he said, I betook me my Bible, and began to take great pleasure reading; but especially with the historical art thereof. For, as for Paul's Epistles, and uchlike Scriptures, I could not away with hem, being as yet but ignorant, either of the orruptions of my nature or of the want and orth of Jesus Christ to save me.

Wherefore I fell to some outward reforma-ion, both in my words and life, and did set he commandments before me for my way to eaven; which commandments I also did strive to keep, and, as I thought, did keep them pretty well sometimes, and then I should have comfort; yet now and then should break one, and so afflict my conscience; but then I should repent, and say I was sorry for it, and promise God to do better next time, and there get help again, for then I thought I pleased God as well as any man in England.

Thus I continued about a year; all which time our neighbors did take me to be a very godly man, a new and religious man, and did marvel much to see such a great and famous alteration in my life and manners. And indeed so it was, though yet I knew not Christ, nor grace, nor faith, nor hope. And, truly, as I have well seen since, had I then died, my state had been most fearful. Well, this, I say, continued about a twelvemonth or more.

But, I say, my neighbors were amazed at this my great conversion, from prodigious profaneness to something like a moral life. And truly, so they well might; for this my conversion was as great, as for Tom of Bethlem to become a sober man. Now therefore they began to praise, to commend, and to speak well of me, both to my face, and behind my back. Now I was, as they said, become godly; now I was become a right honest man. But oh! when I understood that these were their words and opinions of me, it pleased me mighty well. For though, as yet, I was nothing but a poor painted hypocrite, yet I loved to be talked of as one that was truly godly. I was proud of my godliness, and indeed I did all I did, either to be seen of, or to be well spoken of, by men; and thus I continued for about a twelvemonth, or more.

Now you must know, that before this I had taken much delight in ringing, but my conscience beginning to be tender, I thought such practice was but vain, and therefore forced myself to leave it, yet my mind hankered. Wherefore, I should go to the steeple house and look on it, though I durst not ring. But I thought this did not become religion neither, yet I forced myself, and would look on still. But quickly after, I began to think, how if one of the bells should fall? Then I chose to stand under a main beam, that lay overthwart the steeple, from side to side, thinking there I might stand sure. But then I should think again, should the bell fall with a swing, it might first hit the wall, and then rebounding upon me, might kill me for all this beam. This made me stand in the steeple-door; and now, thought

[1] Jeremiah II, 25, XVIII, 12.

I, I am safe enough; for if a bell should then fall I can slip out behind these thick walls, and so be preserved notwithstanding.

So after this I would yet go to see them ring, but would not go further than the steeple-door; but then it came into my head, how if the steeple itself should fall? And this thought, It may fall for ought I know, when I stood and looked on, did continually so shake my mind, that I durst not stand at the steeple-door any longer, but was forced to flee, for fear the steeple should fall upon my head.

Another thing was my dancing. I was a full year before I could quite leave that. But all this while, when I thought I kept this or that commandment, or did, by word or deed anything that I thought was good, I had great peace in my conscience; and should think with myself, God cannot choose but be now pleased with me; yea, to relate it in mine own way, I thought no man in England could please God better than I.

But poor wretch as I was, I was all this while ignorant of Jesus Christ, and going about to establish my own righteousness; and had perished therein, had not God in mercy showed me more of my state by nature.

But upon a day, the good providence of God did cast me to Bedford, to work on my calling, and in one of the streets of that town, I came where there were three or four poor women sitting at a door in the sun, talking about the things of God; and being now willing to hear them discourse, I drew near to hear what they said, for I was now a brisk talker also myself, in the matters of religion. But I may say, "I heard, but I understood not;" for they were far above, out of my reach. Their talk was about a new birth, the work of God on their hearts, also how they were convinced of their miserable state by nature. They talked how God had visited their souls with his love in the Lord Jesus, and with what words and promises they had been refreshed, comforted and supported against the temptations of the devil. Moreover they reasoned of the suggestions and temptations of Satan in particular; and told to each other by which they had been afflicted, and how they were borne up under his assaults. They also discoursed of their own wretchedness of heart, of their unbelief; and did contemn, slight and abhor their own righteousness, as filthy and insufficient to do them any good.

And methought they spake as if joy did make them speak; they spake with such pleasantness of Scripture language, and with such appearance of grace in all they said that they were to me, as if they had found a new world; as if they were "people that dwelt alone, and were not to be reckoned amongst their neighbors."[1]

At this I felt my own heart began to shake and mistrust my condition to be naught; for I saw that in all my thoughts about religion and salvation, the new birth did never enter into my mind; neither knew I the comfort of the word and promise, nor the deceitfulness and treachery of my own wicked heart. And for secret thoughts, I took no notice of them; neither did I understand what Satan's temptations were, nor how they were to be withstood and resisted, &c.

Thus, therefore, when I had heard and considered what they said, I left them, and went about my employment again, but their talk and discourse went with me; also my heart would tarry with them, for I was greatly affected with their words, both because by them I was convinced that I wanted the true tokens of a truly godly man, and also because by them I was convinced of the happy and blessed condition of him that was such an one.

Therefore I should often make it my business to be going again and again into the company of these poor people; for I could not stay away; and the more I went amongst them the more I did question my condition and as I still do remember, presently I found two things within me, at which I did sometimes marvel, (especially considering what a blind, ignorant, sordid, and ungodly wretch but just before I was); the one was a very great softness and tenderness of heart, which caused me to fall under the conviction of what by Scripture they asserted; and the other was a great bending in my mind, to continual meditating on them, and on all other good things which at any time I heard or read of.

By these things my mind was now so turned that it lay like a horse-leech at the vein, still crying out, *Give, give*[2]; yea, it was so fixed on eternity, and on the things about the kingdom of heaven, (that is, so far as I knew, though as yet, God knows, I knew but little); that neither pleasures, nor profits, nor persuasions, nor threats could loose it, or make it let go his hold. And though I may speak it with shame, yet it is in very deed a certain truth, it would then have been as

1 Numbers xxiii, 9. 2 Proverbs xxx, 15.

icult for me to have taken my mind from ven to earth, as I have found it often e to get it again from earth to heaven.

One thing I may not omit. There was a ng man in our town, to whom my heart s knit more than to any other, but he ng a most wicked creature for cursing l swearing and whoring, I now shook him and forsook his company; but about a rter of a year after I had left him, I met n in a certain lane, and asked him how he ; he, after his old swearing and mad way, swered, he was well. "But, Harry," said Why do you swear and curse thus? What l become of you if you die in this condi- n?" He answered me in a great chafe, What would the devil do for company, if it re not for such as I am?"

About this time I met with some Ranters' ks, that were put forth by some of our ntrymen, which books were also highly esteem by several old professors;[1] some of se I read, but was not able to make a lgment about them. Wherefore as I read them, and thought upon them (feeling my- f unable to judge), I should betake myself hearty prayer in this manner: "O Lord, I a fool, and not able to know the truth m error. Lord, leave me not to my own ndness, either to approve of, or condemn s doctrine; if it be of God, let me not de- se it; if it be of the devil, let me not em- ice it. Lord, I lay my soul in this matter ly at thy foot; let me not be deceived, I mbly beseech thee." I had one religious in- nate companion all this while, and that was e poor man that I spoke of before. But out this time, he also turned a most devilish nter, and gave himself up to all manner of hiness, especially uncleanness. He would so deny that there was a God, angel, or irit; and would laugh at all exhortations sobriety. When I labored to rebuke his ckedness, he would laugh the more, and etend that he had gone through all re- ions, and could never light on the right now. He told me also, that in a little me I should see all professors turn to the ys of the Ranters. Wherefore, abomi- ting these cursed principles, I left his com- ny forthwith, and became to him as great stranger, as I had been before a familiar.

Neither was this man only a temptation to e; but my calling lying in the country, I ppened to light into several people's com- ny, who, though strict in religion formerly, t were also swept away by these Ranters. These would also talk with me of their ways, and condemn me as legal and dark; pretending that they only had attained to perfection, that could do what they would and not sin. Oh! These temptations were suitable to my flesh, I being but a young man, and my nature in its prime. But God, who had, as I hope, designed me for better things, kept me in the fear of his name, and did not suffer me to accept of such cursed principles. And blessed be God, who put it into my heart to cry to him to be kept and directed, still distrusting mine own wisdom; for I have since seen even the effect of that prayer, in his preserving me, not only from Ranting errors, but from those also that have sprung up since. The Bible was precious to me in those days.

And now, methought, I began to look into the Bible with new eyes, and read as I never did before; and especially the epistles of the Apostle St. Paul were sweet and pleasant to me; and indeed I was then never out of the Bible, either by reading or meditation; still crying out to God that I might know the truth, and way to heaven and glory.

And as I went on and read, I lighted on that passage, "To one is given by the spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same spirit; and to another faith," &c.[1] And though, as I have since seen, that by this Scripture the Holy Ghost intends, in special things extraordinary, yet on me it then did fasten with conviction, that I did want things ordinary, even that understanding and wisdom that other Christians had. On this word I mused, and could not tell what to do; especially this word [*faith*] put me to it, for I could not help it, but sometimes must question, whether I had any faith, or no. For I feared it shut me out of all the blessings that other good people had given them of God. But I was loth to conclude I had no faith; for if I do so, thought I, then I shall count myself a very cast-away indeed.

No, said I, with myself, though I am convinced that I am an ignorant sot, and that I want those blessed gifts of knowledge and understanding that other good people have; yet at a venture, I will conclude I am not altogether faithless, though I know not what faith is. For it was showed me, and that too (as I have seen since) by Satan, that those who conclude themselves in a faithless state, have neither rest nor quiet in their souls; and I was loth to fall quite into despair.

Wherefore by this suggestion, I was for a

- professing Christians.

[1] I Corinthians XII. 8, 9.

while made afraid to see my want of faith. But God would not suffer me thus to undo and destroy my soul, but did continually, against this my blind and sad conclusion, create still within me such suppositions, insomuch that I could not rest content, until I did now come to some certain knowledge, whether I had faith or no; this always running in my mind, "But how if you want faith indeed? But how can you tell you have faith?" And besides, I saw for certain, if I had it not, I was sure to perish for ever.

So that though I endeavored at the first to look over the business of faith, yet in a little time, I better considering the matter, was willing to put myself upon the trial, whether I had faith or no. But alas, poor wretch, so ignorant and brutish was I, that I knew to this day no more how to do it, than I know how to begin and accomplish that rare and curious piece of art, which I never yet saw or considered.

Wherefore, while I was thus considering, and being put to my plunge about it (for you must know, that as yet I had in this matter broken my mind to no man, only did hear and consider), the tempter came in with this delusion, "that there was no way for me to know I had faith, but by trying to work some miracle"; urging those Scriptures that seem to look that way, for the enforcing and strengthening his temptation. Nay, one day, as I was betwixt Elstow and Bedford, the temptation was hot upon me, to try if I had faith, by doing of some miracle; which miracle at that time was this, I must say to the puddles that were in the horse-pads, be dry; and to the dry places, be you the puddles. And truly, one time I was going to say so indeed; but just as I was about to speak, this thought came into my mind, "But go under yonder hedge and pray first, that God would make you able." But when I had concluded to pray, this came hot upon me, that if I prayed, and came again, and tried to do it, and yet did nothing notwithstanding, then be sure I had no faith, but was a cast-away, and lost. Nay, thought I, if it be so, I will never try yet, but will stay a little longer.

So I continued at a great loss; for I thought, if they only had faith, which could do so wonderful things, then I concluded, that, for the present, I neither had it, nor yet, for time to come, were ever like to have it. Thus I was tossed betwixt the devil and my own ignorance, and so perplexed, especially at some times, that I could not tell what to do.

About this time, the state and happiness of these poor people at Bedford was thus, in a dream or vision, presented to me. I saw as if they were set on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds. Methought also, betwixt me and them, I saw a wall that did compass about this mountain; now, through this wall, my soul did greatly desire to pass; concluding, that if I could, I would go even into the very midst of them, and there also comfort myself with the heat of their sun.

About this wall I thought myself to go again and again, still prying as I went, to see if I could find some way or passage, by which I might enter therein; but none could I find for some time. At the last, I saw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a little doorway in the wall, through which I attempted to pass. Now the passage being very straight and narrow, I made many offers to get in, but all in vain, even until I was well nigh quite beat out, by striving to get in. At last, with great striving, methought I at first did get in my head, and after that, by a sideling striving, my shoulders and my whole body. Then was I exceeding glad, and went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun.

Now this mountain, and wall, &c., was thus made out to me: the mountain signified the church of the living God; the sun that shone thereon, the comfortable shining of his merciful face on them that were therein; the wall, I thought, was the word, that did make separation between the Christians and the world; and the gap which was in this wall, I thought, was Jesus Christ, who is the way to God the Father.[1] But forasmuch as the passage was wonderful narrow, even so narrow, that I could not but with great difficulty enter in thereat, it showed me, that none could enter into life, but those that were in downright earnest, and unless also they left this wicked world behind them; for here was only room for body and soul, but not for body and soul, and sin.

This resemblance abode upon my spirit many days; all which time, I saw myself in a forlorn and sad condition, but yet was provoked to a vehement hunger and desire to be one of that number that did sit in the sunshine. Now also I should pray wherever I was, whether at home or abroad, in house or

[1] John xiv, 6; Matthew vii, 14.

, and should also often, with lifting up of
rt, sing that of the fifty-first Psalm, "O
d, consider my distress;" for as yet I
w not where I was.

either as yet could I attain to any com-
able persuasion that I had faith in
ist; but instead of having satisfaction,
I began to find my soul to be assaulted
fresh doubts about my future happi-
; especially with such as these, "Whether
as elected? But how if the day of grace
ld now be past and gone?"

y these two temptations I was very much
cted and disquieted; sometimes by one
sometimes by the other of them. And
, to speak of that about my questioning
election, I found at this time that though
as in a flame to find the way to heaven
glory, and though nothing could beat me
from this, yet this question did so offend
discourage me, that I was, especially at
e times, as if the very strength of my body
had been taken away by the force and
ver thereof. This Scripture did also seem
ne to trample upon all my desires: "It is
ther in him that willeth, nor in him that
neth, but in God that showeth mercy."[1]
With this Scripture I could not tell what to
for I evidently saw that unless the great
d, of his infinite grace and bounty, had
untarily chosen me to be a vessel of
rcy, though I should desire and long and
or until my heart did break, no good could
ne of it. Therefore, this would still stick
h me, "How can you tell you are elected?
d what if you should not? How then?"
O Lord, thought I, what if I should not,
eed? It may be you are not, said the
npter; it may be so, indeed, thought I.
y then, said Satan, you had as good leave
and strive no further; for if, indeed, you
uld not be elected and chosen of God,
re is no talk of your being saved: "For it is
ither in him that willeth, nor in him that
neth; but in God that showeth mercy."
By these things I was driven to my wits'
d, not knowing what to say, or how to
swer these temptations. (Indeed, I little
ought that Satan had thus assaulted me,
t that rather it was my own prudence
us to start the question;) for, that the
ect only obtained eternal life, that I, with-
t scruple, did heartily close withal; but
at myself was one of them, there lay all the
estion.

Thus, therefore, for several days, I was
eatly assaulted and perplexed, and was often, when I have been walking, ready to sink where I went, with faintness in my mind. But one day, after I had been so many weeks oppressed and cast down therewith, as I was now quite giving up the ghost of all my hopes of ever attaining life, that sentence fell with weight upon my spirit. "Look at the generations of old and see; did ever any trust in God, and were confounded?"

At which I was greatly lightened, and encouraged in my soul; for thus, at that very instant, it was expounded to me, "Begin at the beginning of Genesis, and read to the end of the Revelations, and see if you can find that there was ever any that trusted in the Lord, and was confounded." So, coming home, I presently went to my Bible, to see if I could find that saying, not doubting but to find it presently; for it was so fresh, and with such strength and comfort on my spirit, that I was as if it talked with me.

Well, I looked, but I found it not; only it abode upon me. Then I did ask first this good man, and then another, if they knew where it was, but they knew no such place. At this I wondered that such a sentence should so suddenly, and with such comfort and strength, seize and abide upon my heart, and yet that none could find it. For I doubted not but it was in holy Scripture.

Thus I continued above a year, and could not find the place; but at last, casting my eye into the Apocrypha books, I found it in Ecclesiasticus.[1] This, at the first, did somewhat daunt me; but because by this time I had got more experience of the love and kindness of God, it troubled me the less; especially when I considered that though it was not in those texts that we call holy and canonical, yet, forasmuch as this sentence was the sum and substance of many of the promises, it was my duty to take the comfort of it. And I bless God for that word, for it was of God to me. That word doth still, at times, shine before my face.

After this, that other doubt did come with strength upon me, "But how if the day of grace should be past and gone? How if you have overstood the time of mercy?" Now, I remember that one day, as I was walking into the country, I was much in the thoughts of this, "But how if the day of grace be past?" And to aggravate my trouble, the tempter presented to my mind those good people of Bedford, and suggested thus unto me, that these being converted already, they were all that God would save in those parts;

[1] Romans ix, 16.

[1] Ecclesiasticus ii, 10.

and that I came too late for these had got the blessing before I came.

Now was I in great distress, thinking in very deed that this might well be so. Wherefore I went up and down bemoaning my sad condition, counting myself far worse than a thousand fools, for standing off thus long, and spending so many years in sin as I have done; still crying out, Oh! that I had turned sooner! Oh! that I had turned seven years ago! It made me also angry with myself, to think that I should have no more wit, but to trifle away my time till my soul and heaven were lost.

But when I had been long vexed with this fear, and was scarce able to take one step more, just about the same place where I received my other encouragement, these words broke in upon my mind, "Compel them to come in, that my house may be filled; and yet there is room."[1] These words, but especially them, "And yet there is room," were sweet words to me; for, truly, I thought that by them I saw that there was place enough in heaven for me; and, moreover, that when the Lord Jesus did speak these words, he then did think of me; and that he knowing the time would come that I should be afflicted with fear that there was no place left for me in his bosom, did before speak this word, and leave it upon record, that I might find help thereby against this vile temptation. This, I then verily believed.

In the light and encouragement of this word, I went a pretty while; and the comfort was the more, when I thought that the Lord Jesus should think on me so long ago, and that he should speak them words on purpose for my sake. For I did then think verily that he did on purpose speak them to encourage me withal.

But I was not without my temptations to go back again. Temptations, I say, both from Satan, mine own heart, and carnal acquaintance. But I thank God these were out-weighed by that sound sense of death and of the day of judgment, which abode, as it were, continually in my view. I should often also think on Nebuchadnezzar, of whom it is said, "He had given him all the kingdoms of the earth."[2] Yet, thought I, if this great man had all his portion in this world, one hour in hell-fire would make him forget all. Which consideration was a great help to me.

I was almost made, about this time, to see something concerning the beasts that Moses counted clean and unclean. I thought those beasts were types of men; the clea types of them that were the people of Go but the unclean, types of such as were t children of the wicked one. Now, I re that the clean beasts "chewed the cud that is, thought I, they show us, we mu feed upon the word of God. They al "parted the hoof;" I thought that signifi we must part, if we would be saved, with t ways of ungodly men. And also, in furth reading about them I found, that though did chew the cud as the hare, yet if we walk with claws like a dog, or if we did part t hoof like the swine, yet if we did not che the cud as the sheep, we were still, for all tha but unclean:[1] for I thought the hare to a type of those that talk of the word, y walk in ways of sin; and that the swi was like him that parteth with his outwa pollutions, but still wanteth the word faith, without which there could be no w of salvation, let a man be never so devou After this I found, by reading the word, th those that must be glorified with Christ another world must be called by him her called to the partaking of a share in his wo and righteousness, and to the comforts a first-fruits of his Spirit, and to a peculiar i terest in all those heavenly things which indeed fore-fit the soul for that rest, a house of glory which is in heaven above.

Here, again, I was at a very great stan not knowing what to do, fearing I was n called; "for," thought I, "if I be not calle what then can do me good? None but tho who are effectually called, inherit the kin dom of heaven." But oh! how I now love those words that spake of a Christian calling! as when the Lord said to on "Follow me·" and to another, "Come aft me." "And oh," thought I, "that he wou say so to me too, how gladly would I ru after him!"

I cannot now express with what longing and breathings in my soul I cried to Christ t call me. Thus I continued for a time, all o a flame to be converted to Jesus Christ; an did also see all that day, such glory in a cor verted state, that I could not be contente without a share therein. Gold! could it hav been gotten for gold, what could I have give for it! Had I had a whole world, it had a gone ten thousand times over for this, tha my soul might have been in a converte state.

How lovely now was every one in my eye that I thought to be converted men an

1 Luke XIV, 22, 23. 2 Daniel V, 18, 19.

1 Deuteronomy XIV, 6, 8.

men! they shone, they walked like people t carried the broad seal of heaven about m. Oh! I saw the lot was fallen to them pleasant places, and they had a goodly itage.[1] But that which made me sick, was t of Christ, in Mark, "He went up into nountain, and called to him whom he uld, and they came unto him."[2]

This Scripture made me faint and fear, yet kindled fire in my soul. That which de me fear was this, lest Christ should e no liking to me, for he called whom he uld. But oh! the glory that I saw in that dition did still so engage my heart that I ld seldom read of any that Christ did call : I presently wished, "Would I had been n in their clothes; would I had been born er; would I had been born John; or, would ad been by and had heard him when he led them, how would I have cried, O Lord, l me also!" But, oh! I feared he would t call me.

And truly, the Lord let me go thus many nths together and showed me nothing, ner that I was already, or should be called reafter. But at last, after much time nt, and many groans to God, that I might made partaker of the holy and heavenly ling, that word came in upon me: "I will anse their blood, that I have not cleansed, the Lord dwelleth in Zion."[3] These rds I thought were sent to encourage me wait still upon God, and signified unto me, t if I were not already, yet time might me, I might be in truth converted unto rist.

About this time I began to break my mind those poor people in Bedford, and to tell em my condition; which when they had ard, they told Mr. Gifford of me, who him- f also took occasion to talk with me, and s willing to be well persuaded of me, though think but from little grounds. But he in- ted me to his house, where I should hear m confer with others, about the dealings of d with their souls, from all which I still ceived more conviction, and from that time gan to see something of the vanity and ward wretchedness of my wicked heart, for yet I knew no great matter therein; but w it began to be discovered unto me, and so to work at that rate for wickedness as never did before. Now I evidently found, at lusts and corruptions would strongly it forth themselves within me, in wicked oughts and desires, which I did not re- rd before; my desires also for heaven and life began to fail. I found also, that whereas before my soul was full of longings after God, now my heart began to hanker after every foolish vanity; yea, my heart would not be moved to mind that that was good; it began to be careless, both of my soul and heaven; it would now continually hang back, both to, and in every duty; and was as a clog on the leg of a bird, to hinder her from flying.

Nay, thought I, now I grow worse and worse; now am I farther from conversion than ever I was before. Wherefore I began to sink greatly in my soul, and began to entertain such discouragement in my heart as laid me as low as hell. If now I should have burned at the stake, I could not believe that Christ had love for me; alas, I could neither hear him, nor see him, nor feel him, nor savor any of his things. I was driven as with a tempest: my heart would be unclean: the Canaanites would dwell in the land.

Sometimes I would tell my condition to the people of God, which, when they heard, they would pity me, and would tell me of the promises. But they had as good have told me, that I must reach the sun with my finger as have bidden me receive or rely upon the promise; and as soon I should have done it, all my sense and feeling was against me; and I saw I had an heart that would sin, and that lay under a law that would condemn.

These things have often made me think of the child which the father brought to Christ, "who, while he was yet a coming to him, was thrown down by the devil,[1] and also so rent and torn by him, that he lay and wallowed foaming."[2]

Further, in these days, I should find my heart to shut itself up against the Lord, and against his holy word. I have found my unbelief to set, as it were, the shoulder to the door to keep him out, and that too even then, when I have with many a bitter sigh cried, "Good Lord, break it open; Lord, break these gates of brass, and cut these bars of iron asunder."[3] Yet that word would sometimes create in my heart a peaceable pause, "I girded thee, though thou hast not known me."[4]

But all this while as to the act of sinning, I never was more tender than now. My hinder parts were inward. I durst not take a pin or stick, though but so big as a straw, for my conscience now was sore and would smart at every touch; I could not now tell how to

1 Psalm XVI, 6. 2 Mark III, 13. 3 Joel III, 21.
1 Luke IX, 42. 2 Mark IX, 20.
3 Psalm CVII, 16. 4 Isaiah XLV, 5.

speak my words, for fear I should misplace them. Oh, how gingerly did I then go in all I did or said! I found myself as on a miry bog that shook if I did but stir; and was as there left both of God and Christ, and the Spirit, and all good things.

But, I observe, though I was such a great sinner before conversion, yet God never much charged the guilt of the sins of my ignorance upon me; only he showed me I was lost if I had not Christ, because I had been a sinner. I saw that I wanted a perfect righteousness to present me without fault before God; and this righteousness was nowhere to be found, but in the person of Jesus Christ.

But my original and inward pollution, that, that was my plague and my affliction; that I say, at a dreadful rate, always putting forth itself within me; that I had the guilt of, to amazement; by reason of that, I was more loathsome in my own eyes than was a toad; and I thought I was so in God's eyes too. Sin and corruption, I said, would as naturally bubble out of my heart as water would bubble out of a fountain. I thought now that every one had a better heart than I had; and could have changed heart with any body. I thought none but the devil himself could equalize me for inward wickedness and pollution of mind. I fell, therefore, at the sight of my own vileness deeply into despair; for I concluded that this condition that I was in could not stand with a state of grace. Sure, thought I, I am forsaken of God; sure, I am given up to the devil, and to a reprobate mind. And thus I continued a long while, even for some years together.

While I was thus afflicted with the fears of my own damnation, there were two things would make me wonder; the one was, when I saw old people hunting after the things of this life, as if they should live here always; the other was, when I found professors much distressed and cast down, when they met with outward losses; as of husband, wife, child, &c. "Lord," thought I, "what ado is here about such little things as these! What seeking after carnal things by some, and what grief in others for the loss of them! If they so much labor after, and spend so many tears for the things of this present life, how am I to be bemoaned, pitied, and prayed for! My soul is dying, my soul is damning. Were my soul but in a good condition, and were I but sure of it, ah! how rich should I esteem myself, though blessed with bread and water! I should count those but small afflictions, and should bear them as little burthens. wounded spirit who can bear?"

And though I was thus troubled, and tosse and afflicted, with the sight and sense a terror of my own wickedness, yet I w afraid to let this sense and sight go quite my mind; for I found that unless guilt of co science was taken off the right way, that by the blood of Christ, a man grew rath worse for the loss of his trouble of mind, th better. Wherefore, if my guilt lay ha upon me, then I should cry that the blood Christ might take it off; and if it was goi off without it, (for the sense of sin would sometimes as if it would die, and go qui away) then I would also strive to fetch upon my heart again, by bringing the pu ishment for sin in hell-fire upon my spiri and should cry, "Lord, let it not go off m heart, but the right way, but by the bloo of Christ, and by the application of th mercy, through him, to my soul"; for tha Scripture lay much upon me, "Witho shedding of blood is no remission."[1] An that which made me the more afraid this was, because I had seen some, wh though when they were under wounds conscience, then they would cry and pra yet, seeking rather present ease from the trouble than pardon for their sin, cared n how they lost their guilt so they got it ou of their mind; now, having got it off th wrong way, it was not sanctified unto them but they grew harder and blinder and mor wicked after their trouble. This made m afraid, and made me cry to God the more that it might not be so with me.

And now was I sorry that God had mad me a man, for I feared I was a reprobate. counted man as unconverted, the most dole ful of all creatures. Thus being afflicted an tossed about my sad condition, I counte myself alone, and above the most of me unblessed.

Yea, I thought it impossible that ever should attain to so much goodness of heart as to thank God that he had made me a man Man indeed is the most noble by creation o all creatures in the visible world; but by si he had made himself the most ignoble. Th beasts, birds, fishes, &c., I blessed their con dition, for they had not a sinful nature, they were not obnoxious to the wrath of God; they were not to go to hell-fire after death. could therefore have rejoiced, had my condi tion been as any of theirs.

In this condition I went a great while; but

1 Hebrews IX, 22.

en the comforting time was come, I heard e preach a sermon upon those words in the ng, "Behold, thou art fair, my love; be- d, thou art fair." [1] But at that time he de these two words, "my love," his chief d subject matter; from which, after he had ittle opened the text, he observed these veral conclusions: "1. That the church, d so every saved soul, is Christ's love, en loveless. 2. Christ's love without a use. 3. Christ's love when hated of the rld. 4. Christ's love when under tempta- n, and under desertion. 5. Christ's love, m first to last."

But I got nothing by what he said at esent; only when he came to the applica- n of the fourth particular, this was the rd he said: "If it be so, that the saved soul Christ's love when under temptation and sertion; then, poor tempted soul, when thou t assaulted and afflicted with temptations, d the hidings of God's face, yet think on ese two words, 'my love,' still."

So as I was a going home, these words came ain into my thoughts; and I well remem- r, as they came in, I said thus in my heart, What shall I get by thinking on these two rds?" This thought had no sooner passed rough my heart, but these words began us to kindle in my spirit: "Thou art my ve, thou art my love," twenty times to- gether; and still as they ran thus in my mind, they waxed stronger and warmer, and began to make me look up. But being as yet between hope and fear, I still replied in my heart, "But is it true? but is it true?" At which, that sentence fell in upon me, "He wist not that it was true which was done by the angel." [1]

Then I began to give place to the word, which, with power, did over and over make this joyful sound within my soul, "Thou art my love, thou art my love, and nothing shall separate thee from my love." And with that Romans eight, thirty-nine, came into my mind. Now was my heart filled full of comfort and hope, and now I could believe that my sins should be forgiven me; yea, I was now so taken with the love and mercy of God, that I remember I could not tell how to contain till I got home. I thought I could have spoken of his love, and have told of his mercy to me, even to the very crows that sat upon the ploughed lands before me, had they been capable to have understood me; wherefore I said in my soul, with much gladness, "Well, I would I had a pen and ink here, I would write this down before I go any further, for surely I will not forget this forty years hence." But alas! within less than forty days I began to question all again; and by times, fell to my old courses again; which made me begin to question all still.

[1] Song of Solomon IV, 1.

[1] Acts XII, 9.

# THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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The reign of Queen Anne (1702–14) coincides with the appearance of one of the most brilliant groups of writers which has ever graced English letters. In 1704 were published Swift's *Tale of a Tub* and *Battle of the Books*. From 1709 till 1712 Steele and Addison were delighting all England with the kindly wit of *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. In 1709 young Mr. Pope won instant recognition by the poetry of his *Pastorals*, which were shortly followed by the *Essay on Criticism* (1711) and *The Rape of the Lock* (1712). Among the names of lesser note one should not forget John Gay, whose *Shepherd's Week* was published in 1714.

It was a period of great political unrest, in which each of the parties sought to win and hold public opinion by the aid of literature; so that much of the literary energies of the Tory Swift and the Whig Addison was diverted into partisan propaganda, until, with the death of Anne and the accession of the German prince George I, England entered on a long period of all but undisputed Whig ascendency, during which the politicians no longer needed literary allies. During the reigns of George I (1714–27) and George II (1727–60), the court played a negligible part in literary history, except as the great minister, Sir Robert Walpole, served as target of much brilliant literary satire.

During the period of the Commonwealth, the people of England had been subjected to the austere régime of Puritan prohibitions. With the Restoration of 1660 came, as a natural reaction, a time when — at any rate in those fashionable circles which most influence literature — the life of England was marked by general profligacy and by a cynical disregard of moral principles. It was the task of the early decades of the eighteenth century to reëstablish a reasonable balance in the moral life of the nation. The Queen Anne wits were neither Puritans nor libertines, but sober-minded and accomplished men of the world. To them both Puritan "enthusiasm" and the profligacy of the Restoration "fop" were equally offenses against good taste and good sense. It was the avowed purpose of Addison and Steele in *The Spectator* to make vice ridiculous, and to bring to the cause of decency and virtue the powerful allies of wit and good breeding.

Both in England and in France it was a time when reason, and its practical corollary good sense, were the final court of appeal in matters of belief and conduct, and of art and literature also. The philosophical rationalism of Descartes, the empiricism of Hobbes and Locke, the newly awakened interest in the natural sciences of which Sir Isaac Newton is a great exemplar, and in England the reaction against seventeenth-century preoccupation with questions of religion, all conspired to turn men's minds away from the mysteries of life and to focus their attention on the real and actual. And so the literature of eighteenth-century England is primarily concerned with the everyday facts and interests of well-ordered, civilized human life, as it transacts itself in London and in the quiet English countryside. It is much given to moralizing — too much so for our modern taste — but its morality is that of enlightened worldliness, with small admixture of mystic yearning. Until Wesley and his Methodists began (1740) their appeal to men's hearts, the Christian religion had become in eighteenth-century pulpits so coldly rational that the orthodox churchman is hardly distinguishable from the "free-thinking" Deist with his reasoned "religion of nature." The prevailing school of ethics was a calculating utilitarianism, such as that which expresses itself in Franklin's famous dictum that "honesty is the best policy." For the foreign-born and dull-witted Hanoverian kings, with their stupid profligacies, it was impossible to feel an intense personal loyalty. In religion, in ethics, and in politics, the deeper springs of life had gone dry. There remained life's many-colored surface; and on that the literature of the period turned its brilliant searchlight.

It is preëminently a social literature, whose school is the coffeehouse and tavern or the polite *salon*. Swift sends his Gulliver to strange lands of fancy only that we may thus see contemporary England from a new angle of vision. The supreme masterpiece of Pope's art lays its scene in a fashionable drawing-room. Thomson, to be sure, turns his back on the life of the city, but only that he may record with perfect fidelity to truth the varying phenomena of the shifting seasons.

This complete devotion to the real and actual, this preoccupation with the everyday life of normal men and women, closed the doors to romance and discouraged the more giddy flights of poetical imagination; but it gave us instead, by way of compensation, much shrewd wisdom, sound sense, and flashing wit. It made possible such a great biography as Boswell's completely realistic portrait of Johnson and his contemporaries; it encouraged the kindly human art of letter-writing and gave us such great collections of personal letters as those of Gray, Horace Walpole, and Cowper; it expressed itself in the charming familiar essays of Addison and Goldsmith; chief of all, it enabled the eighteenth century to discover for us the modern novel. Fictitious narratives in prose had, of course, been written long before the eighteenth century; but they had been deliberately romantic and far from everyday reality. The modern novel, even when its scene is far-away or

long-ago, gives us always, if its art be good, a compelling sense of actuality. Its persons live in a real world and behave as we think we should behave if put in their places. It was Defoe and Richardson who discovered this art, and Fielding who brought it in *Tom Jones* (1749) to a degree of perfection that has seldom since been equaled.

The temper of the eighteenth century was in a high degree critical; and this critical temper expressed itself in brilliant, witty satire, which ranges all the way from the fierce indignation of a Swift, and the keen rapier strokes of Pope and Sheridan, to the kindly, humorous satire of Addison and Goldsmith. Eighteenth-century literature is often serious, but it is seldom solemn. Its prevailing spirit is the spirit of comedy — of wit and humor and daring jest. The most brilliant jester in our literature is an eighteenth-century parson, Laurence Sterne.

These qualities which mark the eighteenth century were less favorable to poetry than to prose. For good sense is the foe of enthusiasm, and enthusiasm rather than the spirit of comedy leads to the higher realms of poetry. The great bulk of eighteenth-century poetry — Pope, Gay, Goldsmith, Cowper, and much of Burns — keeps near the earth, and deals frequently with materials which the nineteenth century would have thought better suited for prose. When the poets of this period leave the lower levels, they too often mark their more ambitious flights by a speciously elevated diction — unfamiliar polysyllables of Latin derivation, studied departure from the normal word-order, the grandiose paraphrasing of simple ideas which substitutes for so commonplace a word as "birds" such phrases as "plumy people" or "tuneful choir." From these mannerisms Pope, except in his translations of Homer, is for the most part free; but they seriously mar the poetry of Thomson, the Pindaric odes of Gray and Collins, and the verse of a great company of minor poets. They are particularly frequent in poems written in blank verse — a metrical form which from 1730 on shares with the heroic couplet of Pope in general use for longer poems — and clearly have their origin in a mistaken attempt to imitate the poetical manner of Milton. Another vice of eighteenth-century poetry, the extravagant use of personified abstractions such as "pale Envy" and "wan Despair," springs from the influence of Milton's minor poems and from that of Spenser, who shared with Milton the literary devotion of poets and critics who preferred not to follow in the steps of Dryden and Pope.

Pope lived till 1744; and the prestige of his genius, and that of his master Dryden, dominates the first half of the century. To the body of critical principles which underlie Pope's poetry, the principles that are formulated in his *Essay on Criticism* and in the *Art Poétique* of the French poet-critic Boileau, literary historians have given the name "neo-classicism." Like all such labels, the term "neo-classical" is not easy to define, for within the school are included several varying sects; but the chief qualities implied by it are good sense, reasonableness, scrupulous fidelity to the truth of ascertained fact and to the normal and constant sentiments of human nature, adherence to the form and spirit of the great writers of classical antiquity who seemed most completely to exemplify the principles of reasonableness and truth to nature. Neo-classicism is the foe of obscurity and bombast, of the far-fetched "conceits" of the seventeenth-century "metaphysical" poets such as Donne and Herbert, of all that is improbable, abnormal, not immediately recognizable by the average intelligent man as part of the universal experience of human nature. In particular, it had nothing but scorn for the extravagant adventures of medieval romance. In so far as this school of criticism has made for sanity and clarity, its influence on literature has been a wholesome one; but its principles, when narrowly applied, unduly restrict the field of poetry. For the human spirit must be free to range beyond the region of established fact, to concern itself with realities which transcend everyday experience, to explore even such a world of dream as that in which Kubla Khan decreed his stately pleasure-dome.

In the second half of the eighteenth century this neo-classic theory of literature, though still, under the sturdy championship of Samuel Johnson, the dominant one, was increasingly subject to dissent and open attack. If Gray's *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* (1751) conforms in the main to its principles, his *Bard* (1757) is in a totally foreign spirit, and his latest poems revert to the mystical stories of the pagan North. Cowper mingles with his neo-classical fidelity to fact a tender but intense religious fervor. The cult of "sensibility," or sentimentality, as exemplified by Sterne substitutes for sound reason the caprice of random feeling. Macpherson's "Ossian" (1761) glorifies the virtues of primitive Caledonian chieftains. Bishop Percy revived the popular ballads (1765). Horace Walpole in his *Castle of Otranto* (1764) brings back the supernatural horrors of medieval romance. The disciples of Rousseau preach a "return to nature" which means profound distrust of all the conventions of civilized society, and the exaltation of the simple rustic and the "noble savage." When in 1786 Burns published his Kilmarnock volume of poems, written on rural themes and in a rustic dialect, he was hailed as the "plowman poet," the "child of nature," who owed nothing to Aristotle and the schools. Though Burns is for the most part realistic rather than romantic, though he owes much to the tradition of eighteenth-century poetry, he is none the less a very different sort of poet from the polished, courtly Pope. In his verses we hear also the echoes of the French Revolution, which was ushering in a new period of European history, and with it a new set of literary ideals.

For the history of the period the standard work is W. E. H. Lecky's *History of England in the*

*ighteenth Century* in seven volumes. A briefer account may be found in pp. 701–806 of J. R. reen's *Short History of the English People*. Another standard work is Sir Leslie Stephen's *English hought in the Eighteenth Century*. For the literary history of the century, see Volumes IX and X the *Cambridge History of English Literature*. G. Saintsbury's *Peace of the Augustans* is "a survey eighteenth-century literature as a place of rest and refreshment." Thackeray's *English Humorts of the Eighteenth Century* is stimulating and delightful, but not always trustworthy. An exllent account of manners and customs may be found in Sir Walter Besant's *London in the Eighnth Century*. Austin Dobson's *Eighteenth Century Vignettes*, in three small volumes, leads one to amusing out-of-the-way corners.

## JONATHAN SWIFT (1667–1745)

Swift lies buried in St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, "where fierce indignation cannot further cerate his heart." These words, translated from the Latin epitaph which he himself composed, re the key to his character and to his writings. So relentlessly does this "sæva indignatio" tear is heart, that to a careless observer he seems heartless. Nothing could seem more heartless than is *Modest Proposal* (1729) — that the poverty-stricken children of Ireland should be sold for utcher's meat to the landlords. Yet in every line of it is throbbing an intense and passionate inignation at the social and economic evils of eighteenth-century Ireland. The proposal is no more hocking than the condition which calls it forth.

Swift's life was a mixture of galling disappointments and hollow triumphs. He was born in 1667 Ireland, though of English ancestry, and was educated, with the financial help of a rich uncle, at rinity College, Dublin. At the age of twenty-two he entered the household of Sir William emple, statesman and author, at Moor Park near London, to whom he became private secretary, here with several interruptions he continued for ten years till Sir William's death. He was now hirty-two, with no prospect of success. While still in Temple's employ, he was ordained priest in he Church of England.

In 1704, he published anonymously the *Tale of a Tub*, a very vigorous and brilliant, but irrevernt and often coarse satire on the divisions of the Christian Church — Roman, Anglican, Presbyerian. This satire, which goes far beyond its immediate subject and includes a scathing analysis f many aspects of human life, is in some ways the most masterly expression of Swift's great powers. n the same year was published the *Battle of the Books*, a brilliant satire on literary controversy. n 1708 was published the *Argument against Abolishing Christianity*, a masterpiece of comic irony.

At last, during the Tory ministry of 1710–14, Swift had his day of triumph, when his enormous owers of intellect had a chance to make themselves felt. It was essential to the Government that t should win and hold public opinion. Swift's vitriolic pen became its chief support. It is no exggeration to say that he kept the Tory ministry in office. Cabinet ministers sought not only his id as pamphleteer but his shrewd advice. He was actually the most powerful man in England. He writes exultantly, but scornfully, of it all in the *Journal to Stella*, a diary addressed to his dearst friend, Miss Esther Johnson. Swift's devotion to "Stella" is a fascinating but baffling romance. There is some reason to believe that he was secretly married to her; but no marriage was ever acknowledged; and the friendship, which began when Stella was a little girl and continued till her death in 1728, was free from any breath of scandal.

Swift had struggled through poverty and bad health to gain power. By the time he had achieved t, he had developed such a contempt for humanity and all its pettiness that he despised the plaudits of his Lilliputian countrymen. For his services to the Government he expected to be rewarded by appointment to a bishopric; but instead he was given only the deanship of St. Patrick's, Dublin. Thither he went on the death of Queen Anne in 1714, and lived there the rest of his life, with only occasional visits to England. This life seemed to him little better than exile; he was a bitter, disappointed man. But he none the less identified himself with the interests of Ireland. In the *Drapier's Letters* (1724) he vigorously espoused the cause of Ireland against English injustice and oppression. He became the most popular figure in Dublin and in all Ireland; but he scorned this popularity even more than he had the deference paid to him during the period of his political power in London.

In 1726, appeared the *Travels of Lemuel Gulliver*, his most famous work, written, he tells us, "to vex the world rather than divert it." It is a satire on government and society, and on the fundamental and universal qualities of human nature. In Lilliput we see through the eyes of Gulliver the essential pettiness of our life. The account of this land of pygmies, where all nature is reduced to a scale of inches for feet, is elaborated with such delightful wit and fancy that one is in danger of forgetting the bitter satire, the pessimism and misanthropy, which underlie it — qualities which come out with increasing clearness in the three remaining voyages, of which the last has been called "a libel on human nature." The attitude of the Lilliputians towards Gulliver — first fear, then

admiration, and at last ingratitude and enmity veiled under the pretense of legal procedure — is the type of the reception which a great man may expect from ordinary humanity.

After Stella's death in 1728, Swift's gloom and bitterness increased. The last years of his life were made more terrible by mental disease. His mind was clouded, his speech nearly gone; he lived in a dreadful apathy. He died in 1745, leaving his property of some ten thousand pounds to found a hospital in Dublin for lunatics and incurables.

Swift is one of the world's greatest satirists; he is also one of the greatest masters of English prose.

The standard edition of his works is that of Temple Scott in the Bohn Library. The best biography is that of Craik.

## GULLIVER'S TRAVELS

1726

*Gulliver's Travels* purports to be the adventures, related by the traveler himself, of one Captain Lemuel Gulliver, whose portrait was prefixed to the first edition. Swift's name did not appear, though his authorship was not long a secret. The book was an immediate and great success, and has ever since been one of the great classics of English prose. In it Swift is making fun of the many books of travel, spiced with marvelous adventure, which were popular in his day. But the satire goes much deeper than that; everywhere Swift exposes by subtle irony and delicate insinuation the vices and follies of our own human society. Lilliput stands for England, and the neighboring kingdom of Blefuscu for France; Whigs and Tories have their counterpart in the Lilliputian parties of low-heels and high; religious dissension and bitter persecution appear in the dispute as to the proper end at which one should break one's breakfast egg. If pride of place and petty jealousy are ridiculous in Lilliput, are they less ridiculous in us merely because we and our world happen to be constructed on a somewhat larger scale of bigness? On his second voyage, Gulliver visits a land of giants, who listen with contemptuous scorn to his glowing account of European civilization, and conclude that our humanity is "the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that Nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth."

### Part I

### A Voyage to Lilliput

#### CHAPTER I

*The Author gives some account of himself and family, his first inducements to travel. He is shipwrecked, and swims for his life, gets safe on shore in the country of* Lilliput, *is made a prisoner, and is carried up country.*

My father had a small estate in Nottinghamshire; I was the third of five sons. He sent me to Emanuel College in Cambridge, at fourteen years old, where I resided three years, and applied myself close to my studies; but the charge of maintaining me (although I had a very scanty allowance) being too great for a narrow fortune, I was bound apprentice to Mr. James Bates, an eminent surgeon in London, with whom I continued four years; and my father now and then sending me small sums of money, I laid them out in learning navigation, and other parts of the mathematics, useful to those who intend to travel, as I always believed it would be some time or other my fortune to do. When I left Mr. Bates, I went down to my father; where, by the assistance of him and my uncle John, and some other relations, I got forty pounds, and a promise of thirty pounds a year to maintain me at Leyden; there I studied physic two years and seven months, knowing it would be useful in long voyages.

Soon after my return from Leyden, I was recommended by my good master, Mr. Bates, to be surgeon to the *Swallow*, Captain Abraham Pannell, commander; with whom I continued three years and a half, making a voyage or two into the Levant, and some other parts. When I came back I resolved to settle in London, to which Mr. Bates, my master, encouraged me, and by him I was recommended to several patients. I took part of a small house in the Old Jury; and being advised to alter my condition, I married Mrs. Mary Burton, second daughter to Mr. Edmund Burton, hosier, in Newgate-street, with whom I received four hundred pounds for a portion.

But, my good master Bates dying in two years after, and I having few friends, my business began to fail; for my conscience would not suffer me to imitate the bad practice of too many among my brethren. Having therefore consulted with my wife, and some of my acquaintance, I determined to go again to sea. I was surgeon successively in two ships, and made several voyages, for six years, to the East and West-Indies, by which I got some addition to my fortune. My hours of leisure I spent in reading the best authors, ancient and modern, being always provided with a good number of books; and when I was ashore, in observing the manners and dispositions of the people, as well as learning

eir language, wherein I had a great facility
r the strength of my memory.

The last of these voyages not proving very
rtunate, I grew weary of the sea, and in-
nded to stay at home with my wife and
mily. I removed from the Old Jury to
tter-Lane, and from thence to Wapping,
pping to get business among the sailors; but
would not turn to account. After three
ars expectation that things would mend, I
cepted an advantageous offer from Captain
illiam Prichard, master of the *Antelope*,
ho was making a voyage to the South-Sea.
e set sail from Bristol, May 4, 1699, and
ir voyage at first was very prosperous.

It would not be proper, for some reasons,
trouble the reader with the particulars of
ir adventures in those seas: let it suffice to
form him, that in our passage from thence
the East-Indies, we were driven by a
olent storm to the north-west of Van Die-
en's Land. By an observation, we found
urselves in the latitude of 30 degrees 2 min-
tes south. Twelve of our crew were dead by
nmoderate labor, and ill food; the rest were
a very weak condition. On the fifth of
ovember, which was the beginning of sum-
er in those parts, the weather being very
azy, the seamen spied a rock, within half a
able's length of the ship; but the wind was
strong, that we were driven directly upon
, and immediately split. Six of the crew,
f whom I was one, having let down the boat
nto the sea, made a shift to get clear of the
ip, and the rock. We rowed, by my com-
utation, about three leagues, till we were
ble to work no longer, being already spent
ith labor while we were in the ship. We
herefore trusted ourselves to the mercy of
he waves, and in about half an hour the boat
as overset by a sudden flurry from the
orth. What became of my companions in
he boat, as well as of those who escaped on
he rock, or were left in the vessel, I cannot
ell; but conclude they were all lost. For
y own part, I swam as fortune directed me,
nd was pushed forward by wind and tide.
often let my legs drop, and could feel no
ottom: but when I was almost gone, and
ble to struggle no longer, I found myself
within my depth; and by this time the storm
as much abated. The declivity was so
mall, that I walked near a mile before I got
o the shore, which I conjectured was about
ight a clock in the evening. I then ad-
anced forward near half a mile, but could
ot discover any sign of houses or inhabit-
nts; at least I was in so weak a condition,
that I did not observe them. I was extremely
tired, and with that, and the heat of the
weather, and about half a pint of brandy that
I drank as I left the ship, I found myself much
inclined to sleep. I lay down on the grass,
which was very short and soft, where I slept
sounder than ever I remember to have done
in my life, and, as I reckoned, about nine
hours; for when I awaked, it was just day-
light. I attempted to rise, but was not able
to stir: for as I happened to lie on my back, I
found my arms and legs were strongly fast-
ened on each side to the ground; and my hair,
which was long and thick, tied down in the
same manner. I likewise felt several slender
ligatures across my body, from my arm-pits
to my thighs. I could only look upwards,
the sun began to grow hot, and the light of-
fended my eyes. I heard a confused noise
about me, but in the posture I lay, could see
nothing except the sky. In a little time I felt
something alive moving on my left leg, which
advancing gently forward over my breast,
came almost up to my chin; when bending
my eyes downwards as much as I could, I
perceived it to be a human creature not six
inches high, with a bow and arrow in his
hands, and a quiver at his back. In the
mean time, I felt at least forty more of the
same kind (as I conjectured) following the
first. I was in the utmost astonishment, and
roared so loud, that they all ran back in a
fright; and some of them, as I was afterwards
told, were hurt with the falls they got by
leaping from my sides upon the ground.
However, they soon returned, and one of
them, who ventured so far as to get a full
sight of my face, lifting up his hands and eyes
by way of admiration, cried out in a shrill, but
distinct voice, *Hekinah degul:* the others re-
peated the same words several times, but then
I knew not what they meant. I lay all this
while, as the reader may believe, in great un-
easiness: at length, struggling to get loose, I
had the fortune to break the strings, and
wrench out the pegs that fastened my left
arm to the ground: for, by lifting it up to my
face, I discovered the methods they had
taken to bind me, and at the same time with
a violent pull, which gave me excessive pain,
I a little loosened the strings that tied down
my hair on the left side, so that I was just
able to turn my head about two inches. But
the creatures ran off a second time, before I
could seize them; whereupon there was a
great shout in a very shrill accent, and after
it ceased, I heard one of them cry aloud *Tolgo
phonac;* when in an instant I felt above an

hundred arrows discharged on my left hand, which pricked me like so many needles; and besides, they shot another flight into the air, as we do bombs in Europe, whereof many, I suppose, fell on my body, (though I felt them not) and some on my face, which I immediately covered with my left hand. When this shower of arrows was over, I fell a groaning with grief and pain, and then striving again to get loose, they discharged another volley larger than the first, and some of them attempted with spears to stick me in the sides; but, by good luck, I had on a buff jerkin, which they could not pierce. I thought it the most prudent method to lie still, and my design was to continue so till night, when, my left hand being already loose, I could easily free myself: and as for the inhabitants, I had reason to believe I might be a match for the greatest armies they could bring against me, if they were all of the same size with him that I saw. But fortune disposed otherwise of me. When the people observed I was quiet, they discharged no more arrows; but, by the noise I heard, I knew their numbers increased; and about four yards from me, over-against my right ear, I heard a knocking for above an hour, like that of people at work; when turning my head that way, as well as the pegs and strings would permit me, I saw a stage erected, about a foot and a half from the ground, capable of holding four of the inhabitants, with two or three ladders to mount it: from whence one of them, who seemed to be a person of quality, made me a long speech, whereof I understood not one syllable. But I should have mentioned, that before the principal person began his oration, he cried out three times, *Langro dehul san:* (these words and the former were afterwards repeated and explained to me). Whereupon immediately about fifty of the inhabitants came and cut the strings that fastened the left side of my head, which gave me the liberty of turning it to the right, and of observing the person and gesture of him that was to speak. He appeared to be of a middle age, and taller than any of the other three who attended him, whereof one was a page that held up his train, and seemed to be somewhat longer than my middle finger; the other two stood one on each side to support him. He acted every part of an orator, and I could observe many periods of threatenings, and others of promises, pity, and kindness. I answered in a few words, but in the most submissive manner, lifting up my left hand, and both my eyes to the sun, as calling him for a witness; and being almost famished with hunger, having not eaten a morsel for some hours before I left the ship, I found the demands of nature so strong upon me, that I could not forbear showing my impatience (perhaps against the strict rules of decency) by putting my finger frequently on my mouth, to signify that I wanted food. The *Hurgo* (for so they call a great lord, as I afterwards learnt) understood me very well. He descended from the stage and commanded that several ladders should be applied to my sides, on which above an hundred of the inhabitants mounted and walked towards my mouth, laden with baskets full of meat, which had been provided and sent thither by the King's orders, upon the first intelligence he received of me. I observed there was the flesh of several animals, but could not distinguish them by the taste. There were shoulders, legs, and loins, shaped like those of mutton, and very well dressed, but smaller than the wings of a lark. I eat them by two or three at a mouthful, and took three loaves at a time, about the bigness of musket bullets. They supplied me as fast as they could, showing a thousand marks of wonder and astonishment at my bulk and appetite. I then made another sign that I wanted drink. They found by my eating, that a small quantity would not suffice me; and being a most ingenious people, they slung up with great dexterity one of their largest hogsheads, then rolled it towards my hand, and beat out the top; I drank it off at a draught, which I might well do, for it did not hold half a pint, and tasted like a small wine of Burgundy, but much more delicious. They brought me a second hogshead, which I drank in the same manner, and made signs for more, but they had none to give me. When I had performed these wonders, they shouted for joy, and danced upon my breast, repeating several times as they did at first, *Hekinah degul.* They made me a sign that I should throw down the two hogsheads, but first warning the people below to stand out of the way, crying aloud, *Borach mivola,* and when they saw the vessels in the air, there was an universal shout of *Hekinah degul.* I confess I was often tempted while they were passing backwards and forwards on my body, to seize forty or fifty of the first that came in my reach, and dash them against the ground. But the remembrance of what I had felt, which probably might not be the worst they could do, and the promise of honor I made them, for so I interpreted my submissive behavior, soon drove out these imaginations.

sides, I now considered myself as bound by laws of hospitality to a people who had ated me with so much expense and mag- icence. However, in my thoughts, I could sufficiently wonder at the intrepidity of se diminutive mortals, who durst venture mount and walk upon my body, while one my hands was at liberty, without tremb- g at the very sight of so prodigious a crea- e as I must appear to them. After some ne, when they observed that I made no re demands for meat, there appeared be- e me a person of high rank from his Im- rial Majesty. His Excellency, having unted on the small of my right leg, ad- nced forwards up to my face, with about lozen of his retinue. And producing his edentials under the Signet Royal, which applied close to my eyes, spoke about ten nutes, without any signs of anger, but th a kind of determinate resolution; often inting forwards, which, as I afterwards und, was towards the capital city, about lf a mile distant, whither it was agreed by s Majesty in council that I must be con- yed. I answered in few words, but to no rpose, and made a sign with my hand that as loose, putting it to the other (but over s Excellency's head for fear of hurting him his train) and then to my own head and dy, to signify that I desired my liberty. appeared that he understood me well ough, for he shook his head by way of dis- probation, and held his hand in a posture show that I must be carried as a prisoner. owever, he made other signs to let me under- and that I should have meat and drink ough, and very good treatment. Where- on I once more thought of attempting to eak my bonds; but again, when I felt the art of their arrows, upon my face and nds, which were all in blisters, and many of e darts still sticking in them, and observing kewise that the number of my enemies in- eased, I gave tokens to let them know that ey might do with me what they pleased. pon this, the *Hurgo* and his train withdrew, ith much civility and cheerful countenances. oon after I heard a general shout, with fre- uent repetitions of the words, *Peplom selan*, nd I felt great numbers of people on my left de relaxing the cords to such a degree, that was able to turn upon my right, and to ease yself with making water; which I very lentifully did, to the great astonishment of he people, who conjecturing by my motions vhat I was going to do, immediately opened o the right and left on that side to avoid the torrent which fell with such noise and violence from me. But before this, they had daubed my face and both my hands with a sort of ointment very pleasant to the smell, which in a few minutes removed all the smart of their arrows. These circumstances, added to the refreshment I had received by their victuals and drink, which were very nourishing, disposed me to sleep. I slept about eight hours, as I was afterwards assured; and it was no wonder, for the physicians, by the Emperor's order, had mingled a sleepy potion in the hogshead of wine.

It seems that upon the first moment I was discovered sleeping on the ground after my landing, the Emperor had early notice of it by an express; and determined in council that I should be tied in the manner I have related, (which was done in the night while I slept) that plenty of meat and drink should be sent to me, and a machine prepared to carry me to the capital city.

This resolution perhaps may appear very bold and dangerous, and I am confident would not be imitated by any prince in Europe on the like occasion; however, in my opinion, it was extremely prudent, as well as generous: for supposing these people had endeavored to kill me with their spears and arrows while I was asleep, I should certainly have awaked with the first sense of smart, which might so far have roused my rage and strength, as to have enabled me to break the strings wherewith I was tied; after which, as they were not able to make resistance, so they could expect no mercy.

These people are most excellent mathematicians, and arrived to a great perfection in mechanics, by the countenance and encouragement of the Emperor, who is a renowned patron of learning. This prince hath several machines fixed on wheels, for the carriage of trees and other great weights. He often builds his largest men of war, whereof some are nine foot long, in the woods where the timber grows, and has them carried on these engines three or four hundred yards to the sea. Five hundred carpenters and engineers were immediately set at work to prepare the greatest engine they had. It was a frame of wood raised three inches from the ground, about seven foot long and four wide, moving upon twenty-two wheels. The shout I heard was upon the arrival of this engine, which it seems set out in four hours after my landing. It was brought parallel to me as I lay. But the principal difficulty was to raise and place me in this vehicle. Eighty poles, each of one

foot high, were erected for this purpose, and very strong cords of the bigness of packthread were fastened by hooks to many bandages, which the workmen had girt round my neck, my hands, my body, and my legs. Nine hundred of the strongest men were employed to draw up these cords by many pulleys fastened on the poles, and thus, in less than three hours, I was raised and slung into the engine, and there tied fast. All this I was told, for, while the whole operation was performing, I lay in a profound sleep, by the force of that soporiferous medicine infused into my liquor. Fifteen hundred of the Emperor's largest horses, each about four inches and a half high, were employed to draw me towards the metropolis, which, as I said, was half a mile distant.

About four hours after we began our journey, I awaked by a very ridiculous accident; for the carriage being stopped a while to adjust something that was out of order, two or three of the young natives had the curiosity to see how I looked when I was asleep; they climbed up into the engine, and advancing very softly to my face, one of them, an officer in the guards, put the sharp end of his halfpike a good way up into my left nostril, which tickled my nose like a straw, and made me sneeze violently: whereupon they stole off unperceived, and it was three weeks before I knew the cause of my awaking so suddenly. We made a long march the remaining part of that day, and rested at night with five hundred guards on each side of me, half with torches, and half with bows and arrows, ready to shoot me if I should offer to stir. The next morning at sun-rise we continued our march, and arrived within two hundred yards of the city gates about noon. The Emperor, and all his court, came out to meet us; but his great officers would by no means suffer his Majesty to endanger his person by mounting on my body.

At the place where the carriage stopped, there stood an ancient temple, esteemed to be the largest in the whole kingdom; which having been polluted some years before by an unnatural murder, was, according to the zeal of those people, looked upon as profane, and therefore had been applied to common uses, and all the ornaments and furniture carried away. In this edifice it was determined I should lodge. The great gate fronting to the north was about four foot high, and almost two foot wide, through which I could easily creep. On each side of the gate was a small window not above six inches from the ground: into that on the left side, the King's smit conveyed fourscore and eleven chains, li those that hang to a lady's watch in Euro and almost as large, which were locked to left leg with six and thirty padlocks. Ov against this temple, on the other side of t great highway, at twenty foot distance, the was a turret at least five foot high. He the Emperor ascended, with many princip lords of his court, to have an opportunity viewing me, as I was told, for I could not s them. It was reckoned that above an hu dred thousand inhabitants came out of th town upon the same errand; and, in spite my guards, I believe there could not be few than ten thousand at several times, wh mounted my body by the help of ladder But a proclamation was soon issued to forbi it upon pain of death. When the workme found it was impossible for me to break loos they cut all the strings that bound m whereupon I rose up, with as melancholy disposition as ever I had in my life. But th noise and astonishment of the people at see ing me rise and walk, are not to be expressed The chains that held my left leg were abou two yards long, and gave me not only th liberty of walking backwards and forwards i a semicircle; but, being fixed within fou inches of the gate, allowed me to creep in and lie at my full length in the temple.

## CHAPTER II

*The Emperor of* Lilliput, *attended by several o the nobility, comes to see the Author in his con finement. The Emperor's person and habi described. Learned men appointed to teac the Author their language. He gains favo by his mild disposition. His pockets ar searched, and his sword and pistols taken from him.*

When I found myself on my feet, I looke about me, and must confess I never beheld a more entertaining prospect. The country round appeared like a continued garden, and the inclosed fields, which were generally forty foot square, resembled so many beds o flowers. These fields were intermingled with woods of half a stang,[1] and the tallest trees as I could judge, appeared to be seven foot high. I viewed the town on my left hand, which looked like the painted scene of a city in a theatre.

I had been for some hours extremely pressed by the necessities of nature; which was no wonder, it being almost two days since I had last disburthened myself. I was under

1 A stang is a pole or perch; sixteen feet and a half.

reat difficulties between urgency and shame. he best expedient I could think on, was to eep into my house, which I accordingly did; nd shutting the gate after me, I went as far s the length of my chain would suffer, and ischarged my body of that uneasy load. ut this was the only time I was ever guilty f so uncleanly an action; for which I cannot ut hope the candid reader will give some al- owance, after he hath maturely and im- artially considered my case, and the distress was in. From this time my constant prac- ice was, as soon as I rose, to perform that usiness in open air, at the full extent of my hain, and due care was taken every morning efore company came, that the offensive natter should be carried off in wheel-barrows, y two servants appointed for that purpose. would not have dwelt so long upon a circum- tance, that perhaps at first sight may appear ot very momentous, if I had not thought it ecessary to justify my character in point of leanliness to the world; which I am told ome of my maligners have been pleased, pon this and other occasions, to call in uestion.

When this adventure was at an end, I came ack out of my house, having occasion for resh air. The Emperor was already de- cended from the tower, and advancing on horseback towards me, which had like to have cost him dear; for the beast, though very well trained, yet wholly unused to such a sight, which appeared as if a mountain moved before him, reared up on his hinder feet: but that prince, who is an excellent horseman, kept his seat, till his attendants ran in, and held the bridle, while his Majesty had time to dismount. When he alighted, he sur- veyed me round with great admiration,[1] but kept beyond the length of my chain. He ordered his cooks and butlers, who were already prepared, to give me victuals and drink, which they pushed forward in a sort of vehicles upon wheels, till I could reach them. I took these vehicles, and soon emptied them all; twenty of them were filled with meat, and ten with liquor; each of the former afforded me two or three good mouthfuls, and I emp- tied the liquor of ten vessels, which was con- tained in earthen vials, into one vehicle, drinking it off at a draught; and so I did with the rest. The Empress, and young Princes of the blood of both sexes, attended by many ladies, sat at some distance in their chairs; but upon the accident that happened to the Emperor's horse, they alighted, and came near his person, which I am now going to describe. He is taller by almost the breadth of my nail, than any of his court; which alone is enough to strike an awe into the beholders. His features are strong and masculine, with an Austrian lip and arched nose, his complex- ion olive, his countenance erect, his body and limbs well proportioned, all his motions graceful, and his deportment majestic. He was then past his prime, being twenty-eight years and three quarters old, of which he had reigned about seven, in great felicity, and generally victorious. For the better con- venience of beholding him, I lay on my side, so that my face was parallel to his, and he stood but three yards off: however, I have had him since many times in my hand, and therefore cannot be deceived in the descrip- tion. His dress was very plain and simple, and the fashion of it between the Asiatic and the European: but he had on his head a light helmet of gold, adorned with jewels, and a plume on the crest. He held his sword drawn in his hand, to defend himself, if I should happen to break loose; it was almost three inches long, the hilt and scabbard were gold enriched with diamonds. His voice was shrill, but very clear and articulate, and I could distinctly hear it when I stood up. The ladies and courtiers were all most mag- nificently clad, so that the spot they stood upon seemed to resemble a petticoat spread on the ground, embroidered with figures of gold and silver. His Imperial Majesty spoke often to me, and I returned answers, but neither of us could understand a syllable. There were several of his priests and lawyers present (as I conjectured by their habits) who were commanded to address themselves to me, and I spoke to them in as many languages as I had the least smattering of, which were High and Low Dutch, Latin, French, Spanish, Italian, and Lingua Franca; but all to no purpose. After about two hours the court retired, and I was left with a strong guard, to prevent the impertinence, and probably the malice of the rabble, who were very impatient to crowd about me as near as they durst, and some of them had the impu- dence to shoot their arrows at me as I sat on the ground by the door of my house, whereof one very narrowly missed my left eye. But the colonel ordered six of the ringleaders to be seized, and thought no punishment so proper as to deliver them bound into my hands, which some of his soldiers accordingly did, pushing them forwards with the butt- ends of their pikes into my reach; I took them

[1] wonder.

all in my right hand, put five of them into my coat-pocket, and as to the sixth, I made a countenance as if I would eat him alive. The poor man squalled terribly, and the colonel and his officers were in much pain, especially when they saw me take out my pen-knife: but I soon put them out of fear: for, looking mildly, and immediately cutting the strings he was bound with, I set him gently on the ground, and away he ran. I treated the rest in the same manner, taking them one by one out of my pocket, and I observed both the soldiers and people were highly obliged at this mark of my clemency, which was represented very much to my advantage at court.

Towards night I got with some difficulty into my house, where I lay on the ground, and continued to do so about a fortnight; during which time the Emperor gave orders to have a bed prepared for me. Six hundred beds of the common measure were brought in carriages, and worked up in my house; an hundred and fifty of their beds sewn together made up the breadth and length, and these were four double, which however kept me but very indifferently from the hardness of the floor, that was of smooth stone. By the same computation they provided me with sheets, blankets, and coverlets, tolerable enough for one who had been so long inured to hardships as I.

As the news of my arrival spread through the kingdom, it brought prodigious numbers of rich, idle, and curious people to see me; so that the villages were almost emptied, and great neglect of tillage and household affairs must have ensued, if his Imperial Majesty had not provided, by several proclamations and orders of state, against this inconveniency. He directed that those who had already beheld me should return home, and not presume to come within fifty yards of my house without licence from court; whereby the secretaries of state got considerable fees.

In the mean time, the Emperor held frequent councils to debate what course should be taken with me; and I was afterwards assured by a particular friend, a person of great quality, who was looked upon to be as much in the secret as any, that the court was under many difficulties concerning me. They apprehended my breaking loose, that my diet would be very expensive, and might cause a famine. Sometimes they determined to starve me, or at least to shoot me in the face and hands with poisoned arrows, which would soon dispatch me; but again they considered, that the stench of so large a carcass might produce a plague in the metropolis, and probably spread through the whole kingdom. In the midst of these consultations, several officers of the army went to the door of the great council-chamber; and two of them being admitted, gave an account of my behavior to the six criminals above-mentioned, which made so favorable an impression in the breast of his Majesty and the whole board, in my behalf, that an Imperial Commission was issued out, obliging all the villages nine hundred yards around the city, to deliver in every morning six beeves, forty sheep, and other victuals for my sustenance, together with a proportionable quantity of bread, and wine, and other liquors; for the due payment of which his Majesty gave assignments upon his treasury. For this prince lives chiefly upon his own demesnes, seldom, except upon great occasions, raising any subsidies upon his subjects, who are bound to attend him in his wars at their own expense. An establishment was also made of six hundred persons to be my domestics, who had board-wages allowed for their maintenance, and tents built for them very conveniently on each side of my door. It was likewise ordered, that three hundred tailors should make me a suit of clothes after the fashion of the country: that six of his Majesty's greatest scholars should be employed to instruct me in their language: and, lastly, that the Emperor's horses, and those of the nobility, and troops of guards, should be frequently exercised in my sight, to accustom themselves to me. All these orders were duly put in execution, and in about three weeks I made a great progress in learning their language; during which time, the Emperor frequently honored me with his visits, and was pleased to assist my masters in teaching me. We began already to converse together in some sort; and the first words I learnt were to express my desire that he would please to give me my liberty, which I every day repeated on my knees. His answer, as I could comprehend it, was, that this must be a work of time, not to be thought on without the advice of his council, and that first I must *Lumos kelmin pesso desmar lon emposo;* that is, swear a peace with him and his kingdom. However, that I should be used with all kindness; and he advised me to acquire, by my patience and discreet behavior, the good opinion of himself and his subjects. He desired I would not take it ill, if he gave orders to certain proper officers to search me; for

rbably I might carry about me several
apons, which must needs be dangerous
ngs, if they answered the bulk of so prodi-
us a person. I said, his Majesty should be
isfied, for I was ready to strip myself, and
n up my pockets before him. This I de-
ered part in words, and part in signs. He
lied, that by the laws of the kingdom I
st be searched by two of his officers; that
knew this could not be done without my
nsent and assistance; that he had so good
opinion of my generosity and justice, as to
st their persons in my hands: that what-
er they took from me should be returned
en I left the country, or paid for at the
e which I would set upon them. I took up
two officers in my hands, put them first
o my coat-pockets, and then into every
ner pocket about me, except my two fobs,
d another secret pocket which I had no
nd should be searched, wherein I had some
tle necessaries that were of no consequence
any but myself. In one of my fobs there
s a silver watch, and in the other a small
antity of gold in a purse. These gentle-
en, having pen, ink, and paper about them,
ade an exact inventory of every thing they
w; and when they had done, desired I would
t them down, that they might deliver it to
e Emperor. This inventory I afterwards
nslated into English, and is word for word
follows:

*Imprimis*, In the right coat-pocket of the
reat Man-Mountain (for so I interpret the
ords *Quinbus Flestrin*) after the strictest
arch, we found only one great piece of
arse cloth, large enough to be a foot-cloth
r your Majesty's chief room of state. In
e left pocket we saw a huge silver chest,
ith a cover of the same metal, which we, the
archers, were not able to lift. We desired
should be opened, and one of us stepping
to it, found himself up to the mid leg in a
rt of dust, some part whereof flying up to
ur faces, set us both a sneezing for several
mes together. In his right waistcoat-
ocket we found a prodigious bundle of white
in substances, folded one over another,
bout the bigness of three men, tied with a
trong cable, and marked with black figures;
which we humbly conceive to be writings,
very letter almost half as large as the palm
f our hands. In the left there was a sort of
ngine, from the back of which were extended
wenty long poles, resembling the palisadoes
efore your Majesty's court; wherewith we
onjecture the Man-Mountain combs his
head; for we did not always trouble him with
questions, because we found it a great difficulty to make him understand us. In the large pocket on the right side of his middle cover (so I translate the word *ranfu-lo*, by which they meant my breeches) we saw a hollow pillar of iron, about the length of a man, fastened to a strong piece of timber, larger than the pillar; and upon one side of the pillar were huge pieces of iron sticking out, cut into strange figures, which we know not what to make of. In the left pocket, another engine of the same kind. In the smaller pocket on the right side, were several round flat pieces of white and red metal, of different bulk; some of the white, which seemed to be silver, were so large and heavy, that my comrade and I could hardly lift them. In the left pocket were two black pillars irregularly shaped: we could not, without difficulty, reach the top of them as we stood at the bottom of his pocket. One of them was covered, and seemed all of a piece: but at the upper end of the other, there appeared a white round substance, about twice the bigness of our heads. Within each of these was enclosed a prodigious plate of steel; which, by our orders, we obliged him to show us, because we apprehended they might be dangerous engines. He took them out of their cases, and told us, that in his own country his practice was to shave his beard with one of these, and cut his meat with the other. There were two pockets which we could not enter: these he called his fobs; they were two large slits cut into the top of his middle cover, but squeezed close by the pressure of his belly. Out of the right fob hung a great silver chain, with a wonderful kind of engine at the bottom. We directed him to draw out whatever was fastened to that chain; which appeared to be a globe, half silver, and half of some transparent metal; for, on the transparent side, we saw certain strange figures circularly drawn, and thought we could touch them, till we found our fingers stopped by that lucid substance. He put this engine to our ears, which made an incessant noise like that of a water-mill. And we conjecture it is either some unknown animal, or the god that he worships; but we are more inclined to the latter opinion, because he assured us, (if we understood him right, for he expressed himself very imperfectly) that he seldom did any thing without consulting it. He called it his oracle, and said it pointed out the time for every action of his life. From the left fob he took out a net almost large enough for a

fisherman, but contrived to open and shut like a purse, and served him for the same use: we found therein several massy pieces of yellow metal, which, if they be real gold, must be of immense value.

Having thus, in obedience to your Majesty's commands, diligently searched all his pockets, we observed a girdle about his waist made of the hide of some prodigious animal; from which, on the left side, hung a sword of the length of five men; and on the right, a bag or pouch divided into two cells, each cell capable of holding three of your Majesty's subjects. In one of these cells were several globes or balls of a most ponderous metal, about the bigness of our heads, and requiring a strong hand to lift them: the other cell contained a heap of certain black grains, but of no great bulk or weight, for we could hold about fifty of them in the palms of our hands.

This is an exact inventory of what we found about the body of the Man-Mountain, who used us with great civility, and due respect to your Majesty's Commission. Signed and sealed on the fourth day of the eighty-ninth moon of your Majesty's auspicious reign.

CLEFRIN FRELOCK, MARSI FRELOCK.

When this inventory was read over to the Emperor, he directed me, although in very gentle terms, to deliver up the several particulars. He first called for my scimitar, which I took out, scabbard and all. In the mean time he ordered three thousand of his choicest troops (who then attended him) to surround me at a distance, with their bows and arrows just ready to discharge: but I did not observe it, for my eyes were wholly fixed upon his Majesty. He then desired me to draw my scimitar, which, although it had got some rust by the sea-water, was in most parts exceeding bright. I did so, and immediately all the troops gave a shout between terror and surprise; for the sun shone clear, and the reflection dazzled their eyes, as I waved the scimitar to and fro in my hand. His Majesty, who is a most magnanimous prince, was less daunted than I could expect; he ordered me to return it into the scabbard, and cast it on the ground as gently as I could, about six foot from the end of my chain. The next thing he demanded, was one of the hollow iron pillars, by which he meant my pocket-pistols. I drew it out, and at his desire, as well as I could, expressed to him the use of it; and charging it only with powder, which, by the closeness of my pouch, happened to escape wetting in the sea (an inconvenience against which all prudent mariners take special care to provide,) I first cautioned the Emperor not to be afraid, and then I let it off in the air. The astonishment here was much greater than at the sight of my scimitar. Hundreds fell down as if they had been struck dead; and even the Emperor, although he stood his ground, could not recover himself in some time. I delivered up both my pistols in the same manner as I had done my scimitar, and then my pouch of powder and bullets; begging him that the former might be kept from fire, for it would kindle with the smallest spark, and blow up his imperial palace into the air. I likewise delivered up my watch, which the Emperor was very curious to see, and commanded two of his tallest yeomen of the guards to bear it on a pole upon their shoulders, as draymen in England do a barrel of ale. He was amazed at the continual noise it made, and the motion of the minute-hand, which he could easily discern; for their sight is much more acute than ours: and asked the opinions of his learned men about him, which were various and remote, as the reader may well imagine without my repeating; although indeed I could not very perfectly understand them. I then gave up my silver and copper money, my purse, with nine large pieces of gold, and some smaller ones; my knife and razor, my comb and silver snuff-box, my handkerchief and journal-book. My scimitar, pistols, and pouch, were conveyed in carriages to his Majesty's stores; but the rest of my goods were returned to me.

I had, as I before observed, one private pocket which escaped their search, wherein there was a pair of spectacles, (which I sometimes use for the weakness of my eyes) a pocket perspective, and several other little conveniences; which being of no consequence to the Emperor, I did not think myself bound in honor to discover, and I apprehended they might be lost or spoiled if I ventured them out of my possession.

## CHAPTER III

*The Author diverts the Emperor, and his nobility of both sexes, in a very uncommon manner. The diversions of the court of* Lilliput *described. The Author has his liberty granted him upon certain conditions.*

My gentleness and good behavior had gained so far on the Emperor and his court, and indeed upon the army and people in general, that I began to conceive hopes of

ng my liberty in a short time. I took all ible methods to cultivate this favorable osition. The natives came by degrees to ess apprehensive of any danger from me. uld sometimes lie down, and let five or of them dance on my hand. And at last oys and girls would venture to come and at hide and seek in my hair. I had now e a good progress in understanding and king their language. The Emperor had ind one day to entertain me with several ne country shows, wherein they exceed all ons I have known, both for dexterity and nificence. I was diverted with none so h as that of the rope-dancers, performed n a slender white thread, extended about foot, and twelve inches from the ground. on which I shall desire liberty, with the ler's patience, to enlarge a little.

his diversion is only practised by those sons who are candidates for great employnts, and high favor, at court. They are ned in this art from their youth, and are always of noble birth, or liberal educan. When a great office is vacant, either death or disgrace, (which often happens) or six of those candidates petition the peror to entertain his Majesty and the rt with a dance on the rope, and whoever aps the highest without falling, succeeds he office. Very often the chief ministers mselves are commanded to show their l, and to convince the Emperor that they e not lost their faculty. Flimnap, the asurer, is allowed to cut a caper on the ight rope, at least an inch higher than other lord in the whole empire.[1] I have n him do the summerset several times toher upon a trencher fixed on the rope, ich is no thicker than a common packead in England. My friend Reldresal, ncipal Secretary for Private Affairs, is, in opinion, if I am not partial, the second er the Treasurer; the rest of the great ofrs are much upon a par.

These diversions are often attended with al accidents, whereof great numbers are on ord. I myself have seen two or three ndidates break a limb. But the danger is ch greater when the ministers themselves commanded to show their dexterity; for, contending to excel themselves and their ows, they strain so far, that there is hardly e of them who hath not received a fall, and ne of them two or three. I was assured t a year or two before my arrival, Flimnap would have infallibly broke his neck, if one of the King's cushions, that accidentally lay on the ground, had not weakened the force of his fall.[1]

There is likewise another diversion, which is only shown before the Emperor and Empress, and first minister, upon particular occasions. The Emperor lays on the table three fine silken threads of six inches long. One is blue, the other red, and the third green.[2] These threads are proposed as prizes for those persons whom the Emperor hath a mind to distinguish by a peculiar mark of his favor. The ceremony is performed in his Majesty's great chamber of state, where the candidates are to undergo a trial of dexterity very different from the former, and such as I have not observed the least resemblance of in any other country of the old or the new world. The Emperor holds a stick in his hands, both ends parallel to the horizon, while the candidates advancing one by one, sometimes leap over the stick, sometimes creep under it backwards and forwards several times, according as the stick is advanced or depressed. Sometimes the Emperor holds one end of the stick, and his first minister the other; sometimes the minister has it entirely to himself. Whoever performs his part with most agility, and holds out the longest in leaping and creeping, is rewarded with the blue-colored silk; the red is given to the next, and the green to the third, which they all wear girt twice round about the middle; and you see few great persons about this court, who are not adorned with one of these girdles.

The horses of the army, and those of the royal stables, having been daily led before me, were no longer shy, but would come up to my very feet without starting. The riders would leap them over my hand as I held it on the ground, and one of the Emperor's huntsmen, upon a larger courser, took my foot, shoe and all; which was indeed a prodigious leap. I had the good fortune to divert the Emperor one day after a very extraordinary manner. I desired he would order several sticks of two foot high, and the thickness of an ordinary cane, to be brought me; whereupon his Majesty commanded the master of his woods to give directions accordingly; and the next morning six woodmen arrived with as many carriages, drawn by eight horses to each. I took nine of these sticks, fixing them

Flimnap is probably intended to suggest Sir Robert Walpole.

1 At one crisis of his career, Walpole was helped by the Duchess of Kendall, mistress of George I.

2 The ribbons of the orders of the Garter, the Bath, the Thistle.

firmly in the ground in a quadrangular figure, two foot and a half square. I took four other sticks, and tied them parallel at each corner, about two foot from the ground; then I fastened my handkerchief to the nine sticks that stood erect, and extended it on all sides, till it was tight as the top of a drum; and the four parallel sticks rising about five inches higher than the handkerchief, served as ledges on each side. When I had finished my work, I desired the Emperor to let a troop of his best horse, twenty-four in number, come and exercise upon this plain. His Majesty approved of the proposal, and I took them up, one by one, in my hands, ready mounted and armed, with the proper officers to exercise them. As soon as they got into order, they divided into two parties, performed mock skirmishes, discharged blunt arrows, drew their swords, fled and pursued, attacked and retired, and in short discovered the best military discipline I ever beheld. The parallel sticks secured them and their horses from falling over the stage; and the Emperor was so much delighted that he ordered this entertainment to be repeated several days, and once was pleased to be lifted up and give the word of command; and, with great difficulty, persuaded even the Empress herself to let me hold her in her close chair within two yards of the stage, from whence she was able to take a full view of the whole performance. It was my good fortune that no ill accident happened in these entertainments, only once a fiery horse, that belonged to one of the captains, pawing with his hoof, struck a hole in my handkerchief, and his foot slipping, he overthrew his rider and himself; but I immediately relieved them both, and covering the hole with one hand, I set down the troop with the other, in the same manner as I took them up. The horse that fell was strained in the left shoulder, but the rider got no hurt, and I repaired my handkerchief as well as I could: however, I would not trust to the strength of it any more in such dangerous enterprises.

About two or three days before I was set at liberty, as I was entertaining the court with these kind of feats, there arrived an express to inform his Majesty, that some of his subjects riding near the place where I was first taken up, had seen a great black substance lying on the ground, very oddly shaped, extending its edges round as wide as his Majesty's bedchamber, and rising up in the middle as high as a man; that it was no living creature, as they at first apprehended, for it lay on the grass without motion, and some of them had walked round it several times: that by mounting upon each other's shoulders, they had got to the top, which was flat and even, and stamping upon it they found it was hollow within; that they humbly conceived it might be something belonging to the Man-Mountain; and if his Majesty pleased, they would undertake to bring it with only five horses. I presently knew what they meant, and was glad at heart to receive this intelligence. It seems upon my first reaching the shore after our shipwreck, I was in such confusion, that before I came to the place where I went to sleep, my hat, which I had fastened with a string to my head while I was rowing, and had stuck on all the time I was swimming, fell off after I came to land; the string, as conjecture, breaking by some accident which I never observed, but thought my hat had been lost at sea. I intreated his Imperial Majesty to give orders it might be brought to me as soon as possible, describing to him the use and the nature of it: and the next day the waggoners arrived with it, but not in a very good condition; they had bored two holes in the brim, within an inch and half of the edge, and fastened two hooks in the holes; these hooks were tied by a long cord to the harness, and thus my hat was dragged along for above half an English mile; but the ground in that country being extremely smooth and level, it received less damage than I expected.

Two days after this adventure, the Emperor having ordered that part of his army which quarters in and about his metropolis, to be in readiness, took a fancy of diverting himself in a very singular manner. He desired I would stand like a Colossus, with my legs as far asunder as I conveniently could. He then commanded his General (who was an old experienced leader, and a great patron of mine) to draw up the troops in close order, and march them under me; the foot by twenty-four in a breast, and the horse by sixteen, with drums beating, colors flying, and pikes advanced. This body consisted of three thousand foot, and a thousand horse. His Majesty gave orders, upon pain of death, that every soldier in his march should observe the strictest decency with regard to my person; which, however, could not prevent some of the younger officers from turning up their eyes as they passed under me. And, to confess the truth, my breeches were at that time in so ill a condition, that they afforded some opportunities for laughter and admiration.

had sent so many memorials and peti-
s for my liberty, that his Majesty at
th mentioned the matter, first in his
net, and then in a full council; where it
opposed by none, except Skyresh Bolgo-
who was pleased, without any provoca-
, to be my mortal enemy. But it was
ied against him by the whole board, and
irmed by the Emperor. That minister
*Galbet*, or Admiral of the Realm, very
h in his master's confidence, and a person
versed in affairs, but of a morose and
complexion. However, he was at length
uaded to comply; but prevailed that the
les and conditions upon which I should
et free, and to which I must swear, should
rawn up by himself. These articles were
ught to me by Skyresh Bolgolam in per-
attended by two under-secretaries, and
ral persons of distinction. After they
read, I was demanded to swear to the
formance of them; first in the manner of
own country, and afterwards in the
thod prescribed by their laws; which was
hold my right foot in my left hand, to
e the middle finger of my right hand on
crown of my head, and my thumb on the
of my right ear. But because the reader
be curious to have some idea of the
e and manner of expression peculiar to
people, as well as to know the articles
n which I recovered my liberty, I have
le a translation of the whole instrument
d for word, as near as I was able, which I
offer to the public.

OLBASTO MOMAREM EVLAME GURDILO
FIN MULLY ULLY GUE, most mighty Em-
or of Lilliput, delight and terror of the
erse, whose dominions extend five thou-
l *blustrugs* (about twelve miles in circum-
nce) to the extremities of the globe;
narch of all monarchs, taller than the sons
hen; whose feet press down to the centre,
whose head strikes against the sun; at
se nod the princes of the earth shake their
es; pleasant as the spring, comfortable
he summer, fruitful as autumn, dreadful
winter. His most sublime Majesty pro-
eth to the Man-Mountain, lately arrived
our celestial dominions, the following ar-
es, which by a solemn oath he shall be
ged to perform.

irst, The Man-Mountain shall not depart
n our dominions, without our licence un-
our great seal.

d, He shall not presume to come into our
tropolis, without our express order; at which time, the inhabitants shall have two hours warning to keep within their doors.

3rd, The said Man-Mountain shall confine his walks to our principal high roads, and not offer to walk or lie down in a meadow or field of corn.

4th, As he walks the said roads, he shall take the utmost care not to trample upon the bodies of any of our loving subjects, their horses, or carriages, nor take any of our subjects into his hands, without their own consent.

5th, If an express requires extraordinary dispatch, the Man-Mountain shall be obliged to carry in his pocket the messenger and horse a six days journey once in every moon, and return the said messenger back (if so required) safe to our Imperial Presence.

6th, He shall be our ally against our enemies in the Island of Blefuscu, and do his utmost to destroy their fleet, which is now preparing to invade us.

7th, That the said Man-Mountain shall, at his times of leisure, be aiding and assisting our workmen, in helping to raise certain great stones, towards covering the wall of the principal park, and other our royal buildings.

8th, That the said Man-Mountain shall, in two moons' time, deliver in an exact survey of the circumference of our dominions by a computation of his own paces round the coast.

Lastly, That upon his solemn oath to observe all the above articles, the said Man-Mountain shall have a daily allowance of meat and drink sufficient for the support of 1728 of our subjects, with free access to our Royal Person, and other marks of our favor. Given at our Palace at Belfaborac the twelfth day of the ninety-first moon of our reign.

I swore and subscribed to these articles with great cheerfulness and content, although some of them were not so honorable as I could have wished; which proceeded wholly from the malice of Skyresh Bolgolam, the High-Admiral: whereupon my chains were immediately unlocked, and I was at full liberty; the Emperor himself in person did me the honor to be by at the whole ceremony. I made my acknowledgements by prostrating myself at his Majesty's feet: but he commanded me to rise; and after many gracious expressions, which, to avoid the censure of vanity, I shall not repeat, he added, that he hoped I should prove a useful servant, and well deserve all the favors he had already conferred upon me, or might do for the future.

The reader may please to observe, that in the last article for the recovery of my liberty, the Emperor stipulates to allow me a quantity of meat and drink sufficient for the support of 1728 Lilliputians. Some time after, asking a friend at court how they came to fix on that determinate number; he told me that his Majesty's mathematicians, having taken the height of my bod by the help of a quadrant, and finding it to exceed theirs in the proportion of twelve to one they concluded from the similarity of their bodies, that mine must contain at least 1728 of theirs, and consequently would require as much food as was necessary to support that number of Lilliputians. By which, the reader may conceive an idea of the ingenuity of that people, as well as the prudent and exact economy of so great a prince.

## CHAPTER IV

Mildendo, *the metropolis of* Lilliput, *described, together with the Emperor's palace. A conversation between the Author and a principal Secretary, concerning the affairs of that empire. The Author's offer to serve the Emperor in his wars.*

The first request I made after I had obtained my liberty, was, that I might have licence to see Mildendo, the metropolis; which the Emperor easily granted me, but with a special charge to do no hurt either to the inhabitants or their houses. The people had notice by proclamation of my design to visit the town. The wall which encompassed it, is two foot and a half high, and at least eleven inches broad, so that a coach and horses may be driven very safely round it; and it is flanked with strong towers at ten foot distance. I stepped over the great Western Gate, and passed very gently, and sideling through the two principal streets, only in my short waistcoat, for fear of damaging the roofs and eaves of the houses with the skirts of my coat. I walked with the utmost circumspection, to avoid treading on any stragglers, that might remain in the streets, although the orders were very strict, that all people should keep in their houses, at their own peril. The garret windows and tops of houses were so crowded with spectators, that I thought in all my travels I had not seen a more populous place. The city is an exact square, each side of the wall being five hundred foot long. The two great streets, which run cross and divide it into four quarters, are five foot wide. The lanes and alleys, which I could not enter, but only viewe them as I passed, are from twelve to eightee inches. The town is capable of holding fiv hundred thousand souls. The houses ar from three to five stories. The shops an markets well provided.

The Emperor's palace is in the centre c the city, where the two great streets mee It is inclosed by a wall of two foot high, an twenty foot distant from the buildings. had his Majesty's permission to step ove this wall; and the space being so wide be tween that and the palace, I could easily vie it on every side. The outward court is square of forty foot, and includes two othe courts: in the inmost are the royal apar ments, which I was very desirous to see, bu found it extremely difficult; for the grea gates, from one square into another, were bu eighteen inches high, and seven inches wid Now the buildings of the outer court were a least five foot high, and it was impossible fo me to stride over them without infinite dan age to the pile, though the walls were strongl built of hewn stone, and four inches thic At the same time the Emperor had a gre desire that I should see the magnificence o his palace; but this I was not able to do ti three days after, which I spent in cuttin down with my knife some of the largest tre in the royal park, about an hundred yar distant from the city. Of these trees I mad two stools, each about three foot high, an strong enough to bear my weight. Th people having received notice a second tim I went again through the city to the palac with my two stools in my hands. When came to the side of the outer court, I stoo upon one stool, and took the other in m hand: this I lifted over the roof, and gent set it down on the space between the first an second court, which was eight foot wide. then stept over the buildings very conve iently from one stool to the other, and dre up the first after me with a hooked stick. I this contrivance I got into the inmost cou and lying down upon my side, I applied m face to the windows of the middle stori which were left open on purpose, and d covered the most splendid apartments th can be imagined. There I saw the Empre and the young Princes, in their several loc ings, with their chief attendants about the Her Imperial Majesty was pleased to sm very graciously upon me, and gave me out the window her hand to kiss.

But I shall not anticipate the reader wi farther descriptions of this kind, because I

serve them for a greater work, which is now almost ready for the press, containing a general description of this empire, from its first erection, through a long series of princes, with a particular account of their wars and politics, laws, learning, and religion: their plants and animals, their peculiar manners and customs, with other matters very curious and useful; my chief design at present being only to relate such events and transactions as happened to the public, or to myself, during a residence of about nine months in that empire.

One morning, about a fortnight after I had obtained my liberty, Reldresal, Principal Secretary (as they style him) of Private Affairs, came to my house attended only by one servant. He ordered his coach to wait at a distance, and desired I would give him an hour's audience; which I readily consented to, on account of his quality and personal merits, as well as the many good offices he had done me during my solicitations at court. I offered to lie down, that he might the more conveniently reach my ear; but he chose rather to let me hold him in my hand during our conversation. He began with compliments on my liberty; said he might pretend to some merit in it: but, however, added, that if it had not been for the present situation of things at court, perhaps I might not have obtained it so soon. For, said he, as flourishing a condition as we may appear to be in to foreigners, we labor under two mighty evils; a violent faction at home, and the danger of an invasion by a most potent enemy from abroad. As to the first, you are to understand, that for about seventy moons past there have been two struggling parties in this empire, under the names of *Tramecksan* and *Slamecksan*, from the high and low heels on their shoes, by which they distinguish themselves.[1] It is alleged indeed, that the high heels are most agreeable to our ancient constitution: but however this be, his Majesty hath determined to make use of only low heels in the administration of the government, and all offices in the gift of the Crown, as you cannot but observe; and particularly, that his Majesty's Imperial heels are lower at least by a *drurr* than any of his court; (*drurr* is a measure about the fourteenth part of an inch). The animosities between these two parties run so high, that they will neither eat nor drink, nor talk with each other. We compute the *Tramecksan*, or High-Heels, to exceed us in number; but the power is wholly on our side. We apprehend his Imperial Highness, the Heir to the Crown, to have some tendency towards the High-Heels; at least we can plainly discover one of his heels higher than the other, which gives him a hobble in his gait.[1] Now, in the midst of these intestine disquiets, we are threatened with an invasion from the Island of Blefuscu,[2] which is the other great empire of the universe, almost as large and powerful as this of his Majesty. For as to what we have heard you affirm, that there are other kingdoms and states in the world inhabited by human creatures as large as yourself, our philosophers are in much doubt, and would rather conjecture that you dropped from the moon, or one of the stars; because it is certain, that an hundred mortals of your bulk would, in a short time, destroy all the fruits and cattle of his Majesty's dominions. Besides, our histories of six thousand moons make no mention of any other regions, than the two great empires of Lilliput and Blefuscu. Which two mighty powers have, as I was going to tell you, been engaged in a most obstinate war for six and thirty moons past. It began upon the following occasion. It is allowed on all hands, that the primitive way of breaking eggs, before we eat them, was upon the larger end: but his present Majesty's grandfather,[3] while he was a boy, going to eat an egg, and breaking it according to the ancient practice, happened to cut one of his fingers. Whereupon the Emperor his father published an edict, commanding all his subjects, upon great penalties, to break the smaller end of their eggs. The people so highly resented this law, that our histories tell us there have been six rebellions raised on that account; wherein one Emperor lost his life, and another his crown.[4] These civil commotions were constantly fomented by the monarchs of Blefuscu; and when they were quelled, the exiles always fled for refuge to that empire. It is computed, that eleven thousand persons have, at several times, suffered death, rather than submit to break their eggs at the smaller end. Many hundred large volumes have been published upon this controversy: but the books of the Big-Endians have been long forbidden, and the whole party rendered incapable by law of holding employments. During the course of these

1 Tories and Whigs.

1 George II, while Prince of Wales, had a foot in each political camp.

2 Blefuscu stands for France, the hereditary foe of England.

3 Henry VIII. The Little-Endians are the Protestants; the Big-Endians, the Roman Catholics.

4 Charles I and James II.

troubles, the Emperors of Blefuscu did frequently expostulate by their ambassadors, accusing us of making a schism in religion, by offending against a fundamental doctrine of our great prophet Lustrog, in the fifty-fourth chapter of the Blundecral (which is their Alcoran). This, however, is thought to be a mere strain upon the text: for the words are these; *That all true believers break their eggs at the convenient end:* and which is the convenient end, seems, in my humble opinion, to be left to every man's conscience, or at least in the power of the chief magistrate to determine. Now the Big-Endian exiles have found so much credit in the Emperor of Blefuscu's court, and so much private assistance and encouragement from their party here at home, that a bloody war has been carried on between the two empires for six and thirty moons with various success; during which time we have lost forty capital ships, and a much greater number of smaller vessels, together with thirty thousand of our best seamen and soldiers; and the damage received by the enemy is reckoned to be somewhat greater than ours. However, they have now equipped a numerous fleet, and are just preparing to make a descent upon us; and his Imperial Majesty, placing great confidence in your valor and strength, has commanded me to lay this account of his affairs before you.

I desired the Secretary to present my humble duty to the Emperor, and to let him know, that I thought it would not become me, who was a foreigner, to interfere with parties; but I was ready, with the hazard of my life, to defend his person and state against all invaders.

## CHAPTER V

*The Author, by an extraordinary stratagem, prevents an invasion. A high title of honor is conferred upon him. Ambassadors arrive from the Emperor of* Blefuscu, *and sue for peace. The Empress's apartment on fire by an accident; the Author instrumental in saving the rest of the palace.*

The Empire of Blefuscu is an island situated to the north north-east side of Lilliput, from whence it is parted only by a channel of eight hundred yards wide. I had not yet seen it, and upon this notice of an intended invasion, I avoided appearing on that side of the coast, for fear of being discovered by some of the enemy's ships, who had received no intelligence of me, all intercourse between the two empires having been strictly forbidden during the war, upon pain of death, and an embargo laid by our Emperor upon all vessels whatsoever. I communicated to his Majesty a project I had formed of seizing the enemy's whole fleet: which, as our scouts assured us, lay at anchor in the harbor ready to sail with the first fair wind. I consulted the most experienced seamen, upon the depth of the channel, which they had often plumbed, who told me, that in the middle at high-water it was seventy *glumgluffs* deep, which is about six foot of European measure; and the rest of it fifty *glumgluffs* at most. I walked towards the north-east coast over against Blefuscu; and lying down behind a hillock, took out my small pocket perspective-glass, and viewed the enemy's fleet at anchor, consisting of about fifty men of war, and a great number of transports: I then came back to my house, and gave order (for which I had a warrant) for a great quantity of the strongest cable and bars of iron. The cable was about as thick as packthread, and the bars of the length and size of a knitting-needle. I trebled the cable to make it stronger, and for the same reason I twisted three of the iron bars together, binding the extremities into a hook. Having thus fixed fifty hooks to as many cables, I went back to the north-east coast, and putting off my coat, shoes, and stockings, walked into the sea in my leathern jerkin, about half an hour before high water. I waded with what haste I could, and swam in the middle about thirty yards till I felt ground; I arrived at the fleet in less than half an hour. The enemy was so frighted when they saw me, that they leaped out of their ships, and swam to shore, where there could not be fewer than thirty thousand souls. I then took my tackling, and fastening a hook to the hole at the prow of each, I tied all the cords together at the end. While I was thus employed, the enemy discharged several thousand arrows, many of which stuck in my hands and face; and besides the excessive smart, gave me much disturbance in my work. My greatest apprehension was for my eyes, which I should have infallibly lost, if I had not suddenly thought of an expedient. I kept among other little necessaries a pair of spectacles in a private pocket, which, as I observed before, had scaped the Emperor's searchers. These I took out and fastened as strongly as I could upon my nose, and thus armed went on boldly with my work in spite of the enemy's arrows, many of which struck against the glasses of my spectacles

but without any other effect, further than a little to discompose them. I had now fastened all the hooks, and taking the knot in my hand, began to pull; but not a ship would stir, for they were all too fast held by their anchors, so that the boldest part of my enterprise remained. I therefore let go the cord, and leaving the hooks fixed to the ships, I resolutely cut with my knife the cables that fastened the anchors, receiving about two hundred shots in my face and hands; then I took up the knotted end of the cables, to which my hooks were tied, and with great ease drew fifty of the enemy's largest men of war after me.

The Blefuscudians, who had not the least imagination of what I intended, were at first confounded with astonishment. They had seen me cut the cables, and thought my design was only to let the ships run a-drift, or fall foul on each other: but when they perceived the whole fleet moving in order, and saw me pulling at the end, they set up such a scream of grief and despair, that it is almost impossible to describe or conceive. When I had got out of danger, I stopped awhile to pick out the arrows that stuck in my hands and face; and rubbed on some of the same ointment that was given me at my first arrival, as I have formerly mentioned. I then took off my spectacles, and waiting about an hour, till the tide was a little fallen, I waded through the middle with my cargo, and arrived safe at the royal port of Lilliput.

The Emperor and his whole court stood on the shore, expecting the issue of this great adventure. They saw the ships move forward in a large half-moon, but could not discern me, who was up to my breast in water. When I advanced in the middle of the channel, they were yet in more pain, because I was under water to my neck. The Emperor concluded me to be drowned, and that the enemy's fleet was approaching in a hostile manner: but he was soon eased of his fears, for the channel growing shallower every step I made, I came in a short time within hearing, and holding up the end of the cable by which the fleet was fastened, I cried in a loud voice, *Long live the most puissant Emperor of Lilliput!* This great prince received me at my landing with all possible encomiums, and created me a *Nardac* upon the spot, which is the highest title of honor among them.

His Majesty desired I would take some other opportunity of bringing all the rest of his enemy's ships into his ports. And so unmeasurable is the ambition of princes, that he seemed to think of nothing less than reducing the whole empire of Blefuscu into a province, and governing it by a viceroy; of destroying the Big-Endian exiles, and compelling the people to break the smaller end of their eggs, by which he would remain the sole monarch of the whole world. But I endeavored to divert him from this design, by many arguments drawn from the topics of policy as well as justice; and I plainly protested, that I would never be an instrument of bringing a free and brave people into slavery. And when the matter was debated in council, the wisest part of the ministry were of my opinion.

This open bold declaration of mine was so opposite to the schemes and politics of his Imperial Majesty, that he could never forgive it; he mentioned it in a very artful manner at council, where I was told that some of the wisest appeared, at least by their silence, to be of my opinion; but others, who were my secret enemies, could not forbear some expressions, which by a side-wind reflected on me. And from this time began an intrigue between his Majesty and a junto of ministers maliciously bent against me, which broke out in less than two months, and had like to have ended in my utter destruction. Of so little weight are the greatest services to princes, when put into the balance with a refusal to gratify their passions.

About three weeks after this exploit, there arrived a solemn embassy from Blefuscu, with humble offers of a peace; which was soon concluded upon conditions very advantageous to our Emperor, wherewith I shall not trouble the reader. There were six ambassadors, with a train of about five hundred persons, and their entry was very magnificent, suitable to the grandeur of their master, and the importance of their business. When their treaty was finished, wherein I did them several good offices by the credit I now had, or at least appeared to have at court, their Excellencies, who were privately told how much I had been their friend, made me a visit in form. They began with many compliments upon my valor and generosity, invited me to that kingdom in the Emperor their master's name, and desired me to show them some proofs of my prodigious strength, of which they had heard so many wonders; wherein I readily obliged them, but shall not trouble the reader with the particulars.

When I had for some time entertained their Excellencies, to their infinite satisfaction and surprise, I desired they would do me the

honor to present my most humble respects to the Emperor their master, the renown of whose virtues had so justly filled the whole world with admiration, and whose royal person I resolved to attend before I returned to my own country: accordingly, the next time I had the honor to see our Emperor, I desired his general licence to wait on the Blefuscudian monarch, which he was pleased to grant me, as I could perceive, in a very cold manner; but could not guess the reason, till I had a whisper from a certain person that Flimnap and Bolgolam had represented my intercourse with those ambassadors as a mark of disaffection, from which I am sure my heart was wholly free. And this was the first time I began to conceive some imperfect idea of courts and ministers.

It is to be observed, that these ambassadors spoke to me by an interpreter, the languages of both empires differing as much from each other as any two in Europe, and each nation priding itself upon the antiquity, beauty, and energy of their own tongues, with an avowed contempt for that of their neighbor; yet our Emperor, standing upon the advantage he had got by the seizure of their fleet, obliged them to deliver their credentials, and make their speech in the Lilliputian tongue. And it must be confessed, that from the great intercourse of trade and commerce between both realms, from the continual reception of exiles, which is mutual among them, and from the custom in each empire to send their young nobility and richer gentry to the other, in order to polish themselves by seeing the world, and understanding men and manners; there are few persons of distinction, or merchants, or seamen, who dwell in the maritime parts, but what can hold conversation in both tongues; as I found some weeks after, when I went to pay my respects to the Emperor of Blefuscu, which in the midst of great misfortunes, through the malice of my enemies, proved a very happy adventure to me, as I shall relate in its proper place.

The reader may remember, that when I signed those articles upon which I recovered my liberty, there were some which I disliked upon account of their being too servile, neither could anything but an extreme necessity have forced me to submit. But being now a *Nardac* of the highest rank in that empire, such offices were looked upon as below my dignity, and the Emperor (to do him justice) never once mentioned them to me. However, it was not long before I had an opportunity of doing his Majesty, at least, as I then thought, a most signal service. I was alarmed at midnight with the cries of many hundred people at my door; by which being suddenly awaked, I was in some kind of terror. I heard the word *burglum* repeated incessantly: several of the Emperor's court, making their way through the crowd, entreated me to come immediately to the palace, where her Imperial Majesty's apartment was on fire, by the carelessness of a maid of honor, who fell asleep while she was reading a romance. I got up in an instant; and orders being given to clear the way before me, and it being likewise a moonshine night, I made a shift to get to the palace without trampling on any of the people. I found they had already applied ladders to the walls of the apartment, and were well provided with buckets, but the water was at some distance. These buckets were about the size of a large thimble, and the poor people supplied me with them as fast as they could; but the flame was so violent that they did little good. I might easily have stifled it with my coat, which I unfortunately left behind me for haste, and came away only in my leathern jerkin. The case seemed wholly desperate and deplorable; and this magnificent palace would have infallibly been burnt down to the ground, if, by a presence of mind, unusual to me, I had not suddenly thought of an expedient. I had the evening before drunk plentifully of a most delicious wine, called *glimigrim*, (the Blefuscudians call it *flunec*, but ours is esteemed the better sort) which is very diuretic. By the luckiest chance in the world, I had not discharged myself of any part of it. The heat I had contracted by coming very near the flames, and by laboring to quench them, made the wine begin to operate by urine; which I voided in such a quantity, and applied so well to the proper places, that in three minutes the fire was wholly extinguished, and the rest of that noble pile, which had cost so many ages in erecting, preserved from destruction.

It was now day-light, and I returned to my house without waiting to congratulate with the Emperor: because, although I had done a very eminent piece of service, yet I could not tell how his Majesty might resent the manner by which I had performed it: for, by the fundamental laws of the realm, it is capital in any person, of what quality soever, to make water within the precincts of the palace. But I was a little comforted by a message from his Majesty, that he would give orders to the Grand Justiciary for passing

my pardon in form; which, however, I could not obtain. And I was privately assured, that the Empress, conceiving the greatest abhorrence of what I had done, removed to the most distant side of the court, firmly resolved that those buildings should never be repaired for her use; and, in the presence of her chief confidents could not forbear vowing revenge.

## CHAPTER VI

*Of the inhabitants of* Lilliput; *their learning, laws, and customs, the manner of educating their children. The Author's way of living in that country. His vindication of a great lady.*

Although I intend to leave the description of this empire to a particular treatise, yet in the mean time I am content to gratify the curious reader with some general ideas. As the common size of the natives is somewhat under six inches high, so there is an exact proportion in all other animals, as well as plants and trees: for instance, the tallest horses and oxen are between four and five inches in height, the sheep an inch and a half, more or less: their geese about the bigness of a sparrow, and so the several gradations downwards till you come to the smallest, which, to my sight, were almost invisible; but nature hath adapted the eyes of the Lilliputians to all objects proper for their view: they see with great exactness, but at no great distance. And to show the sharpness of their sight towards objects that are near, I have been much pleased with observing a cook pulling a lark, which was not so large as a common fly; and a young girl threading an invisible needle with invisible silk. Their tallest trees are about seven foot high: I mean some of those in the great royal park, the tops whereof I could but just reach with my fist clinched. The other vegetables are in the same proportion; but this I leave to the reader's imagination.

I shall say but little at present of their learning, which for many ages hath flourished in all its branches among them: but their manner of writing is very peculiar, being neither from the left to the right, like the Europeans; nor from the right to the left, like the Arabians; nor from up to down, like the Chinese; nor from down to up, like the Cascagians; but aslant from one corner of the paper to the other, like ladies in England.

They bury their dead with their heads directly downwards, because they hold an opinion, that in eleven thousand moons they are all to rise again, in which period the earth (which they conceive to be flat) will turn upside down, and by this means they shall, at their resurrection, be found ready standing on their feet. The learned among them confess the absurdity of this doctrine, but the practice still continues, in compliance to the vulgar.

There are some laws and customs in this empire very peculiar; and if they were not so directly contrary to those of my own dear country, I should be tempted to say a little in their justification. It is only to be wished, that they were as well executed. The first I shall mention, relates to informers. All crimes against the state are punished here with the utmost severity; but if the person accused maketh his innocence plainly to appear upon his trial, the accuser is immediately put to an ignominious death; and out of his goods or lands, the innocent person is quadruply recompensed for the loss of his time, for the danger he underwent, for the hardship of his imprisonment, and for all the charges he hath been at in making his defence. Or, if that fund be deficient, it is largely supplied by the Crown. The Emperor does also confer on him some public mark of his favor, and proclamation is made of his innocence through the whole city.

They look upon fraud as a greater crime than theft, and therefore seldom fail to punish it with death; for they allege, that care and vigilance, with a very common understanding, may preserve a man's goods from thieves, but honesty has no fence against superior cunning; and since it is necessary that there should be a perpetual intercourse of buying and selling, and dealing upon credit, where fraud is permitted and connived at, or hath no law to punish it, the honest dealer is always undone, and the knave gets the advantage. I remember when I was once interceding with the Emperor for a criminal who had wronged his master of a great sum of money, which he had received by order, and ran away with; and happening to tell his Majesty, by way of extenuation, that it was only a breach of trust; the Emperor thought it monstrous in me to offer, as a defence, the greatest aggravation of the crime: and truly I had little to say in return, farther than the common answer, that different nations had different customs; for, I confess, I was heartily ashamed.

Although we usually call reward and punishment the two hinges upon which all government turns, yet I could never observe

this maxim to be put in practice by any nation except that of Lilliput. Whoever can there bring sufficient proof that he hath strictly observed the laws of his country for seventy-three moons, hath a claim to certain privileges, according to his quality and condition of life, with a proportionable sum of money out of a fund appropriated for that use: he likewise acquires the title of *Snilpall*, or Legal, which is added to his name, but does not descend to his posterity. And these people thought it a prodigious defect of policy among us, when I told them that our laws were enforced only by penalties, without any mention of reward. It is upon this account that the image of Justice, in their courts of judicature, is formed with six eyes, two before, as many behind, and on each side one, to signify circumspection; with a bag of gold open in her right hand, and a sword sheathed in her left, to show she is more disposed to reward than to punish.

In choosing persons for all employments, they have more regard to good morals than to great abilities; for, since government is necessary to mankind, they believe that the common size of human understandings is fitted to some station or other, and that Providence never intended to make the management of public affairs a mystery, to be comprehended only by a few persons of sublime genius, of which there seldom are three born in an age: but they suppose truth, justice, temperance, and the like, to be in every man's power; the practice of which virtues, assisted by experience and a good intention, would qualify any man for the service of his country, except where a course of study is required. But they thought the want of moral virtues was so far from being supplied by superior endowments of the mind, that employments could never be put into such dangerous hands as those of persons so qualified; and at least, that the mistakes committed by ignorance in a virtuous disposition, would never be of such fatal consequence to the public weal, as the practices of a man whose inclinations led him to be corrupt, and had great abilities to manage, and multiply, and defend his corruptions.

In like manner, the disbelief of a Divine Providence renders a man uncapable of holding any public station; for, since kings avow themselves to be the deputies of Providence, the Lilliputians think nothing can be more absurd than for a prince to employ such men as disown the authority under which he acts.

In relating these and the following laws, I would only be understood to mean the original institutions, and not the most scandalous corruptions into which these people are fallen by the degenerate nature of man. For as to that infamous practice of acquiring great employments by dancing on the ropes or badges of favor and distinction by leaping over sticks and creeping under them, the reader is to observe, that they were first introduced by the grandfather of the Emperor now reigning, and grew to the present height by the gradual increase of party and faction.

Ingratitude is among them a capital crime as we read it to have been in some other countries: for they reason thus, that whoever makes ill returns to his benefactor, must needs be a common enemy to the rest of mankind, from whom he hath received no obligation, and therefore such a man is not fit to live.

Their notions relating to the duties of parents and children differ extremely from ours. For, since the conjunction of male and female is founded upon the great law of nature, in order to propagate and continue the species, the Lilliputians will needs have it, that men and women are joined together like other animals, by the motives of concupiscence; and that their tenderness towards their young proceeds from the like natural principle: for which reason they will never allow, that a child is under any obligation to his father for begetting him, or to his mother for bringing him into the world, which, considering the miseries of human life, was neither a benefit in itself, nor intended so by his parents, whose thoughts in their love-encounters were otherwise employed. Upon these, and the like reasonings, their opinion is, that parents are the last of all others to be trusted with the education of their own children; and therefore they have in every town public nurseries where all parents, except cottagers and laborers, are obliged to send their infants of both sexes to be reared and educated when they come to the age of twenty moons, at which time they are supposed to have some rudiments of docility. These schools are of several kinds, suited to different qualities and to both sexes. They have certain professors well skilled in preparing children for such a condition of life as befits the rank of their parents, and their own capacities as well as inclinations. I shall first say something of the male nurseries, and then of the female.

The nurseries for males of noble or eminent

birth, are provided with grave and learned professors, and their several deputies. The clothes and food of the children are plain and simple. They are bred up in the principles of honor, justice, courage, modesty, clemency, religion, and love of their country; they are always employed in some business, except in the times of eating and sleeping, which are very short, and two hours for diversions, consisting of bodily exercises. They are dressed by men till four years of age, and then are obliged to dress themselves, although their quality be ever so great; and the women attendants, who are aged proportionably to ours at fifty, perform only the most menial offices. They are never suffered to converse with servants, but go together in small or greater numbers to take their diversions, and always in the presence of a professor, or one of his deputies; whereby they avoid those early bad impressions of folly and vice to which our children are subject. Their parents are suffered to see them only twice a year; the visit is to last but an hour. They are allowed to kiss the child at meeting and parting; but a professor, who always stands by on those occasions, will not suffer them to whisper, or use any fondling expressions, or bring any presents of toys, sweetmeats, and the like.

The pension from each family for the education and entertainment of a child, upon failure of due payment, is levied by the Emperor's officers.

The nurseries for children of ordinary gentlemen, merchants, traders, and handicrafts, are managed proportionably after the same manner; only those designed for trades, are put out apprentices at eleven years old, whereas those of persons of quality continue in their exercises till fifteen, which answers to one and twenty with us: but the confinement is gradually lessened for the last three years.

In the female nurseries, the young girls of quality are educated much like the males, only they are dressed by orderly servants of their own sex; but always in the presence of a professor or deputy, till they come to dress themselves, which is at five years old. And if it be found that these nurses ever presume to entertain the girl with frightful or foolish stories, or the common follies practiced by chambermaids among us, they are publicly whipped thrice about the city, imprisoned for a year, and banished for life to the most desolate part of the country. Thus the young ladies there are as much ashamed of being cowards and fools, as the men, and despise all personal ornaments beyond decency and cleanliness: neither did I perceive any difference in their education, made by their difference of sex, only that the exercises of the females were not altogether so robust; and that some rules were given them relating to domestic life, and a smaller compass of learning was enjoined them: for their maxim is, that among people of quality, a wife should be always a reasonable and agreeable companion, because she cannot always be young. When the girls are twelve years old, which among them is the marriageable age, their parents or guardians take them home, with great expressions of gratitude to the professors, and seldom without tears of the young lady and her companions.

In the nurseries of females of the meaner sort, the children are instructed in all kinds of works proper for their sex, and their several degrees: those intended for apprentices, are dismissed at seven years old, the rest are kept to eleven.

The meaner families who have children at these nurseries, are obliged, besides their annual pension, which is as low as possible, to return to the steward of the nursery a small monthly share of their gettings, to be a portion for the child; and therefore all parents are limited in their expenses by the law. For the Lilliputians think nothing can be more unjust, than for people, in subservience to their own appetites, to bring children into the world, and leave the burthen of supporting them on the public. As to persons of quality, they give security to appropriate a certain sum for each child, suitable to their condition; and these funds are always managed with good husbandry, and the most exact justice.

The cottagers and laborers keep their children at home, their business being only to till and cultivate the earth, and therefore their education is of little consequence to the public; but the old and diseased among them are supported by hospitals: for begging is a trade unknown in this empire.

And here it may perhaps divert the curious reader, to give some account of my domestic, and my manner of living in this country, during a residence of nine months and thirteen days. Having a head mechanically turned, and being likewise forced by necessity, I had made for myself a table and chair convenient enough, out of the largest trees in the royal park. Two hundred sempstresses were employed to make me shirts, and linen for my bed and table, all of the

strongest and coarsest kind they could get; which, however, they were forced to quilt together in several folds, for the thickest was some degrees finer than lawn. Their linen was usually three inches wide, and three foot make a piece. The sempstresses took my measure as I lay on the ground, one standing at my neck, and another at my mid-leg, with a strong cord extended, that each held by the end, while the third measured the length of the cord with a rule an inch long. Then they measured my right thumb, and desired no more; for by a mathematical computation, that twice round the thumb is once round the wrist, and so on to the neck and the waist, and by the help of my old shirt, which I displayed on the ground before them for a pattern, they fitted me exactly. Three hundred tailors were employed in the same manner to make me clothes; but they had another contrivance for taking my measure. I kneeled down, and they raised a ladder from the ground to my neck; upon this ladder one of them mounted, and let fall a plumb-line from my collar to the floor, which just answered the length of my coat: but my waist and arms I measured myself. When my clothes were finished, which was done in my house, (for the largest of theirs would not have been able to hold them) they looked like the patch-work made by the ladies in England, only that mine were all of a color.

I had three hundred cooks to dress my victuals, in little convenient huts built about my house, where they and their families lived, and prepared me two dishes a-piece. I took up twenty waiters in my hand, and placed them on the table: an hundred more attended below on the ground, some with dishes of meat, and some with barrels of wine, and other liquors, slung on their shoulders; all which the waiters above drew up as I wanted, in a very ingenious manner, by certain cords, as we draw the bucket up a well in Europe. A dish of their meat was a good mouthful, and a barrel of their liquor a reasonable draught. Their mutton yields to ours, but their beef is excellent. I have had a sirloin so large, that I have been forced to make three bites of it; but this is rare. My servants were astonished to see me eat it bones and all, as in our country we do the leg of a lark. Their geese and turkeys I usually eat at a mouthful, and I must confess they far exceed ours. Of their smaller fowl I could take up twenty or thirty at the end of my knife.

One day his Imperial Majesty, being informed of my way of living, desired that himself and his Royal Consort, with the young Princes of the blood of both sexes, might have the happiness (as he was pleased to call it) of dining with me. They came accordingly, and I placed them in chairs of state on my table, just over against me, with their guards about them. Flimnap, the Lord High Treasurer, attended there likewise with his white staff; and I observed he often looked on me with a sour countenance, which I would not seem to regard, but eat more than usual, in honor to my dear country, as well as to fill the court with admiration. I have some private reasons to believe, that this visit from his Majesty gave Flimnap an opportunity of doing me ill offices to his master. That minister had always been my secret enemy, though he outwardly caressed me more than was usual to the moroseness of his nature. He represented to the Emperor the low condition of his treasury; that he was forced to take up money at great discount; that exchequer bills would not circulate under nine per cent. below par; that in short I had cost his Majesty above a million and a half of *sprugs* (their greatest gold coin, about the bigness of a spangle); and upon the whole, that it would be advisable in the Emperor to take the first fair occasion of dismissing me.

I am here obliged to vindicate the reputation of an excellent lady, who was an innocent sufferer upon my account. The Treasurer took a fancy to be jealous of his wife, from the malice of some evil tongues, who informed him that her Grace had taken a violent affection for my person; and the court-scandal ran for some time, that she once came privately to my lodging. This I solemnly declare to be a most infamous falsehood, without any grounds, farther than that her Grace was pleased to treat me with all innocent marks of freedom and friendship. I own she came often to my house, but always publicly, nor ever without three more in the coach, who were usually her sister and young daughter, and some particular acquaintance; but this was common to many other ladies of the court. And I still appeal to my servants round, whether they at any time saw a coach at my door without knowing what persons were in it. On those occasions, when a servant had given me notice, my custom was to go immediately to the door; and, after paying my respects, to take up the coach and two horses very carefully in my hands, (for, if

there were six horses, the postillion always unharnessed four) and place them on a table, where I had fixed a movable rim quite round, of five inches high, to prevent accidents. And I have often had four coaches and horses at once on my table full of company, while I sat in my chair leaning my face towards them; and when I was engaged with one set, the coachmen would gently drive the others round my table. I have passed many an afternoon very agreeably in these conversations. But I defy the Treasurer, or his two informers (I will name them, and let them make their best of it) Clustril and Drunlo, to prove that any person ever came to me *incognito*, except the secretary Reldresal, who was sent by express command of his Imperial Majesty, as I have before related. I should not have dwelt so long upon this particular, if it had not been a point wherein the reputation of a great lady is so nearly concerned, to say nothing of my own; though I then had the honor to be a *Nardac*, which the Treasurer himself is not; for all the world knows he is only a *Glumglum*, a title inferior by one degree, as that of a Marquis is to a Duke in England, although I allow he preceded me in right of his post. These false informations, which I afterwards came to the knowledge of, by an accident not proper to mention, made Flimnap, the Treasurer, show his lady for some time an ill countenance, and me a worse; and although he were at last undeceived and reconciled to her, yet I lost all credit with him, and found my interest decline very fast with the Emperor himself, who was indeed too much governed by that favorite.

## CHAPTER VII

*The Author, being informed of a design to accuse him of high-treason, makes his escape to Blefuscu. His reception there.*

Before I proceed to give an account of my leaving this kingdom, it may be proper to inform the reader of a private intrigue which had been for two months forming against me.

I had been hitherto all my life a stranger to courts, for which I was unqualified by the meanness of my condition. I had indeed heard and read enough of the dispositions of great princes and ministers; but never expected to have found such terrible effects of them in so remote a country, governed, as I thought, by very different maxims from those in Europe.

When I was just preparing to pay my attendance on the Emperor of Blefuscu, a considerable person at court (to whom I had been very serviceable at a time when he lay under the highest displeasure of his Imperial Majesty) came to my house very privately at night in a close chair, and without sending his name, desired admittance. The chairmen were dismissed; I put the chair, with his Lordship in it, into my coat-pocket: and giving orders to a trusty servant to say I was indisposed and gone to sleep, I fastened the door of my house, placed the chair on the table, according to my usual custom, and sat down by it. After the common salutations were over, observing his Lordship's countenance full of concern, and enquiring into the reason, he desired I would hear him with patience in a matter that highly concerned my honor and my life. His speech was to the following effect, for I took notes of it as soon as he left me:

"You are to know," said he, "that several Committees of Council have been lately called in the most private manner on your account; and it is but two days since his Majesty came to a full resolution.

"You are very sensible that Skyresh Bolgolam (*Galbet*, or High-Admiral) hath been your mortal enemy almost ever since your arrival. His original reasons I know not; but his hatred is much increased since your great success against Blefuscu, by which his glory, as Admiral, is obscured. This Lord, in conjunction with Flimnap the High-Treasurer, whose enmity against you is notorious on account of his lady, Limtoc the General, Lalcon the Chamberlain, and Balmuff the Grand Justiciary, have prepared articles of impeachment against you, for treason, and other capital crimes."

This preface made me so impatient, being conscious of my own merits and innocence, that I was going to interrupt; when he entreated me to be silent, and thus proceeded:

"Out of gratitude for the favors you have done me, I procured information of the whole proceedings, and a copy of the articles, wherein I venture my head for your service."

*Articles of Impeachment against* Quinbus Flestrin (*the* Man-Mountain.)

ARTICLE I

Whereas, by a statute made in the reign of his Imperial Majesty Calin Deffar Plune, it is enacted, that whoever shall make water within the precincts of the royal palace, shall be liable to the pains and penalties

of high treason; notwithstanding, the said Quinbus Flestrin, in open breach of the said law, under color of extinguishing the fire kindled in the apartment of his Majesty's most dear Imperial Consort, did maliciously, traitorously, and devilishly, by discharge of his urine, put out the said fire kindled in the said apartment, lying and being within the precincts of the said royal palace, against the statute in that case provided, *etc.* against the duty, *etc.*

ARTICLE II

That the said Quinbus Flestrin having brought the imperial fleet of Blefuscu into the royal port, and being afterwards commanded by his Imperial Majesty to seize all the other ships of the said empire of Blefuscu, and reduce that empire to a province, to be governed by a viceroy from hence, and to destroy and put to death not only all the Big-Endian exiles, but likewise all the people of that empire, who would not immediately forsake the Big-Endian heresy: He, the said Flestrin, like a false traitor against his most Auspicious, Serene, Imperial Majesty, did petition to be excused from the said service, upon pretence of unwillingness to force the consciences, or destroy the liberties and lives of an innocent people.

ARTICLE III

That, whereas certain ambassadors arrived from the court of Blefuscu, to sue for peace in his Majesty's court: He, the said Flestrin, did, like a false traitor, aid, abet, comfort, and divert the said ambassadors, although he knew them to be servants to a Prince who was lately an open enemy to his Imperial Majesty, and in open war against his said Majesty.

ARTICLE IV

That the said Quinbus Flestrin, contrary to the duty of a faithful subject, is now preparing to make a voyage to the court and empire of Blefuscu, for which he hath received only verbal licence from his Imperial Majesty; and under color of the said licence, doth falsely and traitorously intend to take the said voyage, and thereby to aid, comfort, and abet the Emperor of Blefuscu, so late an enemy, and in open war with his Imperial Majesty aforesaid.

"There are some other articles, but these are the most important, of which I have read you an abstract.

"In the several debates upon this impeachment, it must be confessed that his Majesty gave many marks of his great lenity, often urging the services you had done him, and endeavoring to extenuate your crimes. The Treasurer and Admiral insisted that you should be put to the most painful and ignominious death, by setting fire on your house at night, and the General was to attend with twenty thousand men armed with poisoned arrows to shoot you on the face and hands. Some of your servants were to have private orders to strew a poisonous juice on your shirts, which would soon make you tear your own flesh, and die in the utmost torture. The General came into the same opinion; so that for a long time there was a majority against you. But his Majesty resolving, if possible, to spare your life, at last brought off the Chamberlain.

"Upon this incident, Reldresal, Principal Secretary for Private Affairs, who always approved himself your true friend, was commanded by the Emperor to deliver his opinion, which he accordingly did; and therein justified the good thoughts you have of him. He allowed your crimes to be great, but that still there was room for mercy, the most commendable virtue in a prince, and for which his Majesty was so justly celebrated. He said, the friendship between you and him was so well known to the world, that perhaps the most honorable board might think him partial: however, in obedience to the command he had received, he would freely offer his sentiments. That if his Majesty, in consideration of your services, and pursuant to his own merciful disposition, would please to spare your life, and only give orders to put out both your eyes, he humbly conceived, that by this expedient, justice might in some measure be satisfied, and all the world would applaud the lenity of the Emperor, as well as the fair and generous proceedings of those who have the honor to be his counsellors. That the loss of your eyes would be no impediment to your bodily strength, by which you might still be useful to his Majesty. That blindness is an addition to courage, by concealing dangers from us; that the fear you had for your eyes, was the greatest difficulty in bringing over the enemy's fleet, and it would be sufficient for you to see by the eyes of the ministers, since the greatest princes do no more.

"This proposal was received with the utmost disapprobation by the whole board. Bolgolam, the Admiral, could not preserve

his temper; but rising up in fury, said, he wondered how the Secretary durst presume to give his opinion for preserving the life of a traitor: that the services you had performed, were, by all true reasons of state, the great aggravation of your crimes; that you, who were able to extinguish the fire, by discharge of urine in her Majesty's apartment (which he mentioned with horror), might, at another time, raise an inundation by the same means, to drown the whole palace; and the same strength which enabled you to bring over the enemy's fleet, might serve, upon the first discontent, to carry it back: that he had good reasons to think you were a Big-Endian in your heart; and as treason begins in the heart, before it appears in overt acts, so he accused you as a traitor on that account, and therefore insisted you should be put to death.

"The Treasurer was of the same opinion; he showed to what straits his Majesty's revenue was reduced by the charge of maintaining you, which would soon grow insupportable: that the Secretary's expedient of putting out your eyes was so far from being a remedy against this evil, that it would probably increase it, as it is manifest from the common practice of blinding some kind of fowl, after which they fed the faster, and grew sooner fat: that his sacred Majesty and the Council, who are your judges, were in their own consciences fully convinced of your guilt, which was a sufficient argument to condemn you to death, without the formal proofs required by the strict letter of the law.

"But his Imperial Majesty, fully determined against capital punishment, was graciously pleased to say, that since the Council thought the loss of your eyes too easy a censure, some other may be inflicted hereafter. And your friend the Secretary humbly desiring to be heard again, in answer to what the Treasurer had objected concerning the great charge his Majesty was at in maintaining you, said, that his Excellency, who had the sole disposal of the Emperor's revenue, might easily provide against that evil, by gradually lessening your establishment; by which, for want of sufficient food, you would grow weak and faint, and lose your appetite, and consequently decay and consume in a few months; neither would the stench of your carcass be then so dangerous, when it should become more than half diminished; and immediately upon your death, five or six thousand of his Majesty's subjects might, in two or three days, cut your flesh from your bones, take it away by cart-loads, and bury it in distant parts to prevent infection, leaving the skeleton as a monument of admiration to posterity.

"Thus by the great friendship of the Secretary, the whole affair was compromised. It was strictly enjoined, that the project of starving you by degrees should be kept a secret, but the sentence of putting out your eyes was entered on the books; none dissenting except Bolgolam the Admiral, who, being a creature of the Empress, was perpetually instigated by her Majesty to insist upon your death, she having borne perpetual malice against you, on account of that infamous and illegal method you took to extinguish the fire in her apartment.

"In three days your friend the Secretary will be directed to come to your house, and read before you the articles of impeachment; and then to signify the great lenity and favor of his Majesty and Council, whereby you are only condemned to the loss of your eyes, which his Majesty doth not question you will gratefully and humbly submit to; and twenty of his Majesty's surgeons will attend, in order to see the operation well performed, by discharging very sharp-pointed arrows into the balls of your eyes, as you lie on the ground.

"I leave to your prudence what measures you will take; and to avoid suspicion, I must immediately return in as private a manner as I came."

His Lordship did so, and I remained alone, under many doubts and perplexities of mind.

It was a custom introduced by this prince and his ministry (very different, as I have been assured, from the practices of former times,) that after the court had decreed any cruel execution, either to gratify the monarch's resentment, or the malice of a favorite, the Emperor always made a speech to his whole Council, expressing his great lenity and tenderness, as qualities known and confessed by all the world. This speech was immediately published through the kingdom; nor did any thing terrify the people so much as those encomiums on his Majesty's mercy; because it was observed, that the more these praises were enlarged and insisted on, the more inhuman was the punishment, and the sufferer more innocent. And as to myself, I must confess, having never been designed for a courtier either by my birth or education, I was so ill a judge of things, that I could not discover the lenity and favor of his sentence, but conceived it (perhaps erroneously) rather to be rigorous than gentle. I some-

times thought of standing my trial, for although I could not deny the facts alleged in the several articles, yet I hoped they would admit of some extenuations. But having in my life perused many state-trials, which I ever observed to terminate as the judges thought fit to direct, I durst not rely on so dangerous a decision, in so critical a juncture, and against such powerful enemies. Once I was strongly bent upon resistance, for while I had liberty, the whole strength of that empire could hardly subdue me, and I might easily with stones pelt the metropolis to pieces; but I soon rejected that project with horror, by remembering the oath I had made to the Emperor, the favors I received from him, and the high title of *Nardac* he conferred upon me. Neither had I so soon learned the gratitude of courtiers, to persuade myself that his Majesty's present severities acquitted me of all past obligations.

At last I fixed upon a resolution, for which it is probable I may incur some censure, and not unjustly; for I confess I owe the preserving my eyes, and consequently my liberty, to my own great rashness and want of experience: because if I had then known the nature of princes and ministers, which I have since observed in many other courts, and their methods of treating criminals less obnoxious than myself, I should with great alacrity and readiness have submitted to so easy a punishment. But hurried on by the precipitancy of youth, and having his Imperial Majesty's licence to pay my attendance upon the Emperor of Blefuscu, I took this opportunity, before the three days were elapsed, to send a letter to my friend the Secretary, signifying my resolution of setting out that morning for Blefuscu pursuant to the leave I had got; and without waiting for an answer, I went to that side of the island where our fleet lay. I seized a large man of war, tied a cable to the prow, and, lifting up the anchors, I stripped myself, put my clothes (together with my coverlet, which I brought under my arm) into the vessel, and drawing it after me between wading and swimming, arrived at the royal port of Blefuscu, where the people had long expected me: they lent me two guides to direct me to the capital city, which is of the same name. I held them in my hands till I came within two hundred yards of the gate, and desired them to signify my arrival to one of the secretaries, and let him know, I there waited his Majesty's command. I had an answer in about an hour, that his Majesty, attended by the Royal Family, and great officers of the court, was coming out to receive me. I advanced a hundred yards. The Emperor and his train alighted from their horses, the Empress and ladies from their coaches, and I did not perceive they were in any fright or concern. I lay on the ground to kiss his Majesty's and the Empress's hands. I told his Majesty, that I was come according to my promise, and with the licence of the Emperor my master, to have the honor of seeing so mighty a monarch, and to offer him any service in my power, consistent with my duty to my own prince; not mentioning a word of my disgrace, because I had hitherto no regular information of it, and might suppose myself wholly ignorant of any such design; neither could I reasonably conceive that the Emperor would discover the secret while I was out of his power: wherein, however, it soon appeared I was deceived.

I shall not trouble the reader with the particular account of my reception at this court, which was suitable to the generosity of so great a prince; nor of the difficulties I was in for want of a house and bed, being forced to lie on the ground, wrapped up in my coverlet.

## CHAPTER VIII

*The Author, by a lucky accident, finds means to leave* Blefuscu; *and, after some difficulties, returns safe to his native country.*

Three days after my arrival, walking out of curiosity to the north-east coast of the island, I observed, about half a league off, in the sea, somewhat that looked like a boat overturned. I pulled off my shoes and stockings, and wading two or three hundred yards, I found the object to approach nearer by force of the tide; and then plainly saw it to be a real boat, which I supposed might, by some tempest, have been driven from a ship; whereupon I returned immediately towards the city, and desired his Imperial Majesty to lend me twenty of the tallest vessels he had left after the loss of his fleet, and three thousand seamen under the command of his Vice-Admiral. This fleet sailed round, while I went back the shortest way to the coast where I first discovered the boat; I found the tide had driven it still nearer. The seamen were all provided with cordage, which I had beforehand twisted to a sufficient strength. When the ships came up, I stripped myself, and waded till I came within an hundred yards of the boat, after which I was forced

to swim till I got up to it. The seamen threw me the end of the cord, which I fastened to a hole in the fore-part of the boat, and the other end to a man of war; but I found all my labor to little purpose; for being out of my depth, I was not able to work. In this necessity, I was forced to swim behind, and push the boat forwards as often as I could, with one of my hands; and the tide favoring me, I advanced so far, that I could just hold up my chin and feel the ground. I rested two or three minutes, and then gave the boat another shove, and so on till the sea was no higher than my arm-pits; and now the most laborious part being over, I took out my other cables, which were stowed in one of the ships, and fastening them first to the boat, and then to nine of the vessels which attended me; the wind being favorable, the seamen towed, and I shoved till we arrived within forty yards of the shore; and waiting till the tide was out, I got dry to the boat, and by the assistance of two thousand men, with ropes and engines, I made a shift to turn it on its bottom, and found it was but little damaged.

I shall not trouble the reader with the difficulties I was under by the help of certain paddles, which cost me ten days making, to get my boat to the royal port of Blefuscu, where a mighty concourse of people appeared upon my arrival, full of wonder at the sight of so prodigious a vessel. I told the Emperor that my good fortune had thrown this boat in my way, to carry me to some place from whence I might return into my native country, and begged his Majesty's orders for getting materials to fit it up, together with his licence to depart; which, after some kind expostulations, he was pleased to grant.

I did very much wonder, in all this time, not to have heard of any express relating to me from our Emperor to the court of Blefuscu. But I was afterwards given privately to understand, that his Imperial Majesty, never imagining I had the least notice of his designs, believed I was only gone to Blefuscu in performance of my promise, according to the licence he had given me, which was well known at our court, and would return in a few days when that ceremony was ended. But he was at last in pain at my long absence; and after consulting with the Treasurer, and the rest of that cabal, a person of quality was dispatched with the copy of the articles against me. This envoy had instructions to represent to the monarch of Blefuscu, the great lenity of his master, who was content to punish me no farther than with the loss of my eyes; that I had fled from justice, and if I did not return in two hours, I should be deprived of my title of *Nardac*, and declared a traitor. The envoy further added, that in order to maintain the peace and amity between both empires, his master expected, that his brother of Blefuscu would give orders to have me sent back to Lilliput, bound hand and foot, to be punished as a traitor.

The Emperor of Blefuscu having taken three days to consult, returned an answer consisting of many civilities and excuses. He said, that as for sending me bound, his brother knew it was impossible; that although I had deprived him of his fleet, yet he owed great obligations to me for many good offices I had done him in making the peace. That however both their Majesties would soon be made easy; for I had found a prodigious vessel on the shore, able to carry me on the sea, which he had given order to fit up with my own assistance and direction; and he hoped in a few weeks both empires would be freed from so insupportable an incumbrance.

With this answer the envoy returned to Lilliput, and the monarch of Blefuscu related to me all that had passed; offering me at the same time (but under the strictest confidence) his gracious protection, if I would continue in his service; wherein although I believed him sincere, yet I resolved never more to put any confidence in princes or ministers, where I could possibly avoid it; and therefore, with all due acknowledgements for his favorable intentions, I humble begged to be excused. I told him, that since fortune, whether good or evil, had thrown a vessel in my way, I was resolved to venture myself in the ocean, rather than be an occasion of difference between two such mighty monarchs. Neither did I find the Emperor at all displeased; and I discovered by a certain accident, that he was very glad of my resolution, and so were most of his ministers.

These considerations moved me to hasten my departure somewhat sooner than I intended; to which the court, impatient to have me gone, very readily contributed. Five hundred workmen were employed to make two sails to my boat, according to my directions, by quilting thirteen fold of their strongest linen together. I was at the pains of making ropes and cables, by twisting ten, twenty or thirty of the thickest and strongest of theirs. A great stone that I happened to find, after a long search, by the sea-shore,

served me for an anchor. I had the tallow of three hundred cows for greasing my boat, and other uses. I was at incredible pains in cutting down some of the largest timber-trees for oars and masts, wherein I was, however, much assisted by his Majesty's ship-carpenters, who helped me in smoothing them, after I had done the rough work.

In about a month, when all was prepared, I sent to receive his Majesty's commands, and take my leave. The Emperor and Royal Family came out of the palace; I lay down on my face to kiss his hand, which he very graciously gave me: so did the Empress and young Princes of the blood. His Majesty presented me with fifty purses of two hundred *sprugs* a-piece, together with his picture at full length, which I put immediately into one of my gloves, to keep it from being hurt. The ceremonies at my departure were too many to trouble the reader with at this time.

I stored the boat with the carcases of an hundred oxen, and three hundred sheep, with bread and drink proportionable, and as much meat ready dressed as four hundred cooks could provide. I took with me six cows and two bulls alive, with as many ewes and rams, intending to carry them into my own country, and propagate the breed. And to feed them on board, I had a good bundle of hay, and a bag of corn. I would gladly have taken a dozen of the natives, but this was a thing the Emperor would by no means permit; and besides a diligent search into my pockets, his Majesty engaged my honor not to carry away any of his subjects, although with their own consent and desire.

Having thus prepared all things as well as I was able, I set sail on the twenty-fourth day of September 1701, at six in the morning; and when I had gone about four leagues to the northward, the wind being at south-east, at six in the evening I descried a small island about half a league to the north-west. I advanced forward, and cast anchor on the lee-side of the island, which seemed to be uninhabited. I then took some refreshment, and went to my rest. I slept well, and as I conjecture at least six hours, for I found the day broke in two hours after I awaked. It was a clear night. I eat my breakfast before the sun was up; and heaving anchor, the wind being favorable, I steered the same course that I had done the day before, wherein I was directed by my pocket-compass. My intention was to reach, if possible, one of those islands, which I had reason to believe lay to the north-east of Van Diemen's Land. I discovered nothing all that day; but upon the next, about three in the afternoon, when I had by my computation made twenty-four leagues from Blefuscu, I descried a sail steering to the south-east; my course was due east. I hailed her, but could get no answer; yet I found I gained upon her, for the wind slackened. I made all the sail I could, and in half an hour she spied me, then hung out her ancient, and discharged a gun. It is not easy to express the joy I was in upon the unexpected hope of once more seeing my beloved country, and the dear pledges I had left in it. The ship slackened her sails, and I came up with her between five and six in the evening, September 26; but my heart leaped within me to see her English colors. I put my cows and sheep into my coat-pockets, and got on board with all my little cargo of provisions. The vessel was an English merchantman, returning from Japan by the North and South Seas; the Captain, Mr. John Biddel of Deptford, a very civil man, and an excellent sailor. We were now in the latitude of 30 degrees south; there were about fifty men in the ship; and here I met an old comrade of mine, one Peter Williams, who gave me a good character to the Captain. This gentleman treated me with kindness, and desired I would let him know what place I came from last, and whither I was bound; which I did in a few words, but he thought I was raving, and that the dangers I underwent had disturbed my head; whereupon I took my black cattle and sheep out of my pocket, which, after great astonishment, clearly convinced him of my veracity. I then showed him the gold given me by the Emperor of Blefuscu, together with his Majesty's picture at full length, and some other rarities of that country. I gave him two purses of two hundred *sprugs* each, and promised, when we arrived in England, to make him a present of a cow and a sheep big with young.

I shall not trouble the reader with a particular account of this voyage, which was very prosperous for the most part. We arrived in the Downs on the 13th of April 1702. I had only one misfortune, that the rats on board carried away one of my sheep. I found her bones in a hole, picked clean from the flesh. The rest of my cattle I got safe on shore, and set them a grazing in a bowling green at Greenwich, where the fineness of the grass made them feed very heartily, though I had always feared the contrary: neither could I possibly have preserved them in so long a voyage, if the Captain had not

allowed me some of his best biscuit, which, rubbed to powder, and mingled with water, was their constant food. The short time I continued in England, I made a considerable profit by showing my cattle to many persons of quality, and others: and before I began my second voyage, I sold them for six hundred pounds. Since my last return, I find the breed is considerably increased, especially the sheep; which I hope will prove much to the advantage of the woollen manufacture, by the fineness of the fleeces.

I stayed but two months with my wife and family; for my insatiable desire of seeing foreign countries would suffer me to continue no longer. I left fifteen hundred pounds with my wife, and fixed her in a good house at Redriff. My remaining stock I carried with me, part in money, and part in goods, in hopes to improve my fortunes. My eldest uncle John had left me an estate in land, near Epping, of about thirty pounds a year; and I had a long lease of the Black Bull in Fetter-Lane, which yielded me as much more; so that I was not in any danger of leaving my family upon the parish. My son Johnny, named so after his uncle, was at the Grammar School, and a towardly child. My daughter Betty (who is now well married, and has children) was then at her needle-work. I took leave of my wife, and boy and girl, with tears on both sides, and went on board the *Adventure*, a merchant-ship of three hundred tons, bound for Surat, Captain John Nicholas, of Liverpool, Commander. But my account of this voyage must be referred to the second part of my Travels.

*The End of the First Part*

## AN ARGUMENT

TO PROVE THAT THE ABOLISHING OF

## CHRISTIANITY IN ENGLAND

MAY, AS THINGS NOW STAND, BE ATTENDED WITH SOME INCONVENIENCES, AND PERHAPS NOT PRODUCE THOSE MANY GOOD EFFECTS PROPOSED THEREBY

1708

Despite his misanthropy, which can hardly be called Christian, the Reverend Jonathan Swift was a staunch and loyal Churchman, and the bitter opponent of that French school of philosophy known as Deism, which sought to discredit the Christian religion and to substitute for it what was called the "religion of nature" — a creed arrived at by eliminating from Christian teaching all elements which are not also present in the other great religions of the world, Judaism, Mohametanism, the religion of ancient Greece and Rome. Such a creed, its supporters declared, derived its sanction from the universal consent of human reason, and stood in no need of supernatural revelation. In his *Argument against Abolishing Christianity*, Swift supposes that the "free-thinkers" have formally proposed the abolition of Christianity in England, and proceeds to argue against so radical a step. But the brilliant irony of his "argument" is directed not so much against the avowed "free-thinkers" as against that great mass of professing Christians to whom their religion is no more than an empty formula and a set of comfortably established social conventions. "I hope no reader imagines me so weak as to stand up in the defence of real Christianity, such as used in primitive times to have an influence upon men's belief and actions." Swift's ironical defense of "nominal Christianity" is in reality a crushing indictment of our smug hypocrisies.

I am very sensible what a weakness and presumption it is to reason against the general humor and disposition of the world. I remember it was, with great justice, and due regard to the freedom both of the public and the press, forbidden, upon several penalties, to write, or discourse, or lay wagers against the Union, even before it was confirmed by parliament; because that was looked upon as a design to oppose the current of the people, which, beside the folly of it, is a manifest breach of the fundamental law, that makes this majority of opinion the voice of God. In like manner, and for the very same reasons, it may perhaps be neither safe nor prudent to argue against the abolishing of Christianity, at a juncture when all parties appear so unanimously determined upon the point, as we cannot but allow from their actions, their discourses, and their writings. However, I know not how, whether from the affectation of singularity, or the perverseness of human nature, but so it unhappily falls out, that I cannot be entirely of this opinion. Nay, though I were sure an order were issued for my immediate prosecution by the attorney-general, I should still confess that, in the present posture of our affairs at home or abroad, I do not yet see the absolute necessity of extirpating the Christian religion from among us.

This, perhaps, may appear too great a paradox even for our wise and paradoxical age to endure; therefore I shall handle it with all tenderness, and with the utmost deference to that great and profound majority which is of another sentiment.

And yet the curious may please to observe how much the genius of a nation is liable to alter in half an age. I have heard it affirmed for certain, by some very old people, that the contrary opinion was, even in their memories, as much in vogue as the other is now; and that a project for the abolishing of Christianity would then have appeared as singular, and been thought as absurd, as it would be, at this time, to write or discourse in its defence.

Therefore I freely own that all appearances are against me. The system of the gospel, after the fate of other systems, is generally antiquated and exploded: and the mass or body of the common people, among whom it seems to have had its latest credit, are now grown as much ashamed of it as their betters; opinions like fashions always descending from those of quality to the middle sort, and thence to the vulgar, where at length they are dropped and vanish.

But here I would not be mistaken, and must therefore be so bold as to borrow a distinction from the writers on the other side, when they make a difference between nominal and real Trinitarians. I hope no reader imagines me so weak as to stand up in the defence of real Christianity, such as used in primitive times (if we may believe the authors of those ages) to have an influence upon men's belief and actions: to offer at the restoring of that would indeed be a wild project; it would be to dig up foundations; to destroy at one blow all the wit and half the learning of the kingdom; to break the entire frame and constitution of things; to ruin trade, extinguish arts and sciences, with the professors of them; in short, to turn our courts, exchanges, and shops into deserts; and would be full as absurd as the proposal of Horace, where he advises the Romans all in a body to leave their city, and seek a new seat in some remote part of the world, by way of cure for the corruption of their manners.

Therefore I think this caution was in itself altogether unnecessary (which I have inserted only to prevent all possibility of cavilling), since every candid reader will easily understand my discourse to be intended only in defence of nominal Christianity; the other having been for some time wholly laid aside by general consent, as utterly inconsistent with our present schemes of wealth and power.

But why we should therefore cast off the name and title of Christians, although the general opinion and resolution be so violent for it, I confess I cannot (with submission) apprehend, nor is the consequence necessary. However, since the undertakers propose such wonderful advantages to the nation by this project, and advance many plausible objections against the system of Christianity, I shall briefly consider the strength of both, fairly allow them their greatest weight, and offer such answers as I think most reasonable. After which I will beg leave to show what inconveniences may possibly happen by such an innovation, in the present posture of our affairs.

First, one great advantage proposed by the abolishing of Christianity is, that it would very much enlarge and establish liberty of conscience, that great bulwark of our nation, and of the Protestant religion; which is still too much limited by priestcraft, notwithstanding all the good intentions of the legislature, as we have lately found by a severe instance. For it is confidently reported that two young gentlemen of real hopes, bright wit, and profound judgment, who, upon a thorough examination of causes and effects, and by the mere force of natural abilities, without the least tincture of learning, having made a discovery that there was no God, and generously communicating their thoughts for the good of the public, were some time ago, by an unparalleled severity, and upon I know not what obsolete law, broke for blasphemy. And as it has been wisely observed, if persecution once begins, no man alive knows how far it may reach or where it will end.

In answer to all which, with deference to wiser judgments, I think this rather shows the necessity of a nominal religion among us. Great wits love to be free with the highest objects; and if they cannot be allowed a God to revile or renounce, they will speak evil of dignities, abuse the government, and reflect upon the ministry; which I am sure few will deny to be of much more pernicious consequence, according to the saying of Tiberius, *deorum offensa diis curæ*.[1] As to the particular fact related, I think it is not fair to argue from one instance, perhaps another cannot be produced: yet (to the comfort of all those who may be apprehensive of persecution) blasphemy, we know, is freely spoken a million of times in every coffee-house and tavern, or wherever else good company meet. It must be allowed, indeed, that, to break an English free-born officer only for blasphemy was, to speak the gentlest of such an action, a very

1 "Offences against the gods are the concern of the gods."

high strain of absolute power. Little can be said in excuse for the general: perhaps he was afraid it might give offence to the allies, among whom, for aught we know, it may be the custom of the country to believe a God. But if he argued, as some have done, upon a mistaken principle, that an officer who is guilty of speaking blasphemy may some time or other proceed so far as to raise a mutiny, the consequence is by no means to be admitted; for surely the commander of an English army is likely to be but ill obeyed whose soldiers fear and reverence him as little as they do a Deity.

It is further objected against the gospel system, that it obliges men to the belief of things too difficult for free-thinkers, and such who have shaken off the prejudices that usually cling to a confined education. To which I answer, that men should be cautious how they raise objections which reflect upon the wisdom of the nation. Is not everybody freely allowed to believe whatever he pleases, and to publish his belief to the world whenever he thinks fit, especially if it serves to strengthen the party which is in the right? Would any indifferent foreigner, who should read the trumpery lately written by Asgil, Tindal, Toland, Coward,[1] and forty more, imagine the gospel to be our rule of faith, and confirmed by parliaments? Does any man either believe, or say he believes, or desire to have it thought that he says he believes, one syllable of the matter? And is any man worse received upon that score, or does he find his want of nominal faith a disadvantage to him in the pursuit of any civil or military employment? What if there be an old dormant statute or two against him, are they not now obsolete to a degree, that Empson and Dudley[2] themselves, if they were now alive, would find it impossible to put them in execution?

It is likewise urged that there are, by computation, in this kingdom, above ten thousand parsons, whose revenues, added to those of my lords the bishops, would suffice to maintain at least two hundred young gentlemen of wit and pleasure, and free-thinking, enemies to priestcraft, narrow principles, pedantry, and prejudices, who might be an ornament to the court and town: and then again, so great a number of able divines might be a recruit to our fleet and armies. This, indeed, appears to be a consideration of some weight; but then, on the other side, several things deserve to be considered likewise: as first, whether it may not be thought necessary that in certain tracts of country, like what we call parishes, there shall be one man at least of abilities to read and write. Then it seems a wrong computation, that the revenues of the church throughout this island would be large enough to maintain two hundred young gentlemen, or even half that number, after the present refined way of living; that is, to allow each of them such a rent as, in the modern form of speech, would make them easy. But still there is in this project a greater mischief behind; and we ought to beware of the woman's folly, who killed the hen that every morning laid her a golden egg. For, pray what would become of the race of men in the next age, if we had nothing to trust to beside the scrofulous, consumptive productions furnished by our men of wit and pleasure, when, having squandered away their vigor, health, and estates, they are forced, by some disagreeable marriage, to piece up their broken fortunes, and entail rottenness and politeness on their posterity? Now, here are ten thousand persons reduced, by the wise regulations of Henry VIII, to the necessity of a low diet and moderate exercise, who are the only great restorers of our breed, without which the nation would in an age or two become one great hospital.

Another advantage proposed by the abolishing of Christianity, is the clear gain of one day in seven, which is now entirely lost, and consequently the kingdom one-seventh less considerable in trade, business, and pleasure; besides the loss to the public of so many stately structures, now in the hands of the clergy, which might be converted into play-houses, market-houses, exchanges, common dormitories, and other public edifices.

I hope I shall be forgiven a hard word, if I call this a perfect *cavil*. I readily own there has been an old custom, time out of mind, for people to assemble in the churches every Sunday, and that shops are still frequently shut, in order, as it is conceived, to preserve the memory of that ancient practice; but how this can prove a hindrance to business or pleasure is hard to imagine. What if the men of pleasure are forced, one day in the week, to game at home instead of the chocolate-houses? are not the taverns and coffee-houses open? can there be a more convenient season for taking a dose of physic? are fewer claps got upon Sundays than other days? is not that the chief day for traders to

1 Notorious deists and "free-thinkers."
2 English politicians of the reign of Henry VII, who rigorously put in execution obsolete tax laws.

sum up the accounts of the week, and for lawyers to prepare their briefs? But I would fain know how it can be pretended that the churches are misapplied? where are more appointments and rendezvouses of gallantry? where more care to appear in the foremost box, with greater advantage of dress? where more meetings for business? where more bargains driven of all sorts? and where so many conveniences or incitements to sleep?

There is one advantage greater than any of the foregoing proposed by the abolishing of Christianity; that it will utterly extinguish parties among us, by removing those factious distinctions of high and low church, of Whig and Tory, Presbyterian and Church of England, which are now so many grievous clogs upon public proceedings, and are apt to dispose men to prefer the gratifying of themselves, or depressing of their adversaries, before the most important interests of the state.

I confess, if it were certain that so great an advantage would redound to the nation by this expedient, I would submit and be silent; but will any man say that, if the words *whoring*, *drinking*, *cheating*, *lying*, *stealing* were, by act of parliament, ejected out of the English tongue and dictionaries, we should all awake next morning chaste and temperate, honest and just, and lovers of truth? Is this a fair consequence? Or, if the physicians would forbid us to pronounce the words *pox*, *gout*, *rheumatism*, and *stone*, would that expedient serve, like so many talismans, to destroy the diseases themselves? Are party and faction rooted in men's hearts no deeper than phrases borrowed from religion, or founded upon no firmer principles? and is our language so poor that we cannot find other terms to express them? Are *envy*, *pride*, *avarice*, and *ambition* such ill nomenclators, that they cannot furnish appellations for their owners? Will not *heydukes*, and *mamalukes*, *mandarins*, and *patshaws*, or any other words formed at pleasure, serve to distinguish those who are in the ministry, from others, who would be in it if they could? What, for instance, is easier than to vary the form of speech, and instead of the word church make it a question in politics whether the monument be in danger? Because religion was nearest at hand to furnish a few convenient phrases, is our invention so barren, we can find no other? Suppose, for argument sake, that the Tories favored Margarita, the Whigs Mrs. Tofts, and the trimmers Valentini;[1] would not *Margaritians*, *Toftians*, and *Valentinians* be very tolerable marks of distinction? The *Prasini* and *Veniti*, two most virulent factions in Italy, began (if I remember right) by a distinction of colors in ribbons; and we might contend with as good a grace about the dignity of the *blue* and the *green*, which would serve as properly to divide the court, the parliament, and the kingdom between them as any terms of art whatsoever borrowed from religion. And therefore I think there is little force in this objection against Christianity, or prospect of so great an advantage, as is proposed in the abolishing of it.

It is again objected, as a very absurd, ridiculous custom, that a set of men should be suffered, much less employed and hired, to bawl one day in seven against the lawfulness of those methods most in use, toward the pursuit of greatness, riches, and pleasure, which are the constant practice of all men alive on the other six. But this objection is, I think, a little unworthy of so refined an age as ours. Let us argue this matter calmly: I appeal to the breast of any polite freethinker, whether, in the pursuit of gratifying a predominant passion, he has not always felt a wonderful incitement, by reflecting it was a thing forbidden; and therefore we see, in order to cultivate this taste, the wisdom of the nation has taken special care that the ladies should be furnished with prohibited silks, and the men with prohibited wine. And indeed it were to be wished that some other prohibitions were promoted, in order to improve the pleasures of the town; which for want of such expedients begin already, as I am told, to flag and grow languid, giving way daily to cruel inroads from the spleen.[1]

It is likewise proposed as a great advantage to the public, that if we once discard the system of the gospel, all religion will of course be banished for ever; and consequently along with it those grievous prejudices of education, which under the names of *virtue*, *conscience*, *honor*, *justice*, and the like, are so apt to disturb the peace of human minds, and the notions whereof are so hard to be eradicated, by right reason or free-thinking, sometimes during the whole course of our lives.

Here first I observe, how difficult it is to get rid of a phrase which the world is once grown fond of, though the occasion that first produced it be entirely taken away. For several years past, if a man had but an ill-favored nose, the deep-thinkers of the age

1 Popular stage-favorites.

1 The spleen was supposed to be the seat of ill-humor and depression.

would some way or other contrive to impute the cause to the prejudice of his education. From this fountain were said to be derived all our foolish notions of justice, piety, love of our country; all our opinions of God or a future state, heaven, hell, and the like; and there might formerly, perhaps, have been some pretence for this charge. But so effectual care has been taken to remove those prejudices by an entire change in the methods of education, that (with honor I mention it to our polite innovators) the young gentlemen who are now on the scene seem to have not the least tincture of those infusions, or string of those weeds; and by consequence, the reason for abolishing nominal Christianity upon that pretext is wholly ceased.

For the rest, it may perhaps admit a controversy whether the banishing of all notions of religion whatsoever would be convenient for the vulgar. Not that I am in the least of opinion with those who hold religion to have been the invention of politicians to keep the lower part of the world in awe, by the fear of invisible powers; unless mankind were then very different to what it is now: for I look upon the mass or body of our people here in England to be as free-thinkers, that is to say, as staunch unbelievers, as any of the highest rank. But I conceive some scattered notions about a superior power to be of singular use for the common people, as furnishing excellent materials to keep children quiet when they grow peevish, and providing topics of amusement in a tedious winter-night.

Lastly, it is proposed as a singular advantage, that the abolishing of Christianity will very much contribute to the uniting of Protestants, by enlarging the terms of communion, so as to take in all sorts of dissenters, who are now shut out of the pale upon account of a few ceremonies, which all sides confess to be things indifferent; that this alone will effectually answer the great ends of a scheme for comprehension, by opening a large noble gate, at which all bodies may enter; whereas the chaffering with dissenters, and dodging about this or the other ceremony, is but like opening a few wickets, and leaving them at jar, by which no more than one can get in at a time, and that not without stooping, and sideling, and squeezing his body.

To all this I answer, that there is one darling inclination of mankind which usually affects to be a retainer to religion, though she be neither its parent, its godmother, or its friend; I mean the spirit of opposition, that lived long before Christianity, and can easily subsist without it. Let us, for instance, examine wherein the opposition of sectaries among us consists; we shall find Christianity to have no share in it at all. Does the gospel anywhere prescribe a starched, squeezed countenance, a stiff formal gait, a singularity of manners and habit, or any affected modes of speech, different from the reasonable part of mankind? Yet, if Christianity did not lend its name to stand in the gap, and to employ or divert these humors, they must of necessity be spent in contraventions to the laws of the land, and disturbance of the public peace. There is a portion of enthusiasm [1] assigned to every nation, which, if it has not proper objects to work on, will burst out and set all in a flame. If the quiet of a state can be bought by only flinging men a few ceremonies to devour, it is a purchase no wise man would refuse. Let the mastiffs amuse themselves about a sheep's skin stuffed with hay, provided it will keep them from worrying the flock. The institution of convents abroad seems in one point a strain of great wisdom; there being few irregularities in human passions that may not have recourse to vent themselves in some of those orders, which are so many retreats for the speculative, the melancholy, the proud, the silent, the politic, and the morose, to spend themselves, and evaporate the noxious particles; for each of whom we in this island are forced to provide a several sect of religion, to keep them quiet; and whenever Christianity shall be abolished, the legislature must find some other expedient to employ and entertain them. For what imports it how large a gate you open, if there will be always left a number, who place a pride and a merit in refusing to enter?

Having thus considered the most important objections against Christianity, and the chief advantages proposed by the abolishing thereof, I shall now, with equal deference and submission to wiser judgments, as before, proceed to mention a few inconveniences that may happen, if the gospel should be repealed, which perhaps the projectors may not have sufficiently considered.

And first, I am very sensible how much the gentlemen of wit and pleasure are apt to murmur, and be choked at the sight of so many daggled-tail parsons, who happen to fall in their way and offend their eyes; but, at the same time, these wise reformers do not consider what an advantage and felicity

[1] Fanaticism.

it is for great wits to be always provided with objects of scorn and contempt, in order to exercise and improve their talents, and divert their spleen from falling on each other or on themselves; especially when all this may be done without the least imaginable danger to their persons.

And to urge another argument of a parallel nature: if Christianity were once abolished, how could the free-thinkers, the strong reasoners, and the men of profound learning, be able to find another subject, so calculated in all points, whereon to display their abilities? what wonderful productions of wit should we be deprived of from those whose genius, by continual practice, has been wholly turned upon raillery and invectives against religion, and would therefore never be able to shine or distinguish themselves upon any other subject? we are daily complaining of the great decline of wit among us, and would we take away the greatest, perhaps the only, topic we have left? Who would ever have suspected Asgil for a wit, or Toland for a philosopher, if the inexhaustible stock of Christianity had not been at hand to provide them with materials? what other subject, through all art or nature, could have produced Tindal for a profound author, or furnished him with readers? it is the wise choice of the subject that alone adorns and distinguishes the writer. For had a hundred such pens as these been employed on the side of religion, they would have immediately sunk into silence and oblivion.

Nor do I think it wholly groundless, or my fears altogether imaginary, that the abolishing Christianity may perhaps bring the church into danger, or at least put the senate to the trouble of another securing vote. I desire I may not be mistaken; I am far from presuming to affirm or think that the church is in danger at present, or as things now stand; but we know not how soon it may be so, when the Christian religion is repealed. As plausible as this project seems, there may be a dangerous design lurking under it. Nothing can be more notorious than that the atheists, deists, socinians, anti-trinitarians, and other sub-divisions of free-thinkers, are persons of little zeal for the present ecclesiastical establishment; their declared opinion is for repealing the sacramental test; they are very indifferent with regard to ceremonies, nor do they hold the *jus divinum*[1] of episcopacy; therefore this may be intended as one politic step toward altering the constitution of the church established, and setting up presbytery in the stead, which I leave to be further considered by those at the helm.

In the last place, I think nothing can be more plain than that, by this expedient, we shall run into the evil we chiefly pretend to avoid, and that the abolishment of the Christian religion will be the readiest course we can take to introduce popery. And I am the more inclined to this opinion, because we know it has been the constant practice of the Jesuits to send over emissaries with instructions to personate themselves members of the several prevailing sects among us. So it is recorded that they have at sundry times appeared in the disguise of presbyterians, anabaptists, independents, and quakers, according as any of these were most in credit; so, since the fashion has been taken up of exploding religion, the popish missionaries have not been wanting to mix with the free-thinkers; among whom Toland, the great oracle of the anti-christians, is an Irish priest, the son of an Irish priest, and the most learned and ingenious author of a book called "The Rights of the Christian Church,"[1] was in a proper juncture reconciled to the Romish faith, whose true son, as appears by a hundred passages in his treatise, he still continues. Perhaps I could add some others to the number, but the fact is beyond dispute, and the reasoning they proceed by is right; for, supposing Christianity to be extinguished, the people will never be at ease till they find out some other method of worship, which will as infallibly produce superstition, as superstition will end in popery.

And therefore if, notwithstanding all I have said, it still be thought necessary to have a bill brought in for repealing Christianity, I would humbly offer an amendment, that instead of the word Christianity, may be put religion in general, which, I conceive, will much better answer all the good ends proposed by the projectors of it. For, as long as we leave in being a God and his providence, with all the necessary consequences which curious and inquisitive men will be apt to draw from such premises, we do not strike at the root of the evil, though we should ever so effectually annihilate the present scheme of the gospel: for of what use is freedom of thought, if it will not produce freedom of action? which is the sole end, how remote soever in appearance, of all objections against

1 divine right.

1 The deist, Tindal, who as a young man had become for a time a Roman Catholic.

Christianity; and therefore the free-thinkers consider it as a sort of edifice, wherein all the parts have such a mutual dependence on each other, that if you happen to pull out one single nail, the whole fabric must fall to the ground. This was happily expressed by him, who had heard of a text brought for proof of the Trinity, which in an ancient manuscript was differently read; he thereupon immediately took the hint, and by a sudden deduction of a long *sorites* most logically concluded — "Why, if it be as you say, I may safely whore and drink on, and defy the parson." From which, and many the like instances easy to be produced, I think nothing can be more manifest than that the quarrel is not against any particular points of hard digestion in the Christian system, but against religion in general; which, by laying restraints on human nature, is supposed the great enemy to the freedom of thought and action.

Upon the whole, if it shall still be thought for the benefit of church and state that Christianity be abolished, I conceive, however, it may be more convenient to defer the execution to a time of peace, and not venture, in this conjuncture, to disoblige our allies, who, as it falls out, are all Christians, and many of them, by the prejudices of their education, so bigoted as to place a sort of pride in the appellation. If, upon being rejected by them, we are to trust to an alliance with the Turk, we shall find ourselves much deceived: for, as he is too remote, and generally engaged in war with the Persian Emperor, so his people would be more scandalized at our infidelity than our Christian neighbors. For the Turks are not only strict observers of religious worship, but, what is worse, believe a God; which is more than is required of us, even while we preserve the name of Christians.

To conclude: whatever some may think of the great advantages to trade by this favorite scheme, I do very much apprehend that, in six months time after the act is passed for the extirpation of the gospel, the Bank and East India stock may fall at least one per cent. And since that is fifty times more than ever the wisdom of our age thought fit to venture for the preservation of Christianity, there is no reason we should be at so great a loss, merely for the sake of destroying it.

## A MODEST PROPOSAL

FOR PREVENTING THE CHILDREN OF POOR PEOPLE IN IRELAND FROM BEING A BURDEN TO THEIR PARENTS OR COUNTRY, AND FOR MAKING THEM BENEFICIAL TO THE PUBLIC.
1729.

For a century and more Ireland had been held by the English virtually as a conquered province; and the economic tyranny of English rule, and the rapacious greed of English landlords, had reduced the great mass of its population to the most terrible and abject poverty. Though of English ancestry, Swift was by birth an Irishman, and as a resident of Ireland he gave himself whole-heartedly to the Irish cause. His great heart burned with indignation at the ragged famine and sordid misery which he saw all about him, "which would move tears and pity in the most savage and inhuman breast." And so with grim irony he proposes his remedy, which he elaborates with relentless ingenuity. This new table delicacy will be "very proper for landlords, who, as they have already devoured most of the parents, seem to have the best title to the children."

It is a melancholy object to those who walk through this great town[1] or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads, and cabin doors, crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags and importuning every passenger for an alms. These mothers, instead of being able to work for their honest livelihood, are forced to employ all their time in strolling to beg sustenance for their helpless infants: who as they grow up either turn thieves for want of work, or leave their dear native country to fight for the pretender in Spain, or sell themselves to the Barbadoes.

I think it is agreed by all parties that this prodigious number of children in the arms, or on the backs, or at the heels of their mothers, and frequently of their fathers, is in the present deplorable state of the kingdom a very great additional grievance; and, therefore, whoever could find out a fair, cheap, and easy method of making these children sound, useful members of the commonwealth, would deserve so well of the public as to have his statue set up for a preserver of the nation.

But my intention is very far from being confined to provide only for the children of professed beggars; it is of a much greater extent, and shall take in the whole number of infants at a certain age who are born of parents in effect as little able to support them

1 Dublin.

as those who demand our charity in the streets.

As to my own part, having turned my thoughts for many years upon this important subject, and maturely weighed the several schemes of our projectors, I have always found them grossly mistaken in their computation. It is true, a child just dropped from its dam may be supported by her milk for a solar year, with little other nourishment; at most not above the value of 2*s.*, which the mother may certainly get, or the value in scraps, by her lawful occupation of begging; and it is exactly at one year old that I propose to provide for them in such a manner as instead of being a charge upon their parents or the parish, or wanting food and raiment for the rest of their lives, they shall on the contrary contribute to the feeding, and partly to the clothing, of many thousands.

There is likewise another great advantage in my scheme, that it will prevent those voluntary abortions, and that horrid practice of women murdering their bastard children, alas! too frequent among us! sacrificing the poor innocent babes I doubt more to avoid the expense than the shame, which would move tears and pity in the most savage and inhuman breast.

The number of souls in this kingdom being usually reckoned one million and a half, of these I calculate there may be about 200,000 couple whose wives are breeders; from which number I subtract 30,000 couple who are able to maintain their own children (although I apprehend there cannot be so many, under the present distresses of the kingdom); but this being granted, there will remain 170,000 breeders. I again subtract 50,000 for those women who miscarry, or whose children die by accident or disease within the year. There only remains 120,000 children of poor parents annually born. The question therefore is, how this number shall be reared and provided for? which, as I have already said, under the present situation of affairs, is utterly impossible by all the methods hitherto proposed. For we can neither employ them in handicraft or agriculture; we neither build houses (I mean in the country) nor cultivate land; they can very seldom pick up a livelihood by stealing, till they arrive at six years old, except where they are of towardly parts; although I confess they learn the rudiments much earlier; during which time, they can however be properly looked upon only as probationers; as I have been informed by a principal gentleman in the county of Cavan, who protested to me that he never knew above one or two instances under the age of six, even in a part of the kingdom so renowned for the quickest proficiency in that art.

I am assured by our merchants, that a boy or a girl before twelve years old is no saleable commodity; and even when they come to this age they will not yield above 3*l.* or 3*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* at most on the exchange; which cannot turn to account either to the parents or kingdom, the charge of nutriment and rags having been at least four times that value.

I shall now therefore humbly propose my own thoughts, which I hope will not be liable to the least objection.

I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee or a ragout.

I do therefore humbly offer it to public consideration that of the 120,000 children already computed, 20,000 may be reserved for breed, whereof only one-fourth part to be males; which is more than we allow to sheep, black cattle, or swine; and my reason is, that these children are seldom the fruits of marriage, a circumstance not much regarded by our savages, therefore one male will be sufficient to serve four females. That the remaining 100,000 may, at a year old, be offered in sale to the persons of quality and fortune through the kingdom; always advising the mother to let them suck plentifully in the last month, so as to render them plump and fat for a good table. A child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends; and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with a little pepper or salt will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter.

I have reckoned upon a medium that a child just born will weigh 12 pounds, and in a solar year, if tolerably nursed, will increase to 28 pounds.

I grant this food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very proper for landlords, who, as they have already devoured most of the parents, seem to have the best title to the children.

Infant's flesh will be in season throughout the year, but more plentifully in March, and a little before and after: for we are told by a grave author, an eminent French physician,

that fish being a prolific diet, there are more children born in Roman Catholic countries about nine months after Lent than at any other season; therefore, reckoning a year after Lent, the markets will be more glutted than usual, because the number of popish infants is at least three to one in this kingdom: and therefore it will have one other collateral advantage, by lessening the number of papists among us.

I have already computed the charge of nursing a beggar's child (in which list I reckon all cottagers, laborers, and four-fifths of the farmers) to be about 2*s*. per annum, rags included; and I believe no gentleman would repine to give 10*s*. for the carcass of a good fat child, which, as I have said, will make four dishes of excellent nutritive meat, when he has only some particular friend or his own family to dine with him. Thus the squire will learn to be a good landlord, and grow popular among the tenants; the mother will have 8*s*. net profit, and be fit for work till she produces another child.

Those who are more thrifty (as I must confess the times require) may flay the carcass; the skin of which artificially dressed will make admirable gloves for ladies, and summer boots for fine gentlemen.

As to our city of Dublin, shambles may be appointed for this purpose in the most convenient parts of it, and butchers we may be assured will not be wanting; although I rather recommend buying the children alive, and dressing them hot from the knife as we do roasting pigs.

A very worthy person, a true lover of his country, and whose virtues I highly esteem, was lately pleased in discoursing on this matter to offer a refinement upon my scheme. He said that many gentlemen of this kingdom, having of late destroyed their deer, he conceived that the want of venison might be well supplied by the bodies of young lads and maidens, not exceeding fourteen years of age nor under twelve; so great a number of both sexes in every country being now ready to starve for want of work and service; and these to be disposed of by their parents, if alive, or otherwise by their nearest relations. But with due deference to so excellent a friend and so deserving a patriot, I cannot be altogether in his sentiments; for as to the males, my American acquaintance assured me, from frequent experience that their flesh was generally tough and lean, like that of our school-boys by continual exercise, and their taste disagreeable; and to fatten them would not answer the charge. Then as to the females, it would, I think, with humble submission be a loss to the public, because they soon would become breeders themselves: and besides, it is not improbable that some scrupulous people might be apt to censure such a practice (although indeed very unjustly), as a little bordering upon cruelty; which, I confess, has always been with me the strongest objection against any project, how well soever intended.

But in order to justify my friend, he confessed that this expedient was put into his head by the famous Psalmanazar, a native of the island Formosa, who came from thence to London about twenty years ago: and in conversation told my friend, that in his country when any young person happened to be put to death, the executioner sold the carcass to persons of quality as a prime dainty; and that in his time the body of a plump girl of fifteen, who was crucified for an attempt to poison the emperor, was sold to his imperial majesty's prime minister of state, and other great mandarins of the court, in joints from the gibbet, at 400 crowns. Neither indeed can I deny, that if the same use were made of several plump young girls in this town, who without one single groat to their fortunes cannot stir abroad without a chair, and appear at playhouse and assemblies in foreign fineries which they never will pay for, the kingdom would not be the worse.

Some persons of a desponding spirit are in great concern about that vast number of poor people, who are aged, diseased, or maimed, and I have been desired to employ my thoughts what course may be taken to ease the nation of so grievous an encumbrance. But I am not in the least pain upon that matter, because it is very well known that they are every day dying and rotting by cold and famine, and filth and vermin, as fast as can be reasonably expected. And as to the young laborers, they are now in as hopeful a condition; they cannot get work, and consequently pine away for want of nourishment, to a degree that if at any time they are accidentally hired to common labor, they have not strength to perform it; and thus the country and themselves are happily delivered from the evils to come.

I have too long digressed, and therefore shall return to my subject. I think the advantages by the proposal which I have made are obvious and many, as well as of the highest importance.

For first, as I have already observed, it would greatly lessen the number of papists, with whom we are yearly overrun, being the principal breeders of the nation as well as our most dangerous enemies; and who stay at home on purpose to deliver the kingdom to the Pretender, hoping to take their advantage by the absence of so many good protestants, who have chosen rather to leave their country than stay at home and pay tithes against their conscience to an episcopal curate.

Secondly, The poor tenants will have something valuable of their own, which by law may be made liable to distress and help to pay their landlord's rent, their corn and cattle being already seized, and money a thing unknown.

Thirdly, Whereas the maintenance of 100,000 children, from two years old and upward, cannot be computed at less than 10*s*. a-piece per annum, the nation's stock will be thereby increased £50,000 per annum, beside the profit of a new dish introduced to the tables of all gentlemen of fortune in the kingdom who have any refinement in taste. And the money will circulate among ourselves, the goods being entirely of our own growth and manufacture.

Fourthly, The constant breeders, beside the gain of 8*s*. sterling per annum by the sale of their children, will be rid of the charge of maintaining them after the first year.

Fifthly, This food would likewise bring great custom to taverns; where the vintners will certainly be so prudent as to procure the best receipts for dressing it to perfection, and consequently have their houses frequented by all the fine gentlemen, who justly value themselves upon their knowledge in good eating: and a skilful cook, who understands how to oblige his guests, will contrive to make it as expensive as they please.

Sixthly, This would be a great inducement to marriage, which all wise nations have either encouraged by rewards or enforced by laws and penalties. It would increase the care and tenderness of mothers toward their children, when they were sure of a settlement for life to the poor babes, provided in some sort by the public, to their annual profit instead of expense. We should see an honest emulation among the married women, which of them could bring the fattest child to the market. Men would become as fond of their wives during the time of their pregnancy as they are now of their mares in foal, their cows in calf, their sows when they are ready to farrow; nor offer to beat or kick them (as is too frequent a practice) for fear of a miscarriage.

Many other advantages might be enumerated. For instance, the addition of some thousand carcasses in our exportation of barreled beef, the propagation of swine's flesh, and improvement in the art of making good bacon, so much wanted among us by the great destruction of pigs, too frequent at our table; which are no way comparable in taste or magnificence to a well-grown, fat, yearling child, which roasted whole will make a considerable figure at a lord mayor's feast or any other public entertainment. But this and many others I omit, being studious of brevity.

Supposing that 1000 families in this city would be constant customers for infants' flesh, beside others who might have it at merry-meetings, particularly at weddings and christenings, I compute that Dublin would take off annually about 20,000 carcasses; and the rest of the kingdom (where probably they will be sold somewhat cheaper) the remaining 80,000.

I can think of no one objection that will possibly be raised against this proposal, unless it should be urged that the number of people will be thereby much lessened in the kingdom. This I freely own, and it was indeed one principal design in offering it to the world. I desire the reader will observe, that I calculate my remedy for this one individual kingdom of Ireland and for no other that ever was, is, or I think ever can be upon earth. Therefore let no man talk to me of other expedients: of taxing our absentees at 5*s*. a pound: of using neither clothes nor household furniture except what is of our own growth and manufacture: of utterly rejecting the materials and instruments that promote foreign luxury: of curing the expensiveness of pride, vanity, idleness, and gaming in our women: of introducing a vein of parsimony, prudence, and temperance: of learning to love our country, in the want of which we differ even from LAPLANDERS and the inhabitants of TOPINAMBOO: of quitting our animosities and factions, nor acting any longer like the Jews, who were murdering one another at the very moment their city was taken: of being a little cautious not to sell our country and conscience for nothing: of teaching landlords to have at least one degree of mercy toward their tenants: lastly, of putting a spirit of honesty, industry, and skill into our shopkeepers; who, if a resolution could now be

taken to buy only our native goods, would immediately unite to cheat and exact upon us in the price, the measure, and the goodness, nor could ever yet be brought to make one fair proposal of just dealing, though often and earnestly invited to it.

Therefore I repeat, let no man talk to me of these and the like expedients, till he has at least some glimpse of hope that there will be ever some hearty and sincere attempt to put them in practice.

But as to myself, having been wearied out for many years with offering vain, idle, visionary thoughts, and at length utterly despairing of success I fortunately fell upon this proposal; which, as it is wholly new, so it has something solid and real, of no expense and little trouble, full in our own power, and whereby we can incur no danger in disobliging ENGLAND. For this kind of commodity will not bear exportation, the flesh being of too tender a consistence to admit a long continuance in salt, although perhaps I could name a country which would be glad to eat up our whole nation without it.

After all, I am not so violently bent upon my own opinion as to reject any offer proposed by wise men, which shall be found equally innocent, cheap, easy, and effectual. But before something of that kind shall be advanced in contradiction to my scheme, and offering a better, I desire the author or authors will be pleased maturely to consider two points. First, as things now stand, how they will be able to find food and raiment for 100,000 useless mouths and backs. And secondly, there being a round million of creatures in human figure throughout this kingdom, whose whole subsistence put into a common stock would leave them in debt 2,000,000*l.* sterling, adding those who are beggars by profession to the bulk of farmers, cottagers, and laborers, with the wives and children who are beggars in effect; I desire those politicians who dislike my overture, and may perhaps be so bold as to attempt an answer, that they will first ask the parents of these mortals, whether they would not at this day think it a great happiness to have been sold for food at a year old in the manner I prescribe, and thereby have avoided such a perpetual scene of misfortunes as they have since gone through by the oppression of landlords, the impossibility of paying rent without money or trade, the want of common sustenance, with neither house nor clothes to cover them from the inclemencies of the weather, and the most inevitable prospect of entailing the like or greater miseries upon their breed for ever.

I profess, in the sincerity of my heart, that I have not the least personal interest in endeavoring to promote this necessary work, having no other motive than the public good of my country, by advancing our trade, providing for infants, relieving the poor, and giving some pleasure to the rich. I have no children by which I can propose to get a single penny; the youngest being nine years old, and my wife past child-bearing.

## JOSEPH ADDISON (1672–1719) AND RICHARD STEELE (1672–1729)

Addison and Steele were born within a few weeks of one another in the spring of 1672 — Addison in a quiet English village where his father was the clergyman, Steele in the city of Dublin. They were school-fellows at the Charterhouse School in London, and undergraduates together at Oxford. Life-long friends, their names are inseparably linked in the annals of English literature. In temperament, however, they were different enough. Addison was the quiet, reserved scholar, shy and with sometimes an almost forbidding coldness; Steele, with his Irish birth, was gay, warm-hearted, extravagant, an eager participant in all social amusements.

They both drifted to London, where they were caught up into the literary-political life of the capital as staunch supporters of the Whig party. Addison's poem the *Campaign*, in celebration of the battle of Blenheim won by the great Whig general, Marlborough, led ultimately to his appointment as Secretary of State. Steele edited the *Gazette*, official publication of the government, and in 1715 was made Sir Richard Steele. Besides his work as an essayist, Steele was one of the most successful comic dramatists of his day, his best known play being the *Conscious Lovers* (1722), an outstanding example of "sentimental comedy." Addison was the author of *Cato* (1713), a tragedy in blank verse which, though seriously deficient in dramatic interest, won great notoriety because of its political import, and continued to be read because of the fine rhetoric of its speeches.

The most memorable work of Addison and Steele was their joint editorship of the *Tatler* (1709–1710) and the *Spectator* (1711–1712, 1714). The earlier periodical, which appeared three times a week, was begun by Steele alone; but Addison contributed about forty of the papers. For its suc-

cessor, which was issued every day but Sunday, Addison wrote about half the numbers. Occasional papers were contributed by other writers. It was the avowed purpose of the *Spectator* to popularize morality and culture, to bring "philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and in coffee-houses." Avoiding carefully any bias of party politics, it portrays with kindly humor and criticizes with sound good sense the manners and customs of eighteenth-century life, all the vanities and petty foibles of the staid city merchant, of the fine lady and "pretty fellow" of the West End. Sometimes the "speculation" of the day is a wise but entertaining discourse on morals and philosophy, sometimes a piece of literary criticism. The prevailing manner is that proper to the familiar essay — witty, whimsical, conversational. Of the two essayists, Addison is the more perfect literary artist. In the often-quoted words of Dr. Johnson, he was master of "an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious." The charm of his essays is the personal charm of their author. It is as though one were able to draw up a coffee-house chair and listen to the quiet conversation of a gracious, kindly, cultivated gentleman as his wit and fancy and shrewd observation play over the variegated surface of every-day life.

The dozen essays here reprinted represent fairly well the varied subjects of the *Tatler* and the *Spectator*, except that the editors have not included any of the familiar group of papers which deal with Sir Roger de Coverley, with which the readers of this book will probably be already well acquainted.

A good biography of Addison is that of Courthope. Austin Dobson has written an excellent short biography of Steele. Both are in the English Men of Letters series. A convenient reprint of the *Spectator* is included in Everyman's Library (Dutton).

## THE TATLER

### ON DUELLING [1]

*The Tatler, No.* 25. *Tuesday, June* 7, 1709

Quicquid agunt homines ——
—— nostri est farrago libelli.
JUVENAL, *Sat.* I, 85, 86

Whate'er men do, or say, or think, or dream,
Our motley paper seizes for its theme.

*White's Chocolate House, June* 6

A letter from a young lady, written in the most passionate terms, wherein she laments the misfortune of a gentleman, her lover, who was lately wounded in a duel, has turned my thoughts to that subject and inclined me to examine into the causes which precipitate men into so fatal a folly. And as it has been proposed to treat of subjects of gallantry in the article from hence, and no one point in nature is more proper to be considered by the company who frequent this place than that of duels, it is worth our consideration to examine into this chimerical, groundless humor and to lay every other thought aside, until we have stripped it of all its false pretenses to credit and reputation amongst men.

But I must confess, when I consider what I am going about, and run over in my imagination all the endless crowd of men of honor who will be offended at such a discourse, I am undertaking, methinks, a work worthy an invulnerable hero in romance, rather than a private gentleman with a single rapier: but as I am pretty well acquainted, by great opportunities, with the nature of man, and know of a truth that all men fight against their will, the danger vanishes and resolution rises upon this subject. For this reason, I shall talk very freely on a custom which all men wish exploded, though no man has courage enough to resist it.

But there is one unintelligible word, which I fear will extremely perplex my dissertation, and I confess to you I find very hard to explain, which is the term "satisfaction." An honest country gentleman had the misfortune to fall into company with two or three modern men of honor, where he happened to be very ill-treated; and one of the company, being conscious of his offense, sends a note to him in the morning and tells him he was ready to give him satisfaction. "This is fine doing," says the plain fellow; "last night he sent me away cursedly out of humor, and this morning he fancies it would be a satisfaction to be run through the body."

As the matter at present stands, it is not to do handsome actions denominates a man of honor; it is enough if he dares to defend ill ones. Thus you often see a common sharper in competition with a gentleman of the first rank; though all mankind is convinced that a fighting gamester is only a pickpocket with the courage of a highwayman. One cannot with any patience reflect on the unaccountable jumble of persons and things in this town and nation; which occasions very frequently that a brave man falls by a hand below that of a common hangman, and yet his executioner escapes the clutches of the hangman for doing it. I shall, therefore, hereafter consider how the bravest men in other ages and nations have behaved

[1] Written by Steele.

themselves upon such incidents as we decide by combat; and show, from their practice, that this resentment neither has its foundation from true reason or solid fame; but is an imposture, made of cowardice, falsehood, and want of understanding. For this work, a good history of quarrels would be very edifying to the public; and I apply myself to the town for particulars and circumstances within their knowledge, which may serve to embellish the dissertation with proper cuts. Most of the quarrels I have ever known have proceeded from some valiant coxcomb's persisting in the wrong, to defend some prevailing folly, and preserve himself from the ingenuousness of owning a mistake.

By this means it is called "giving a man satisfaction," to urge your offense against him with your sword; which puts me in mind of Peter's order to the keeper in *The Tale of a Tub:*[1] "if you neglect to do all this, damn you and your generation for ever: and so we bid you heartily farewell." If the contradiction in the very terms of one of our challenges were as well explained and turned into downright English, would it not run after this manner?

Sir:

"Your extraordinary behavior last night, and the liberty you were pleased to take with me, makes me this morning give you this, to tell you, because you are an ill-bred puppy, I will meet you in Hyde Park an hour hence; and because you want both breeding and humanity, I desire you would come with a pistol in your hand, on horseback, and endeavor to shoot me through the head, to teach you more manners. If you fail of doing me this pleasure, I shall say you are a rascal on every post in town: and so, sir, if you will not injure me more, I shall never forgive what you have done already. Pray, sir, do not fail of getting everything ready; and you will infinitely oblige, Sir, Your most obedient humble servant, etc."

## THE TRUMPET CLUB[2]

*The Tatler, No. 132.* *Saturday, Feb. 11, 1710*

Habeo senectuti magnam gratiam, quae mihi sermonis aviditatem auxit, potionis et cibi sustulit.

TULLIUS, DE SENECTUTE

I am much beholden to old age, which has increased my eagerness for conversation in proportion as it has lessened my appetites of hunger and thirst.

After having applied my mind with more than ordinary attention to my studies, it is my usual custom to relax and unbend it in the conversation of such as are rather easy than shining companions. This I find particularly necessary for me before I retire to rest, in order to draw my slumbers upon me by degrees, and fall asleep insensibly. This is the particular use I make of a set of heavy, honest men, with whom I have passed many hours with much indolence, though not with great pleasure. Their conversation is a kind of preparative for sleep: it takes the mind down from its abstractions, leads it into the familiar traces of thought, and lulls it into that state of tranquility which is the condition of a thinking man, when he is but half awake. After this, my reader will not be surprised to hear the account which I am about to give of a club of my own contemporaries among whom I pass two or three hours every evening. This I look upon as taking my first nap before I go to bed. The truth of it is, I should think myself unjust to posterity, as well as to the society at the Trumpet, of which I am a member, did not I in some part of my writings give an account of the persons among whom I have passed almost a sixth part of my time for these last forty years. Our club consisted originally of fifteen; but, partly by the severity of the law in arbitrary times, and partly by the natural effects of old age, we are at present reduced to a third part of that number; in which, however, we have this consolation, that the best company is said to consist of five persons. I must confess, besides the aforementioned benefit which I meet with in the conversation of this select society, I am not the less pleased with the company, in that I find myself the greatest wit among them, and am heard as their oracle in all points of learning and difficulty.

Sir Jeoffery Notch, who is the oldest of the club, has been in possession of the right-hand chair time out of mind, and is the only man among us that has the liberty of stirring the fire. This, our foreman, is a gentleman of an ancient family, that came to a great estate some years before he had discretion, and run it out in hounds, horses, and cock-fighting; for which reason he looks upon himself as an honest, worthy gentleman, who has had misfortunes in the world, and calls every thriving man a pitiful upstart.

Major Matchlock is the next senior, who served in the last civil wars and has all the battles by heart. He does not think any action in Europe worth talking of since the fight of Marston Moor; and every night tells us of his having been knocked off his horse at

1 By Swift. 2 Written by Steele.

the rising of the London apprentices; for which he is in great esteem among us.

Honest old Dick Reptile is the third of our society. He is a good-natured, indolent man who speaks little himself, but laughs at our jokes; and brings his young nephew along with him, a youth of eighteen years old, to show him good company, and give him a taste of the world. This young fellow sits generally silent; but whenever he opens his mouth or laughs at any thing that passes, he is constantly told by his uncle, after a jocular manner, "Ay, ay, Jack, you young men think us fools; but we old men know you are."

The greatest wit of our company, next to myself, is a bencher of the neighboring Inn,[1] who in his youth frequented the ordinaries[2] about Charing Cross, and pretends to have been intimate with Jack Ogle. He has about ten distiches of *Hudibras* without book, and never leaves the club till he has applied them all. If any modern wit be mentioned, or any town frolic spoken of, he shakes his head at the dullness of the present age, and tells us a story of Jack Ogle.

For my own part, I am esteemed among them, because they see I am something respected by others; though at the same time I understand by their behavior, that I am considered by them as a man of a great deal of learning, but no knowledge of the world; insomuch, that the Major sometimes, in the height of his military pride, calls me the philosopher; and Sir Jeoffery, no longer ago than last night, upon a dispute what day of the month it was then in Holland, pulled his pipe out of his mouth and cried, "What does the scholar say to it?"

Our club meets precisely at six o'clock in the evening; but I did not come last night until half an hour after seven, by which means I escaped the battle of Naseby, which the Major usually begins at about three-quarters after six: I found also that my good friend the Bencher had already spent three of his distiches; and only waited an opportunity to hear a sermon spoken of, that he might introduce the couplet where "a stick" rhymes to "ecclesiastic."[3] At my entrance into the room, they were naming a red petticoat and a cloak, by which I found that the Bencher had been diverting them with a story of Jack Ogle.

I had no sooner taken my seat, but Sir Jeoffery, to show his good will toward me, gave me a pipe of his own tobacco, and stirred up the fire. I look upon it as a point of morality to be obliged by those who endeavor to oblige me; and therefore, in requital for his kindness, and to set the conversation a-going, I took the best occasion I could to put him upon telling us the story of old Gantlett, which he always does with very particular concern. He traced up his descent on both sides for several generations, describing his diet and manner of life, with his several battles, and particularly that in which he fell. This Gantlett was a game cock, upon whose head the knight, in his youth, had won five hundred pounds, and lost two thousand. This naturally set the Major upon the account of Edgehill fight, and ended in a duel of Jack Ogle's.

Old Reptile was extremely attentive to all that was said, though it was the same he had heard every night for these twenty years, and, upon all occasions, winked upon his nephew to mind what passed.

This may suffice to give the world a taste of our innocent conversation, which we spun out until about ten of the clock, when my maid came with a lantern to light me home. I could not but reflect with myself, as I was going out, upon the talkative humor of old men, and the little figure which that part of life makes in one who cannot employ his natural propensity in discourses which would make him venerable. I must own, it makes me very melancholy in company, when I hear a young man begin a story; and have often observed that one of a quarter of an hour long in a man of five-and-twenty gathers circumstances every time he tells it, until it grows into a long Canterbury tale of two hours by that time he is threescore.

The only way of avoiding such a trifling and frivolous old age is to lay up in our way to it such stores of knowledge and observation as may make us useful and agreeable in our declining years. The mind of man in a long life will become a magazine of wisdom or folly, and will consequently discharge itself in something impertinent or improving. For which reason, as there is nothing more ridiculous than an old trifling story-teller, so there is nothing more venerable than one who has turned his experience to the entertainment and advantage of mankind.

In short, we who are in the last stage of life, and are apt to indulge ourselves in talk, ought to consider if what we speak be worth being heard, and endeavor to make our dis-

1 i.e., one of the inns of court. 2 restaurants.

3 And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
Was beat with fist instead of a stick.
*Hudibras*, Pt. I, i, 11 (by Samuel Butler).

course like that of Nestor, which Homer compares to the flowing of honey for its sweetness.

I am afraid I shall be thought guilty of this excess I am speaking of, when I cannot conclude without observing that Milton certainly thought of this passage in Homer when, in his description of an eloquent spirit, he says,

"His tongue dropped manna."

## CHARACTER OF THE UPHOLSTERER [1]

*The Tatler, No.* 155. *Thursday, April* 6, 1710

Aliena negotia curat,
Excussus propriis.

HORACE, *Sat.* II, ii, 19

When he had lost all business of his own,
He ran in quest of news through all the town.

*From my own Apartment, April* 5

There lived some years since, within my neighborhood, a very grave person, an upholsterer, who seemed a man of more than ordinary application to business. He was a very early riser, and was often abroad two or three hours before any of his neighbors. He had a particular carefulness in the knitting of his brows, and a kind of impatience in all his motions, that plainly discovered he was always intent on matters of importance. Upon my inquiry into his life and conversation, I found him to be the greatest newsmonger in our quarter: that he rose before day to read the *Postman;* and that he would take two or three turns to the other end of the town before his neighbors were up, to see if there were any Dutch mails come in. He had a wife and several children; but was much more inquisitive to know what passed in Poland than in his own family, and was in greater pain and anxiety of mind for King Augustus's welfare than that of his nearest relations. He looked extremely thin in a dearth of news, and never enjoyed himself in a westerly wind. This indefatigable kind of life was the ruin of his shop; for about the time that his favorite prince left the crown of Poland, he broke and disappeared.

This man and his affairs had been long out of my mind, until about three days ago, as I was walking in St. James's park, I heard somebody at a distance hemming after me; and who should it be but my old neighbor, the upholsterer? I saw he was reduced to extreme poverty, by certain shabby superfluities in his dress: for, notwithstanding that it was a very sultry day for the time of the year, he wore a loose greatcoat and a muff, with a long campaign wig out of curl, to which he had added the ornament of a pair of black garters buckled under the knee.

Upon his coming up to me, I was going to inquire into his present circumstances; but was prevented by his asking me, with a whisper, "whether the last letters brought any accounts that one might rely upon from Bender?" [1]

I told him, "None that I heard of," and asked him, "whether he had yet married his eldest daughter."

He told me, "No. But pray," says he, "tell me sincerely what are your thoughts of the King of Sweden?" [2] For though his wife and children were starving, I found his chief concern at present was for this great monarch. I told him, that I looked upon him as one of the first heroes of the age.

"But pray," says he, "do you think there is anything in the story of his wound?" And finding me surprised at the question, "Nay," says he, "I only propose it to you."

I answered that I thought there was no reason to doubt of it.

"But why in the heel," says he, "more than any other part of the body?"

"Because," said I, "the bullet chanced to light there."

This extraordinary dialogue was no sooner ended, but he began to launch out into a long dissertation upon the affairs of the North; and after having spent some time on them, he told me he was in a great perplexity how to reconcile the *Supplement* with the *English Post,* and had been just now examining what the other papers say upon the same subject. "The *Daily Courant,*" says he, "has these words: 'We have advices from very good hands that a certain prince has some matters of great importance under consideration.' This is very mysterious; but the *Post-boy* leaves us more in the dark; for he tells us 'That there are private intimations of measures taken by a certain prince, which time will bring to light.' Now the *Postman,*" says he, "who uses to be very clear, refers to the same news in these words: 'The late conduct of a certain prince affords great matter of speculation.' This certain prince," says the upholsterer, "whom they are all so cautious of naming, I take to be ——." Upon which, though there was nobody near us, he whispered something in my ear, which I did not hear, or think worth my while to make him repeat.

1 Written by Addison.

1 A place in Russia, occupied by the Swedes under Charles XII (1709).

2 Charles XII.

We were now got to the upper end of the Mall, where were three or four very odd fellows sitting together upon the bench. These I found were all of them politicians, who used to sun themselves in that place every day about dinner time. Observing them to be curiosities in their kind, and my friend's acquaintance, I sat down among them.

The chief politician of the bench was a great asserter of paradoxes. He told us, with a seeming concern, that by some news he had lately read from Muscovy, it appeared to him that there was a storm gathering in the Black Sea which might in time do hurt to the naval forces of this nation. To this he added that, for his part, he could not wish to see the Turk driven out of Europe, which he believed could not but be prejudicial to our woollen manufacture. He then told us that he looked upon those extraordinary revolutions which had lately happened in those parts of the world to have risen chiefly from two persons who were not much talked of; "and those," says he "are Prince Menzikoff and the Duchess of Mirandola." He backed his assertions with so many broken hints, and such a show of depth and wisdom, that we gave ourselves up to his opinions.

The discourse at length fell upon a point which seldom escapes a knot of true-born Englishmen, whether, in case of a religious war the Protestants would not be too strong for the Papists? This we unanimously determined on the Protestant side. One who sat on my right hand, and, as I found by his discourse, had been in the West Indies, assured us, that it would be a very easy matter for the Protestants to beat the Pope at sea; and added that whenever such a war does break out, it must turn to the good of the Leeward Islands. Upon this, one who sat at the end of the bench, and, as I afterwards found, was the geographer of the company, said that in case the Papists should drive the Protestants from these parts of Europe, when the worst came to the worst, it would be impossible to beat them out of Norway and Greenland, provided the northern crowns hold together, and the czar of Muscovy stand neuter. He further told us, for our comfort, that there were vast tracts of lands about the pole, inhabited neither by Protestants nor Papists, and of greater extent than all the Roman Catholic dominions in Europe.

When we had fully discussed this point, my friend, the upholsterer, began to exert himself upon the present negotiations of peace; in which he deposed princes, settled the bounds of kingdoms, and balanced the power of Europe, with great justice and impartiality. I at length took my leave of the company, and was going away, but had not gone thirty yards, before the upholsterer hemmed again after me. Upon his advancing toward me with a whisper, I expected to hear some secret piece of news, which he had not thought fit to communicate to the bench; but instead of that, he desired me in my ear to lend him half-a-crown. In compassion to so needy a statesman, and to dissipate the confusion I found he was in, I told him, if he pleased, I would give him five shillings, to receive five pounds of him when the Great Turk was driven out of Constantinople; which he very readily accepted, but not before he had laid down to me the impossibility of such an event, as the affairs of Europe now stand.

This paper I design for the particular benefit of those worthy citizens who live more in a coffee house than in their shops, and whose thoughts are so taken up with the affairs of the allies, that they forget their customers.

## CHARACTER OF SIR TIMOTHY TITTLE[1]

*The Tatler, No. 165.* *Saturday, April 29, 1710*

*From my own Apartment, April 28*

It has always been my endeavor to distinguish between realities and appearances, and to separate true merit from the pretense to it. As it shall ever be my study to make discoveries of this nature in human life, and to settle the proper distinctions between the virtues and perfections of mankind and those false colors and resemblances of them that shine alike in the eyes of the vulgar, so I shall be more particularly careful to search into the various merits and pretenses of the learned world. This is the more necessary, because there seems to be a general combination among the pedants to extol one another's labors, and cry up one another's parts; while men of sense, either through that modesty which is natural to them, or the scorn they have for such trifling commendations, enjoy their stock of knowledge, like a hidden treasure, with satisfaction and silence. Pedantry indeed, in learning, is like hypocrisy in religion, a form of knowledge without the power of it; that attracts the eyes of the common people; breaks out in noise and

1 Written by Addison.

show; and finds its reward, not from any inward pleasure that attends it, but from the praises and approbations which it receives from men.

Of this shallow species there is not a more importunate, empty, and conceited animal than that which is generally known by the name of a Critic. This, in the common acceptation of the word, is one that, without entering into the sense and soul of an author, has a few general rules, which, like mechanical instruments, he applies to the works of every writer; and as they quadrate with them, pronounces the author perfect or defective. He is master of a certain set of words, as Unity, Style, Fire, Phlegm, Easy, Natural, Turn, Sentiment, and the like; which he varies, compounds, divides, and throws together, in every part of his discourse, without any thought or meaning. The marks you may know him by are an elevated eye and a dogmatical brow, a positive voice and a contempt for everything that comes out, whether he has read it or not. He dwells altogether in generals. He praises or dispraises in the lump. He shakes his head very frequently at the pedantry of universities, and bursts into laughter when you mention an author that is not known at Will's.[1] He hath formed his judgment upon Homer, Horace, and Virgil, not from their own works, but from those of Rapin and Bossu.[2] He knows his own strength so well, that he never dares praise any thing in which he has not a French author for his voucher.

With these extraordinary talents and accomplishments, Sir Timothy Tittle puts men in vogue, or condemns them to obscurity, and sits as judge of life and death upon every author that appears in public. It is impossible to represent the pangs, agonies, and convulsions which Sir Timothy expresses in every feature of his face, and muscle of his body, upon the reading a bad poet.

About a week ago, I was engaged, at a friend's house of mine, in an agreeable conversation with his wife and daughters, when, in the height of our mirth, Sir Timothy, who makes love to my friend's eldest daughter, came in amongst us, puffing and blowing as if he had been very much out of breath. He immediately called for a chair, and desired leave to sit down without any further ceremony. I asked him, where he had been? whether he was out of order? He only replied, that he was quite spent, and fell a cursing in soliloquy. I could hear him cry, "A wicked rogue — an execrable wretch — was there ever such a monster!" The young ladies upon this began to be affrighted, and asked, whether anyone had hurt him? He answered nothing, but still talked to himself. "To lay the first scene," says he, "in St. James's Park, and the last in Northamptonshire!"

"Is that all?" said I. "Then I suppose you have been at the rehearsal of a play this morning."

"Been!" says he; "I have been at Northampton, in the park, in a lady's bed-chamber, in a dining-room, everywhere; the rogue has led me such a dance ——"

Though I could scarce forbear laughing at his discourse, I told him I was glad it was no worse, and that he was only metaphorically weary.

"In short, sir," says he, "the author has not observed a single unity in his whole play; the scene shifts in every dialogue; the villain has hurried me up and down at such a rate that I am tired off my legs."

I could not but observe with some pleasure, that the young lady whom he made love to conceived a very just aversion towards him, upon seeing him so very passionate in trifles. And as she had that natural sense which makes her a better judge than a thousand critics, she began to rally him upon this foolish humor. "For my part," says she, "I never knew a play take that was written up to your rules, as you call them."

"How, Madam!" says he. "Is that your opinion? I am sure you have a better taste."

"It is a pretty kind of magic," says she, "the poets have, to transport an audience from place to place without the help of a coach and horses; I could travel round the world at such a rate. It is such an entertainment as an enchantress finds when she fancies herself in a wood, or upon a mountain, at a feast, or a solemnity; though at the same time she has never stirred out of her cottage."

"Your simile, Madam," says Sir Timothy, "is by no means just."

"Pray," says she, "let my similes pass without a criticism. I must confess," continued she (for I found she was resolved to exasperate him), "I laughed very heartily at the last new comedy which you found so much fault with."

"But, Madam," says he, "you ought not to have laughed; and I defy anyone to show me a single rule that you could laugh by."

1 The famous coffee-house.
2 French literary critics of the seventeenth century.

"Ought not to laugh!" says she; "pray who should hinder me?"

"Madam," says he, "there are such people in the world as Rapin, Dacier, and several others, that ought to have spoiled your mirth."

"I have heard," says the young lady, "that your great critics are always very bad poets: I fancy there is as much difference between the works of the one and the other, as there is between the carriage of a dancing-master and a gentleman. I must confess," continued she, "I would not be troubled with so fine a judgment as yours is; for I find you feel more vexation in a bad comedy, than I do in a deep tragedy."

"Madam," says Sir Timothy, "that is not my fault; they should learn the art of writing."

"For my part," says the young lady, "I should think the greatest art in your writers of comedies is to please."

"To please!" says Sir Timothy; and immediately fell a-laughing.

"Truly," says she, "that is my opinion." Upon this he composed his countenance, looked upon his watch, and took his leave.

I hear that Sir Timothy has not been at my friend's house since this notable conference, to the great satisfaction of the young lady, who by this means has got rid of a very impertinent fop.

I must confess, I could not but observe with a great deal of surprise how this gentleman, by his ill-nature, folly, and affectation, had made himself capable of suffering so many imaginary pains, and looking with such a senseless severity upon the common diversions of life.

## EARLY RISING [1]

*The Tatler, No.* 263. *Thursday, December* 14, 1710

Minima contentos nocte Britannos.

JUVENAL, *Sat.* II, 161

Britons, contented with the shortest night.

*From my own Apartment, December* 13

An old friend of mine being lately come to town, I went to see him on Tuesday last, about eight o'clock in the evening, with a design to sit with him an hour or two, and talk over old stories; but upon inquiry after him, I found he was gone to bed. The next morning, as soon as I was up and dressed, and had despatched a little business, I came again to my friend's house, about eleven o'clock, with a design to renew my visit; but upon asking for him, his servant told me he was just sat down to dinner. In short, I found that my old-fashioned friend religiously adhered to the example of his forefathers and observed the same hours that had been kept in the family ever since the Conquest.

It is very plain that the night was much longer formerly in this island than it is at present. By the night, I mean that portion of time which nature has thrown into darkness, and which the wisdom of mankind had formerly dedicated to rest and silence. This used to begin at eight o'clock in the evening, and conclude at six in the morning. The curfew, or eight o'clock bell, was the signal throughout the nation for putting out their candles and going to bed.

Our grandmothers, though they were wont to sit up the last in the family, were all of them fast asleep at the same hours that their daughters are busy at crimp and basset. Modern statesmen are concerting schemes and engaged in the depth of politics, at the time when their forefathers were laid down quietly to rest, and had nothing in their heads but dreams. As we have thus thrown business and pleasure into the hours of rest and, by that means, made the natural night but half as long as it should be, we are forced to piece it out with a great part of the morning; so that near two-thirds of the nation lie fast asleep for several hours in broad day light. This irregularity is grown so very fashionable at present, that there is scarce a lady of quality in Great Britain that ever saw the sun rise. And, if the humor increases in proportion to what it has done of late years, it is not impossible but our children may hear the bellman going about the street a nine o'clock in the morning, and the watch making their rounds until eleven. This unaccountable disposition in mankind to continue awake in the night, and sleep in the sunshine, has made me inquire whether the same change of inclination has happened to any other animals? For this reason, I desired a friend of mine in the country to let me know whether the lark rises as early as he did formerly; and whether the cock begins to crow at his usual hour. My friend answered me, that his poultry are as regular as ever, and that all the birds and beasts of his neighborhood keep the same hours that they have observed in the memory of man; and are the same which, in all probability, they have kept for these five thousand years.

If you would see the innovations that have been made among us in this particular, you

[1] Written by Steele.

may only look into the hours of colleges, where they still dine at eleven and sup at six, which were doubtless the hours of the whole nation at the time when those places were founded. But, at present, the courts of justice are scarce opened in Westminster Hall at the time when William Rufus used to go to dinner in it. All business is driven forward. The landmarks of our fathers, if I may so call them, are removed and planted further up into the day; insomuch, that I am afraid our clergy will be obliged, if they expect full congregations, not to look any more upon ten o'clock in the morning as a canonical hour. In my own memory, the dinner has crept by degrees from twelve o'clock to three, and where it will fix nobody knows.

I have sometimes thought to draw up a memorial in the behalf of Supper against Dinner, setting forth that the said Dinner has made several encroachments upon the said Supper, and entered very far upon his frontiers; that he has banished him out of several families, and in all has driven him from his headquarters, and forced him to make his retreat into the hours of midnight; and, in short, that he is now in danger of being entirely confounded and lost in a breakfast. Those who have read Lucian, and seen the complaints of the letter T against S, upon account of many injuries and usurpations of the same nature, will not, I believe, think such a memorial forced and unnatural. If dinner has been thus postponed, or, if you please, kept back from time to time, you may be sure that it has been in compliance with the other business of the day, and that supper has still observed a proportionable distance. There is a venerable proverb, which we have all of us heard in our infancy, of "putting the children to bed, and laying the goose to the fire." This was one of the jocular sayings of our forefathers, but may be properly used in the literal sense at present. Who would not wonder at this perverted relish of those who are reckoned the most polite part of mankind, that prefer seacoals and candles to the sun, and exchange so many cheerful morning hours for the pleasures of midnight revels and debauches? If a man was only to consult his health, he would choose to live his whole time, if possible, in daylight; and to retire out of the world into silence and sleep, while the raw damps and unwholesome vapors fly abroad without a sun to disperse, moderate, or control them. For my own part, I value an hour in the morning as much as common libertines do an hour at midnight. When I find myself awakened into being, and perceive my life renewed within me, and at the same time see the whole face of nature recovered out of the dark uncomfortable state in which it lay for several hours, my heart overflows with such secret sentiments of joy and gratitude, as are a kind of implicit praise to the great Author of nature. The mind, in these early seasons of the day, is so refreshed in all its faculties, and borne up with such new supplies of animal spirits, that she finds herself in a state of youth, especially when she is entertained with the breath of flowers, the melody of birds, the dews that hang upon the plants, and all those other sweets of nature that are peculiar to the morning.

It is impossible for a man to have this relish of being, this exquisite taste of life, who does not come into the world before it is in all its noise and hurry; who loses the rising of the sun, the still hours of the day, and, immediately upon his first getting up, plunges himself into the ordinary cares or follies of the world. I shall conclude this paper with Milton's inimitable description of Adam's awakening his Eve in Paradise, which indeed would have been a place as little delightful as a barren heath or desert to those who slept in it. The fondness of the posture in which Adam is represented, and the softness of his whisper are passages in this divine poem that are above all commendation and rather to be admired than praised.

Now Morn, her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
Advancing, sowed the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam waked, so customed; for his sleep
Was airy light from pure digestion bred,
And temperate vapors bland, which th' only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song
Of birds on every bough; so much the more
His wonder was to find unwakened Eve,
With tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek,
As through unquiet rest. He on his side
Leaning half-raised, with looks of cordial love,
Hung over her, enamored, and beheld
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces. Then, with voice
Mild as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
Her hand soft touching, whispered thus:
"Awake,
My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,
Heaven's last, best gift, my ever-new delight,
Awake; the morning shines, and the fresh field
Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy
reed,

How Nature paints her colors, how the bee
Sits on the bloom, extracting liquid sweet."
Such whispering waked her, but with startled eye
On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake.
"O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,
My glory, my perfection, glad I see
Thy face, and morn returned ——"

## THE SPECTATOR

### THE USES OF THE SPECTATOR [1]

*The Spectator, No.* 10. *Monday, March* 12, 1711

Non aliter quam qui adverso vix flumine lembum
Remigiis subigit, si bracchia forte remisit,
Atque illum praeceps prono rapit alveus amni.
VIRGIL, *Georg.* I, 201

So the boat's brawny crew the current stem,
And slow advancing, struggle with the stream:
But if they slack their hands, or cease to strive,
Then down the flood with headlong haste they drive.
DRYDEN

It is with much satisfaction that I hear this great city inquiring day by day after these my papers, and receiving my morning lectures with a becoming seriousness and attention. My publisher tells me that there are already three thousand of them distributed every day: so that if I allow twenty readers to every paper, which I look upon as a modest computation, I may reckon about threescore thousand disciples in London and Westminster, who I hope will take care to distinguish themselves from the thoughtless herd of their ignorant and unattentive brethren. Since I have raised to myself so great an audience, I shall spare no pains to make their instruction agreeable, and their diversion useful. For which reasons I shall endeavor to enliven morality with wit, and to temper wit with morality, that my readers may, if possible, both ways find their account in the speculation of the day. And to the end that their virtue and discretion may not be short, transient, intermitting starts of thought, I have resolved to refresh their memories from day to day, till I have recovered them out of that desperate state of vice and folly into which the age is fallen. The mind that lies fallow but a single day sprouts up in follies that are only to be killed by a constant and assiduous culture. It was said of Socrates, that he brought philosophy down from heaven, to inhabit among men; and I shall be ambitious to have it said of me that I have brought philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and in coffee-houses.

I would, therefore, in a very particular manner recommend these my speculations to all well-regulated families, that set apart an hour in every morning for tea and bread and butter; and would earnestly advise them for their good to order this paper to be punctually served up, and to be looked upon as a part of the tea equipage.

Sir Francis Bacon observes that a well-written book, compared with its rivals and antagonists, is like Moses's serpent, that immediately swallowed up and devoured those of the Egyptians. I shall not be so vain as to think that where the *Spectator* appears the other public prints will vanish; but shall leave it to my reader's consideration, whether is it not much better to be let into the knowledge of one's self, than to hear what passes in Muscovy or Poland; and to amuse ourselves with such writings as tend to the wearing out of ignorance, passion, and prejudice, than such as naturally conduce to inflame hatreds and make enmities irreconcilable?

In the next place, I would recommend this paper to the daily perusal of those gentlemen whom I cannot but consider as my good brothers and allies; I mean the fraternity of spectators who live in the world without having anything to do in it, and either by the affluence of their fortunes, or laziness of their dispositions, have no other business with the rest of mankind but to look upon them. Under this class of men are comprehended all contemplative tradesmen, titular physicians, fellows of the Royal Society, Templars that are not given to be contentious, and statesmen that are out of business; in short, everyone that considers the world as a theatre, and desires to form a right judgment of those who are the actors on it.

There is another set of men that I must likewise lay a claim to, whom I have lately called the blanks of society, as being altogether unfurnished with ideas till the business and conversation of the day has supplied them. I have often considered these poor souls with an eye of great commiseration, when I have heard them asking the first man they have met with, whether there was any news stirring? and by that means gathering together materials for thinking. These needy persons do not know what to talk of till about twelve o'clock in the morning; for by that time they are pretty good judges of the weather, know which way the wind sits, and whether the Dutch mail be come in. As they lie at the mercy of the first man they meet, and are grave or impertinent all the

[1] Written by Addison.

day long, according to the notions which they have imbibed in the morning, I would earnestly entreat them not to stir out of their chambers till they have read this paper, and do promise them that I will daily instill into them such sound and wholesome sentiments, as shall have a good effect on their conversation for the ensuing twelve hours.

But there are none to whom this paper will be more useful than to the female world. I have often thought there has not been sufficient pains taken in finding out proper employments and diversions for the fair ones. Their amusements seem contrived for them, rather as they are women, than as they are reasonable creatures; and are more adapted to the sex than to the species. The toilet is their great scene of business, and the right adjusting of their hair the principal employment of their lives. The sorting of a suit of ribbons is reckoned a very good morning's work; and if they make an excursion to a mercer's, or a toy-shop, so great a fatigue makes them unfit for anything else all the day after. Their more serious occupations are sewing and embroidery, and their greatest drudgery the preparation of jellies and sweetmeats. This, I say, is the state of ordinary women; though I know there are multitudes of those of a more elevated life and conversation, that move in an exalted sphere of knowledge and virtue, that join all the beauties of the mind to the ornaments of dress, and inspire a kind of awe and respect, as well as love, into their male beholders. I hope to increase the number of these by publishing this daily paper, which I shall always endeavor to make an innocent, if not an improving, entertainment, and by that means at least divert the minds of my female readers from greater trifles. At the same time, as I would fain give some finishing touches to those which are already the most beautiful pieces in human nature, I shall endeavor to point out all those imperfections that are the blemishes, as well as those virtues which are the embellishments, of the sex. In the meanwhile I hope these my gentle readers, who have so much time on their hands, will not grudge throwing away a quarter of an hour in a day on this paper, since they may do it without any hindrance to business.

I know several of my friends and well-wishers are in great pain for me, lest I should not be able to keep up the spirit of a paper which I oblige myself to furnish every day; but to make them easy in this particular, I will promise them faithfully to give it over as soon as I grow dull. This I know will be matter of great raillery to the small wits; who will frequently put me in mind of my promise, desire me to keep my word, assure me that it is high time to give over, with many other little pleasantries of the like nature, which men of a little smart genius cannot forbear throwing out against their best friends, when they have such a handle given them of being witty. But let them remember that I do hereby enter my caveat against this piece of raillery.

## SIGNIOR NICOLINI AND THE LIONS [1]

*The Spectator, No.* 13. *Thursday, March* 15, 1711

Dic mihi, si fias tu leo, qualis eris?
MARTIAL, XII, 93

Were you a lion, how would you behave?

There is nothing that of late years has afforded matter of greater amusement to the town than Signior Nicolini's [2] combat with a lion in the Haymarket, which has been very often exhibited to the general satisfaction of most of the nobility and gentry in the kingdom of Great Britain. Upon the first rumor of this intended combat, it was confidently affirmed, and is still believed by many in both galleries, that there would be a tame lion sent from the Tower every opera night, in order to be killed by Hydaspes; this report, though altogether groundless, so universally prevailed in the upper regions of the playhouse, that some of the most refined politicians in those parts of the audience gave it out in whisper that the lion was a cousin-german of the tiger who made his appearance in King William's days, and that the stage would be supplied with lions at the public expense, during the whole session. Many likewise were the conjectures of the treatment which this lion was to meet with from the hands of Signior Nicolini; some supposed that he was to subdue him in *recitativo*, as Orpheus used to serve the wild beasts in his time, and afterwards to knock him on the head; some fancied that the lion would not pretend to lay his paws upon the hero, by reason of the received opinion that a lion will not hurt a virgin: several, who pretended to have seen the opera in Italy, had informed their friends that the lion was to act a part in High-Dutch, and roar twice or thrice to a thorough bass before he fell at the feet of Hydaspes. To clear up a matter that was

1 Written by Addison.

2 A popular performer in Italian opera, who first came to London in 1708. The vogue of Italian opera was a frequent subject of satire.

so variously reported, I have made it my business to examine whether this pretended lion is really the savage he appears to be, or only a counterfeit.

But before I communicate my discoveries, I must acquaint the reader that upon my walking behind the scenes last winter, as I was thinking on something else, I accidentally jostled against a monstrous animal that extremely startled me and, upon my nearer survey of it, appeared to be a lion rampant. The lion, seeing me very much surprised, told me, in a gentle voice, that I might come by him if I pleased: "For (says he) I do not intend to hurt anybody." I thanked him very kindly, and passed by him. And in a little time after saw him leap upon the stage, and act his part with very great applause. It has been observed by several that the lion has changed his manner of acting twice or thrice since his first appearance; which will not seem strange when I acquaint my reader that the lion has been changed upon the audience three several times. The first lion was a candle-snuffer, who, being a fellow of a testy choleric temper, overdid his part, and would not suffer himself to be killed so easily as he ought to have done; besides, it was observed of him that he grew more surly every time he came out of the lion; and having dropped some words in ordinary conversation, as if he had not fought his best, and that he suffered himself to be thrown upon his back in the scuffle, and that he would wrestle with Mr. Nicolini for what he pleased, out of his lion's skin, it was thought proper to discard him: and it is verily believed to this day that had he been brought upon the stage another time, he would certainly have done mischief. Besides, it was objected against the first lion, that he reared himself so high upon his hinder paws, and walked in so erect a posture, that he looked more like an old man than a lion.

The second lion was a tailor by trade, who belonged to the playhouse, and had the character of a mild and peaceable man in his profession. If the former was too furious, this was too sheepish, for his part; insomuch that, after a short modest walk upon the stage, he would fall at the first touch of Hydaspes, without grappling with him, and giving him an opportunity of showing his variety of Italian trips. It is said indeed, that he once gave him a rip in his flesh-color doublet, but this was only to make work for himself, in his private character of a tailor. I must not omit that it was this second lion who treated me with so much humanity behind the scenes.

The acting lion at present is, as I am informed, a country gentleman, who does it for his diversion, but desires his name may be concealed. He says very handsomely in his own excuse, that he does not act for gain, that he indulges an innocent pleasure in it, and that it is better to pass away an evening in this manner than in gaming and drinking; but at the same time says, with a very agreeable raillery upon himself, that if his name should be known, the ill-natured world might call him, "the ass in the lion's skin." This gentleman's temper is made out of such a happy mixture of the mild and the choleric, that he outdoes both his predecessors, and has drawn together greater audiences than have been known in the memory of man.

I must not conclude my narrative, without taking notice of a groundless report that has been raised to a gentleman's disadvantage, of whom I must declare myself an admirer; namely, that Signior Nicolini and the lion have been seen sitting peaceably by one another, and smoking a pipe together, behind the scenes; by which their common enemies would insinuate that it is but a sham combat which they represent upon the stage: but upon inquiry I find that if any such correspondence has passed between them, it was not till the combat was over, when the lion was to be looked upon as dead, according to the received rules of the drama. Besides this is what is practiced every day in Westminster Hall, where nothing is more usual than to see a couple of lawyers, who have been tearing each other to pieces in the court embracing one another as soon as they are out of it.

I would not be thought, in any part of this relation, to reflect upon Signior Nicolini who in acting this part only complies with the wretched taste of his audience; he knows very well that the lion has many more admirers than himself; as they say, of the famous equestrian statue on the Pont-Neuf at Paris, that more people go to see the horse than the king who sits upon it. On the contrary, it gives me a just indignation to see person whose action gives new majesty to kings, resolution to heroes, and softness to lovers, thus sinking from the greatness of his behavior, and degraded into the character of the London Prentice. I have often wished that our tragedians would copy after this great master in action. Could they make the same use of their arms and legs, and inform their faces with as significant looks and

passions, how glorious would an English tragedy appear with that action, which is capable of giving a dignity to the forced thoughts, cold conceits, and unnatural expressions of an Italian opera! In the meantime, I have related this combat of the lion to show what are at present the reigning entertainments of the politer part of Great Britain.

Audiences have often been reproached by writers for the coarseness of their taste; but our present grievance does not seem to be the want of a good taste, but of common sense.

## WESTMINSTER ABBEY [1]

*The Spectator, No. 26.* *Friday, March 30, 1711*

Pallida mors aequo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas
Regumque turres, O beate Sesti.
Vitae summa brevis spem nos vetat incohare longam:
Jam te premet nox, fabulaeque manes,
Et domus exilis Plutonia ——.

HORACE, *Odes*, I, IV, 13

With equal foot, rich friend, impartial fate
Knocks at the cottage, and the palace gate;
Life's span forbids thee to extend thy cares,
And stretch thy hopes beyond thy years;
Night soon will seize, and you must quickly go
To story'd ghosts, and Pluto's house below.

CREECH

When I am in a serious humor, I very often walk by myself in Westminster Abbey; where the gloominess of the place, and the use to which it is applied, with the solemnity of the building, and the condition of the people who lie in it, are apt to fill the mind with a kind of melancholy, or rather thoughtfulness, that is not disagreeable. I yesterday passed a whole afternoon in the churchyard, the cloisters, and the church, amusing myself with the tombstones and inscriptions that I met with in those several regions of the dead. Most of them recorded nothing else of the buried person, but that he was born upon one day, and died upon another: the whole history of his life being comprehended in those two circumstances that are common to all mankind. I could not but look upon these registers of existence, whether of brass or marble, as a kind of satire upon the departed persons; who had left no other memorial of them but that they were born, and that they died. They put me in mind of several persons mentioned in the battles of heroic poems, who have sounding names given them, for no other reason but that they may be killed, and are celebrated for nothing but being knocked on the head.

Γλαῦκόν τε Μέδοντά τε Θερσίλοχόν τε.

HOMER.

Glaucumque, Medontaque, Thersilochumque.

VIRGIL.

Glaucus, and Medon, and Thersilochus.

The life of these men is finely described in Holy Writ by "the path of an arrow," which is immediately closed up and lost.

Upon my going into the church, I entertained myself with the digging of a grave; and saw in every shovelful of it that was thrown up the fragment of a bone or skull intermixed with a kind of fresh mouldering earth that some time or other had a place in the composition of an human body. Upon this, I began to consider with myself, what innumerable multitudes of people lay confused together under the pavement of that ancient cathedral; how men and women, friends and enemies, priests and soldiers, monks and prebendaries, were crumbled amongst one another, and blended together in the same common mass; how beauty, strength, and youth, with old age, weakness, and deformity, lay undistinguished in the same promiscuous heap of matter.

After having thus surveyed this great magazine of mortality, as it were, in the lump, I examined it more particularly by the accounts which I found on several of the monuments which are raised in every quarter of that ancient fabric. Some of them were covered with such extravagant epitaphs that, if it were possible for the dead person to be acquainted with them, he would blush at the praises which his friends have bestowed upon him. There are others so excessively modest that they deliver the character of the person departed in Greek or Hebrew, and by that means are not understood once in a twelvemonth. In the poetical quarter, I found there were poets who had no monuments, and monuments which had no poets. I observed, indeed, that the present war had filled the church with many of these uninhabited monuments, which had been erected to the memory of persons whose bodies were perhaps buried in the plains of Blenheim, or in the bosom of the ocean.

I could not but be very much delighted with several modern epitaphs, which are written with great elegance of expression and justness of thought, and therefore do honor to the living as well as to the dead. As a foreigner is very apt to conceive an idea of the ignorance or politeness of a nation from the turn of their public monuments and inscriptions, they should be submitted to the perusal of men of learning and genius before

1 Written by Addison.

they are put in execution. Sir Cloudesley Shovel's monument has very often given me great offense: instead of the brave rough English admiral, which was the distinguishing character of that plain, gallant man, he is represented on his tomb by the figure of a beau, dressed in a long periwig, and reposing himself upon velvet cushions under a canopy of state. The inscription is answerable to the monument; for instead of celebrating the many remarkable actions he had performed in the service of his country, it acquaints us only with the manner of his death, in which it was impossible for him to reap any honor. The Dutch, whom we are apt to despise for want of genius, show an infinitely greater taste of antiquity and politeness in their buildings and works of this nature, than what we meet with in those of our own country. The monuments of their admirals, which have been erected at the public expense, represent them like themselves; and are adorned with rostral crowns and naval ornaments, with beautiful festoons of seaweed, shells, and coral.

But to return to our subject. I have left the repository of our English kings for the contemplation of another day, when I shall find my mind disposed for so serious an amusement. I know that entertainments of this nature are apt to raise dark and dismal thoughts in timorous minds, and gloomy imaginations; but for my own part, though I am always serious, I do not know what it is to be melancholy; and can therefore take a view of nature in her deep and solemn scenes, with the same pleasure as in her most gay and delightful ones. By this means I can improve myself with those objects which others consider with terror. When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion; when I see the tomb of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow: when I see kings lying by those who deposed them, when I consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men that divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind. When I read the several dates of the tombs, of some that died yesterday, and some six hundred years ago, I consider that great day when we shall all of us be contemporaries, and make our appearance together.

## THE VISION OF MIRZAH [1]

*The Spectator, No. 159.* *Saturday, September 1, 171*

—— Omnem, quae nunc obducta tuenti
Mortales hebetat visus tibi, et humida circum
Caligat, nubem eripiam ——.

VIRGIL, *Aen.* II, 604

The cloud, which intercepting the clear light,
Hangs o'er the eyes, and blunts thy mortal sight,
I will remove ——

When I was at Grand Cairo, I picked up several oriental manuscripts, which I have still by me. Among others I met with one entitled The Visions of Mirzah, which I have read over with great pleasure. I intend to give it to the public when I have no other entertainment for them; and shall begin with the first vision, which I have translated word for word, as follows:

"On the fifth day of the moon, which, according to the custom of my forefathers, I always keep holy, after having washed myself, and offered up my morning devotions, I ascended the high hills of Bagdat, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer. As I was here airing myself on the tops of the mountains, I fell into a profound contemplation on the vanity of human life; and passing from one thought to another, 'Surely,' said I, 'man is but a shadow, and life a dream.' Whilst I was thus musing, I cast my eyes towards the summit of a rock that was not far from me, where I discovered one in the habit of a shepherd, with a little musical instrument in his hand. As I looked upon him, he applied it to his lips, and began to play upon it. The sound of it was exceeding sweet, and wrought into a variety of tunes that were inexpressibly melodious, and altogether different from anything I had ever heard. They put me in mind of those heavenly airs that are played to the departed souls of good men upon their first arrival in paradise, to wear out the impressions of the last agonies, and qualify them for the pleasures of that happy place. My heart melted away in secret raptures.

"I had been often told that the rock before me was the haunt of a genius; and that several had been entertained with music who had passed by it, but never heard that the musician had before made himself visible. When he had raised my thoughts, by those transporting airs which he played, to taste the pleasures of his conversation, as I looked upon him like one astonished, he beckoned to me, and by the waving of his hand directed me to approach the place where he sat. I drew near with that reverence which is due to

[1] Written by Addison.

a superior nature; and as my heart was entirely subdued by the captivating strains I had heard, I fell down at his feet and wept. The genius smiled upon me with a look of compassion and affability that familiarized him to my imagination, and at once dispelled all the fears and apprehensions with which I approached him. He lifted me from the ground, and taking me by the hand, 'Mirzah,' said he, 'I have heard thee in thy soliloquies; follow me.'

"He then led me to the highest pinnacle of the rock, and placing me on the top of it, 'Cast thy eyes eastward,' said he, 'and tell me what thou seest.' 'I see,' said I, 'a huge valley and a prodigious tide of water rolling through it.' 'The valley that thou seest,' said he, 'is the vale of misery, and the tide of water that thou seest is part of the great tide of eternity.' 'What is the reason,' said I, 'that the tide I see rises out of a thick mist at one end, and again loses itself in a thick mist at the other?' 'What thou seest,' said he, 'is that portion of eternity which is called time, measured out by the sun, and reaching from the beginning of the world to its consummation. Examine now,' said he, 'this sea that is bounded with darkness at both ends, and tell me what thou discoverest in it.' 'I see a bridge,' said I, 'standing in the midst of the tide.' 'The bridge thou seest,' said he, 'is human life; consider it attentively.' Upon a more leisurely survey of it, I found that it consisted of threescore and ten entire arches, with several broken arches, which, added to those that were entire, made up the number about an hundred. As I was counting the arches, the genius told me that this bridge consisted at first of a thousand arches; but that a great flood swept away the rest, and left the bridge in the ruinous condition I now beheld it. 'But tell me further,' said he, 'what thou discoverest on it.' 'I see multitudes of people passing over it,' said I, 'and a black cloud hanging on each end of it.' As I looked more attentively, I saw several of the passengers dropping through the bridge, into the great tide that flowed underneath it; and upon further examination, perceived there were innumerable trap-doors that lay concealed in the bridge, which the passengers no sooner trod upon, but they fell through them into the tide and immediately disappeared. These hidden pitfalls were set very thick at the entrance of the bridge, so that throngs of people no sooner broke through the cloud, but many of them fell into them. They grew thinner towards the middle, but multiplied and lay closer together towards the end of the arches that were entire.

"There were indeed some persons, but their number was very small, that continued a kind of hobbling march on the broken arches, but fell through one after another, being quite tired and spent with so long a walk.

"I passed some time in the contemplation of this wonderful structure, and the great variety of objects which it presented. My heart was filled with a deep melancholy to see several dropping unexpectedly in the midst of mirth and jollity, and catching at every thing that stood by them to save themselves. Some were looking up towards the heavens in a thoughtful posture, and in the midst of a speculation stumbled and fell out of sight. Multitudes were very busy in the pursuit of bubbles that glittered in their eyes and danced before them, but often when they thought themselves within the reach of them, their footing failed and down they sunk. In this confusion of objects, I observed some with scimitars in their hands, and others[1] with urinals, who ran to and fro upon the bridge, thrusting several persons on trap-doors which did not seem to lie in their way, and which they might have escaped, had they not been thus forced upon them.

"The genius, seeing me indulge myself in this melancholy prospect, told me I had dwelt long enough upon it. 'Take thine eyes off the bridge,' said he, 'and tell me if thou yet seest any thing thou dost not comprehend.' Upon looking up, 'What mean,' said I, 'those great flights of birds that are perpetually hovering about the bridge, and settling upon it from time to time? I see vultures, harpies, ravens, cormorants; and among many other feathered creatures several little winged boys that perch in great numbers upon the middle arches.' 'These,' said the genius, 'are envy, avarice, superstition, despair, love, with the like cares and passions that infest human life.'

"I here fetched a deep sigh. 'Alas,' said I, 'man was made in vain! How is he given away to misery and mortality! tortured in life, and swallowed up in death!' The genius being moved with compassion towards me, bid me quit so uncomfortable a prospect: 'Look no more,' said he, 'on man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting out for eternity; but cast thine eye on that thick

[1] i.e., doctors.

mist into which the tide bears the several generations of mortals that fall into it.' I directed my sight as I was ordered, and (whether or no the good genius strengthened it with any supernatural force, or dissipated part of the mist that was before too thick for the eye to penetrate) I saw the valley opening at the further end, and spreading forth into an immense ocean, that had a huge rock of adamant running through the midst of it, and dividing it into two equal parts. The clouds still rested on one half of it, insomuch that I could discover nothing in it; but the other appeared to me a vast ocean planted with innumerable islands, that were covered with fruits and flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little shining seas that ran among them. I could see persons dressed in glorious habits, with garlands upon their heads, passing among the trees, lying down by the sides of fountains, or resting on beds of flowers; and could hear a confused harmony of singing birds, falling waters, human voices, and musical instruments. Gladness grew in me upon the discovery of so delightful a scene. I wished for the wings of an eagle, that I might fly away to those happy seats; but the genius told me there was no passage to them, except through the gates of death that I saw opening every moment upon the bridge. 'The islands,' said he, 'that lie so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole face of the ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the sands on the sea-shore; there are myriads of islands behind those which thou here discoverest, reaching further than thine eye or even thine imagination can extend itself. These are the mansions of good men after death, who, according to the degree and kinds of virtue in which they excelled, are distributed among these several islands, which abound with pleasures of different kinds and degrees, suitable to the relishes and perfections of those who are settled in them; every island is a paradise accommodated to its respective inhabitants. Are not these, O Mirzah, habitations worth contending for? Does life appear miserable, that gives thee opportunities of earning such a reward? Is death to be feared, that will convey thee to so happy an existence? Think not man was made in vain, who has such an eternity reserved for him.' I gazed with inexpressible pleasure on these happy islands. 'At length,' said I, 'show me now, I beseech thee, the secrets that lie hid under those dark clouds which cover the ocean on the other side of the rock of adamant.' The genius making me no answer, I turned about to address myself to him a second time, but I found that he had left me; I then turned again to the vision which I had been so long contemplating, but instead of the rolling tide, the arched bridge, and the happy islands, I saw nothing but the long hollow valley of Bagdat, with oxen, sheep, and camels grazing upon the sides of it." ——

## DISSECTION OF A BEAU'S HEAD [1]

*The Spectator, No. 275. Tuesday, January 15, 171*

—— tribus Anticyris caput insanabile.
HORACE, *Ars Poet.* 30

A head no hellebore can cure.

I was yesterday engaged in an assembly of virtuosos, where one of them produced many curious observations which he had lately made in the anatomy of an human body. Another of the company communicated to us several wonderful discoveries, which he had also made on the same subject, by the help of very fine glasses. This gave birth to a great variety of uncommon remarks, and furnished discourse for the remaining part of the day.

The different opinions which were started on this occasion presented to my imagination so many new ideas that, by mixing with those which were already there, they employed my fancy all the last night, and composed a very wild extravagant dream.

I was invited, methought, to the dissection of a beau's head, and of a coquette's heart which were both of them laid on a table before us. An imaginary operator opened the first with a great deal of nicety, which, upon a cursory and superficial view, appeared like the head of another man; but, upon applying our glasses to it, we made a very odd discovery, namely, that what we looked upon as brains, were not such in reality, but a heap of strange materials wound up in the shape and texture, and packed together with wonderful art in the several cavities of the skull. For, as Homer tells us that the blood of the gods is not real blood, but only something like it; so we found that the brain of a beau is not real brain, but only something like it.

The pineal gland, which many of our modern philosophers suppose to be the seat of the soul, smelt very strong of essence and orange-flower water, and was encompassed with a kind of horny substance, cut into

[1] Written by Addison.

thousand little faces or mirrors, which were imperceptible to the naked eye; insomuch that the soul, if there had been any here, must have been always taken up in contemplating her own beauties.

We observed a large antrum or cavity in the sinciput, that was filled with ribbons, lace, and embroidery, wrought together in a most curious piece of network, the parts of which were likewise imperceptible to the naked eye. Another of these antrums or cavities was stuffed with invisible billet-doux, love-letters, pricked dances, and other trumpery of the same nature. In another we found a kind of powder, which set the whole company a sneezing, and by the scent discovered itself to be right Spanish. The several other cells were stored with commodities of the same kind, of which it would be tedious to give the reader an exact inventory.

There was a large cavity on each side of the head, which I must not omit. That on the right side was filled wi h fictions, flatteries, and falsehoods, vows, promises, and protestations; that on the left with oaths and imprecations. There issued out a duct from each of these cells, which ran into the root of the tongue, where both joined together, and passed forward in one common duct to the tip of it. We discovered several little roads or canals running from the ear into the brain, and took particular care to trace them out through their several passages. One of them extended itself to a bundle of sonnets and little musical instruments. Others ended in several bladders which were filled either with wind or froth. But the large canal entered into a great cavity of the skull, from whence there went another canal into the tongue. This great cavity was filled with a kind of spongy substance, which the French anatomists call *galimatias*, and the English nonsense.

The skins of the forehead were extremely tough and thick, and, what very much surprised us, had not in them any single blood-vessel that we were able to discover, either with or without our glasses; from whence we concluded that the party when alive must have been entirely deprived of the faculty of blushing.

The *os cribriforme* was exceedingly stuffed, and in some places damaged with snuff. We could not but take notice in particular of that small muscle, which is not often discovered in dissections, and draws the nose upwards, when it expresses the contempt which the owner of it has, upon seeing anything he does not like, or hearing anything he does not understand. I need not tell my learned reader, this is that muscle which performs the motion so often mentioned by the Latin poets, when they talk of a man's cocking his nose, or playing the rhinoceros.

We did not find anything very remarkable in the eye, saving only that the *musculi amatorii*, or as we may translate it into English, the ogling muscles, were very much worn and decayed with use; whereas on the contrary, the elevator, or the muscle which turns the eye toward heaven, did not appear to have been used at all.

I have only mentioned in this dissection such new discoveries as we were able to make, and have not taken any notice of those parts which are to be met with in common heads. As for the skull, the face, and indeed the whole outward shape and figure of the head, we could not discover any difference from what we observe in the heads of other men. We were informed, that the person to whom this head belonged, had passed for a man above five and thirty years; during which time he eat and drank like other people, dressed well, talked loud, laughed frequently, and on particular occasions had acquitted himself tolerably at a ball or an assembly; to which one of the company added, that a certain kr ot of ladies took him for a wit. He was cut off in the flower of his age by the blow of a paring-shovel, having been surprised by an eminent citizen, as he was tendering some civilities to his wife.

When we had thoroughly examined this head with all its apartments, and its several kinds of furniture, we put up the brain, such as it was, into its proper place, and laid it aside under a broad piece of scarlet cloth, in order to be prepared, and kept in a great repository of dissections; our operator telling us that the preparation would not be so difficult as that of another brain, for that he had observed several of the little pipes and tubes which ran through the brain were already filled with a kind of mercurial substance, which he looked upon to be true quicksilver.

He applied himself in the next place to the coquette's heart, which he likewise laid open with great dexterity. There occurred to us many particularities in this dissection; but, being unwilling to burden my reader's memory too much, I shall reserve this subject for the speculation of another day.

## DISSECTION OF A COQUETTE'S HEART [1]

*The Spectator, No.* 281. *Tuesday, January* 22, 1712

Pectoribus inhians spirantia consulit exta.
VIRGIL, *Aen.* IV, 64
Anxious the reeking entrails he consults.

Having already given an account of the dissection of a beau's head, with the several discoveries made on that occasion, I shall here, according to my promise, enter upon the dissection of a coquette's heart and communicate to the public such particularities as we observed in that curious piece of anatomy.

I should, perhaps, have waived this undertaking, had not I been put in mind of my promise by several of my unknown correspondents, who are very importunate with me to make an example of the coquette, as I have already done of the beau. It is, therefore, in compliance with the request of friends, that I have looked over the minutes of my former dream, in order to give the public an exact relation of it, which I shall enter upon without further preface.

Our operator, before he engaged in this visionary dissection, told us, that there was nothing in his art more difficult, than to lay open the heart of a coquette, by reason of the many labyrinths and recesses which are to be found in it, and which do not appear in the heart of any other animal.

He desired us first of all to observe the *pericardium*, or outward case of the heart, which we did very attentively; and, by the help of our glasses, discerned in it millions of little scars, which seemed to have been occasioned by the points of innumerable darts and arrows, that from time to time had glanced upon the outward coat; though we could not discover the smallest orifice, by which any of them had entered and pierced the inward substance.

Every smatterer in anatomy knows that this *pericardium*, or case of the heart, contains in it a thin reddish liquor, supposed to be bred from the vapors which exhale out of the heart, and being stopped here, are condensed into this watery substance. Upon examining this liquor, we found that it had in it all the qualities of that spirit which is made use of in the thermometer to show the change of weather.

Nor must I here omit an experiment one of the company assured us he himself had made with this liquor, which he found in great quantity about the heart of a coquette whom he had formerly dissected. He affirmed to us, that he had actually enclosed it in a small tube made after the manner of a weather-glass; but that, instead of acquainting him with the variations of the atmosphere, it showed him the qualities of those persons who entered the room where it stood. He affirmed also, that it rose at the approach of a plume of feathers, an embroidered coat, or a pair of fringed gloves; and that it fell as soon as an ill-shaped periwig, a clumsy pair of shoes, or an unfashionable coat came into his house: nay, he proceeded so far as to assure us, that upon his laughing aloud when he stood by it, the liquor mounted very sensibly, and immediately sunk again upon his looking serious. In short, he told us that he knew very well by this invention whenever he had a man of sense or a coxcomb in his room.

Having cleared away the *pericardium*, or the case, and liquor above mentioned, we came to the heart itself. The outward surface of it was extremely slippery, and the *mucro*, or point, so very cold withal that, upon endeavoring to take hold of it, it glided through the fingers like a smooth piece of ice.

The fibres were turned and twisted in a more intricate and perplexed manner than they are usually found in other hearts; insomuch, that the whole heart was wound up together like a Gordian knot, and must have had very irregular and unequal motions, whilst it was employed in its vital function.

One thing we thought very observable, namely, that upon examining all the vessels which came into it or issued out of it, we could not discover any communication that it had with the tongue.

We could not but take notice, likewise, that several of those little nerves in the heart, which are affected by the sentiments of love, hatred, and other passions, did not descend to this before us from the brain, but from the muscles which lie about the eye.

Upon weighing the heart in my hand, I found it to be extremely light, and consequently very hollow; which I did not wonder at, when, upon looking into the inside of it, I saw multitudes of cells and cavities running one within another, as our historians describe the apartments of Rosamond's Bower. Several of these little hollows were stuffed with innumerable sorts of trifles, which I shall forbear giving any particular account of, and shall therefore only take notice of what lay first and uppermost, which, upon our unfolding it and applying our microscope to it, appeared to be a flame-colored hood.

We were informed that the lady of this heart, when living, received the addresses of

[1] Written by Addison.

several who made love to her, and did not only give each of them encouragement, but made everyone she conversed with believe that she regarded him with an eye of kindness; for which reason we expected to have seen the impression of multitudes of faces among the several plaits and foldings of the heart; but, to our great surprise, not a single print of this nature discovered itself, till we came into the very core and centre of it. We there observed a little figure, which, upon applying our glasses to it, appeared dressed in a very fantastic manner. The more I looked upon it, the more I thought I had seen the face before, but could not possibly recollect either the place or time; when at length one of the company, who had examined this figure more nicely than the rest, showed us plainly by the make of its face, and the several turns of its features, that the little idol that was thus lodged in the middle of the heart was the deceased beau, whose head I gave some account of in my last Tuesday's paper.

As soon as we had finished our dissection, we resolved to make an experiment of the heart, not being able to determine among ourselves the nature of its substance, which differed in so many particulars from that of the heart in other females. Accordingly we laid it into a pan of burning coals, when we observed in it a certain salamandrine quality, that made it capable of living in the midst of fire and flame, without being consumed, or so much as singed.

As we were admiring this strange phenomenon, and standing round the heart in a circle, it gave a most prodigious sigh, or rather crack, and dispersed all at once in smoke and vapor. This imaginary noise, which methought was louder than the burst of a cannon, produced such a violent shake in my brain, that it dissipated the fumes of sleep, and left me in an instant broad awake.

## ON WASTE OF TIME [1]

*The Spectator, No.* 317. *Tuesday, March* 4, 1712

——Fruges consumere nati.

HORACE, *Ep.* I, II, 27

Born to drink and eat.

CREECH

Augustus, a few moments before his death, asked his friends who stood about him if they thought he had acted his part well; and upon receiving such an answer as was due to his extraordinary merit, "Let me then," says he, "go off the stage with your applause," using the expression with which the Roman actors made their exit at the conclusion of a dramatic piece. I could wish that men, while they are in health, would consider well the nature of the part they are engaged in, and what figure it will make in the minds of those they leave behind them; whether it was worth coming into the world for, whether it be suitable to a reasonable being; in short, whether it appears graceful in this life, or will turn to an advantage in the next. Let the sycophant, or buffoon, the satirist, or the good companion, consider with himself, when his body shall be laid in the grave, and his soul pass into another state of existence, how much it will redound to his praise to have it said of him that no man in England eat better, that he had an admirable talent at turning his friends into ridicule, that nobody outdid him at an ill-natured jest, or that he never went to bed before he had dispatched his third bottle. These are, however, very common funeral orations, and eulogiums on deceased persons who have acted among mankind with some figure and reputation.

But if we look into the bulk of our species, they are such as are not likely to be remembered a moment after their disappearance. They leave behind them no traces of their existence, but are forgotten as though they had never been. They are neither wanted by the poor, regretted by the rich, nor celebrated by the learned. They are neither missed in the commonwealth, nor lamented by private persons. Their actions are of no significancy to mankind, and might have been performed by creatures of much less dignity than those who are distinguished by the faculty of reason. An eminent French author speaks somewhere to the following purpose: I have often seen from my chamber window two noble creatures, both of them of an erect countenance, and endowed with reason. These two intellectual beings are employed, from morning to night, in rubbing two smooth stones one upon another; that is, as the vulgar phrase it, in polishing marble.

My friend, Sir Andrew Freeport, as we were sitting in the club last night, gave us an account of a sober citizen who died a few days since. This honest man, being of greater consequence in his own thoughts than in the eye of the world, had for some years past kept a journal of his life. Sir Andrew showed us one week of it. Since the occurrences set down in it mark out such a road of action as that I have been speaking of, I shall present my reader with a faithful copy of it; after

[1] Written by Addison.

having first informed him that the deceased person had in his youth been bred to trade, but finding himself not so well turned for business, he had for several years last past lived altogether upon a moderate annuity.

MONDAY, Eight o'clock. I put on my clothes and walked into the parlor.

Nine o'clock, ditto. Tied my knee-strings, and washed my hands.

Hours ten, eleven, and twelve. Smoked three pipes of Virginia. Read the *Supplement* and *Daily Courant*. Things go ill in the north. Mr. Nisby's opinion thereupon.

One o'clock in the afternoon. Chid Ralph for mislaying my tobacco-box.

Two o'clock. Sat down to dinner. Mem. Too many plums and no suet.

From three to four. Took my afternoon's nap.

From four to six. Walked into the fields. Wind, S.S.E.

From six to ten. At the Club. Mr. Nisby's opinion about the peace.

Ten o'clock. Went to bed, slept sound.

TUESDAY, BEING HOLIDAY, Eight o'clock. Rose as usual.

Nine o'clock. Washed hands and face, shaved, put on my double soled shoes.

Ten, eleven, twelve. Took a walk to Islington.

One. Took a pot of Mother Cob's Mild.

Between two and three. Returned, dined on a knuckle of veal and bacon. Mem. Sprouts wanting.

Three. Nap as usual.

From four to six. Coffee-house. Read the news. A dish of twist. Grand Vizier strangled.

From six to ten. At the Club. Mr. Nisby's account of the Great Turk.

Ten. Dream of the Grand Vizier. Broken sleep.

WEDNESDAY, Eight o'clock. Tongue of my shoe-buckle broke. Hands, but not face.

Nine. Paid off the butcher's bill. Mem. To be allowed for the last leg of mutton.

Ten, eleven. At the coffee-house. More work in the north. Stranger in a black wig asked me how stocks went.

From twelve to one. Walked in the fields. Wind to the south.

From one to two. Smoked a pipe and a half.

Two. Dined as usual. Stomach good.

Three. Nap broke by the falling of a pewter-dish. Mem. Cook-maid in love, and grown careless.

From four to six. At the coffee-house. Advice from Smyrna, that the Grand Vizier was first of all strangled, and afterwards beheaded.

Six o'clock in the evening. Was half an hour in the club before anybody else came. Mr. Nisby of opinion that the Grand Vizier was not strangled the sixth instant.

Ten at night. Went to bed. Slept without waking till nine next morning.

THURSDAY, Nine o'clock. Stayed within till two o'clock for Sir Timothy, who did not bring me my annuity according to his promise.

Two in the afternoon. Sat down to dinner. Loss of appetite. Small beer sour. Beef overcorned.

Three. Could not take my nap.

Four and five. Gave Ralph a box on the ear. Turned off my cookmaid. Sent a message to Sir Timothy. Mem. I did not go to the club tonight. Went to bed at nine o'clock.

FRIDAY. Passed the morning in meditation upon Sir Timothy, who was with me a quarter before twelve.

Twelve o'clock. Bought a new head to my cane, and a tongue to my buckle. Drank a glass of purl to recover appetite.

Two and three. Dined, and slept well.

From four to six. Went to the coffee-house. Met Mr. Nisby there. Smoked several pipes. Mr. Nisby of opinion that laced coffee is bad for the head.

Six o'clock. At the club as steward. Sat late.

Twelve o'clock. Went to bed, dreamt that I drank small beer with the Grand Vizier.

SATURDAY. Waked at eleven, walked in the fields. Wind N.E.

Twelve. Caught in a shower.

One in the afternoon. Returned home, and dried myself.

Two. Mr. Nisby dined with me. First course marrow-bones. Second ox-cheek, with a bottle of Brook's and Hellier.

Three o'clock. Overslept myself.

Six. Went to the Club. Like to have fallen into a gutter. Grand Vizier certainly dead, etc.

I question not but the reader will be surprised to find the above-mentioned journalist taking so much care of a life that was filled with such inconsiderable actions and received so very small improvements; and yet, if we look into the behavior of many whom we daily converse with, we shall find that most of their hours are taken up in those three important articles of eating, drinking,

and sleeping. I do not suppose that a man loses his time, who is not engaged in public affairs, or in an illustrious course of action. On the contrary, I believe our hours may very often be more profitably laid out in such transactions as make no figure in the world than in such as are apt to draw upon them the attention of mankind. One may become wiser and better by several methods of employing one's self in secrecy and silence, and do what is laudable without noise or ostentation. I would, however, recommend to every one of my readers the keeping a journal of their lives for one week, and setting down punctually their whole series of employments during that space of time. This kind of self-examination would give them a true state of themselves, and incline them to consider seriously what they are about. One day would rectify the omissions of another, and make a man weigh all those indifferent actions, which, though they are easily forgotten, must certainly be accounted for.

## ALEXANDER POPE (1688–1744)

Alexander Pope made himself the most distinguished poet of his generation in the face of grave difficulties. His father, a well-to-do linendraper in London, was a Roman Catholic; and the laws of eighteenth-century England placed upon Roman Catholics very serious disabilities. A Roman Catholic could not send his son to any of the great public schools or to the universities, nor even send him to be educated abroad. Pope's education was gained irregularly from private tutors and from his own voracious reading. He was deprived of the intellectual discipline and the wholesome human contacts of school and university. A severe illness at the age of twelve left him for the rest of his life a crippled invalid. He was about four feet, six inches tall, hump-backed, subject to frequent and terrible headaches. His religion made him ineligible for any government offices, such as those held by Addison and by Steele, and closed to him the learned professions; his physical deformity cut him off from many other activities. But luckily he could still be a poet; and Pope was born to be a poet. Before the age of fifteen he had written an epic poem, which he later destroyed. His *Pastorals*, published in 1708, won instant recognition by the exquisite music of their verse. Then in quick succession came the *Essay on Criticism* (1711), the *Rape of the Lock* (1712, revised 1714), and *Windsor Forest* (1713). Before he was twenty-five, Pope was clearly recognized as the greatest living poet. When in 1713 he proposed a translation of Homer's *Iliad*, it was regarded as a great national event. Every one of importance subscribed in advance for copies of the work, which appeared in six volumes, published at intervals between 1715 and 1720. Pope's profit from the translation was over £5000; and it must be remembered that the value of money was many times what it is to-day. His translation of the *Odyssey* (1725–26) yielded three or four thousand pounds more, and Pope was a rich man. He was the first English man of letters to make a fortune directly by his writings. In 1719, he bought the lease of a house with five acres of land on the banks of the Thames at Twickenham near London, where he lived for the rest of his life.

In his later years he devoted himself entirely to didactic and satiric poetry, the sort of writing for which his genius was best suited — the *Dunciad*, a mock-heroic epic directed against false pretenders to wit and learning (1728, revised in 1729, in 1742 with the addition of the fourth book, and in 1743 with Colley Cibber elevated to chief place among the "dunces"), the *Essay on Man* (1732–34), the *Moral Essays* (1731–35), the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* (1735).

Pope's genius won for him the warm friendship of the men and women of his day most distinguished by genius and rank; but his abnormal sensitiveness and his taste for intrigue involved him in many quarrels. Indeed his biography is largely a history of quarrels and intriguings, many of which can be forgiven only when one takes into account his crippled body and the circumstances of his education. But if he could be a bitter enemy, he could also be a generous friend.

During his lifetime, Pope was the "prince of English poets," a rank which he maintained, with some dissenting voices, till the close of the eighteenth century. With the nineteenth century his reputation suffered a great decline. Some even went so far as to declare that he was not a poet at all. We are able now to appraise more justly both his greatness and his limitations. He has not the power of Chaucer, or Shakespeare, or Browning to make men and women live and breathe before our eyes; nor does he like Milton create for us a new heaven and a new earth. His genius is critical rather than creative. It is fairer to compare him with such reflective poets as Wordsworth, or the Byron of *Childe Harold*, or the Tennyson of *In Memoriam*. If he has less spiritual elevation than Wordsworth and less fire than Byron, he is the superior of either in sound good sense, in flashing wit, and in playful fancy. Within the limits of the heroic couplet, a form which he brought to its supreme perfection, he has a marvelous range of metrical power — from the exquisite music of his more elevated poems to the easy colloquial flow of the *Moral Essays* and the satires. He is a master also of terse, epigrammatic diction; his sense for the right word and the

right phrase is so sure that he has given to the English language more familiar quotations than any other poet save Shakespeare. Whether or not we adjudge him a great poet, he is surely one of our great literary artists.

The standard edition of Pope's works is that of Elwin and Courthope in ten volumes, 1871–89. Volume V of this edition contains the fullest account of his life. Within smaller compass, the best edition is that of H. W. Boynton in the Cambridge Poets series (Houghton Mifflin Company), which includes the translations of Homer. A good short biography is that of Sir Leslie Stephen in the English Men of Letters series.

## THE RAPE OF THE LOCK

### AN HEROI-COMICAL POEM

Nolueram, Belinda, tuos violare capillos;[1]
Sed juvat, hoc precibus me tribuisse tuis.
*Mart. Epig.*, XII, 84

First published 1712; revised edition 1714. Hazlitt called the *Rape of the Lock* "the triumph of insignificance." Its subject is insignificant enough. Among the circle of Pope's acquaintance a young nobleman in a spirit of frolic snipped off a lock of hair from the head of a young lady, and the escapade led to a quarrel between the families of the two young people. This trifling episode Pope has elaborated by bringing in all the "insignificances" of fashionable life — the lady's toilet-table, making coffee, playing cards. "The little is made great, and the great little." The whole is handled with the mock solemnity of a heroic epic. It was in the second edition that Pope added the delicious fancy of the sylphs and gnomes. If its substance is insignificant, the result is a supreme triumph of wit and fancy. The moral is pointed in lines 15–34 of Canto V, which insist on the virtues of "good sense" and "good humor." In the first three cantos the satire is directed against the lack of good sense, in the remainder of the poem against the lack of good humor. So that, magnificent trifle though it is, the *Rape of the Lock* is not without significance. If it makes little things great, is not that what we are continually doing in our social lives — magnifying the importance of dress and conventional manners, losing our tempers over trifling slights and annoyances. It is against such foibles as these that Pope levels the dart of his satire.

### CANTO I

What dire offence from amorous causes springs,
What mighty contests rise from trivial things,
I sing — This verse to *Caryll*,[2] muse! is due:
This, even Belinda may vouchsafe to view:
Slight is the subject, but not so the praise,
If she inspire, and he approve my lays.
Say what strange motive, Goddess! could compel
A well-bred Lord to assault a gentle Belle?
O say what stranger cause, yet unexplored,
Could make a gentle Belle reject a Lord?
In tasks so bold can little men engage,
And in soft bosoms dwells such mighty rage?
Sol thro' white curtains shot a tim'rous ray,
And oped those eyes that must eclipse the day.
Now lapdogs give themselves the rousing shake,
And sleepless lovers just at twelve awake:
Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knocked the ground,
And the pressed watch returned a silver sound.
Belinda still her downy pillow prest,
Her guardian Sylph prolonged the balmy rest.
'Twas he had summoned to her silent bed
The morning-dream that hovered o'er her head;
A youth more glittering than a Birthnight Beau[1]
(That even in slumber caused her cheek to glow)
Seemed to her ear his winning lips to lay,
And thus in whispers said, or seemed to say:
"Fairest of mortals, thou distinguished care
Of thousand bright Inhabitants of Air!
If e'er one vision touched thy infant thought,
Of all the nurse and all the priest have taught —
Of airy elves by moonlight shadows seen,
The silver token, and the circled green,
Or virgins visited by Angel-powers,
With golden crowns and wreaths of heavenly flowers;
Hear and believe! thy own importance know,
Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.
Some secret truths, from learned pride concealed,
To maids alone and children are revealed:
What tho' no credit doubting Wits may give?
The fair and innocent shall still believe.
Know, then, unnumbered Spirits round thee fly,

1 I should not have wished, Belinda, to violate your locks; but it is a pleasure to pay this tribute to your prayers.

2 John Caryll, a close personal friend of Pope.

1 i.e. a fine gentleman dressed for a celebration of the King's birthday.

The light militia of the lower sky.
These, tho' unseen, are ever on the wing,
Hang o'er the Box, and hover round the Ring.[1]
Think what an equipage thou hast in air,
And view with scorn two pages and a chair.
As now your own, our beings were of old,
And once inclosed in woman's beauteous mold;
Thence, by a soft transition, we repair
From earthly vehicles to these of air.
Think not, when woman's transient breath is fled,
That all her vanities at once are dead;
Succeeding vanities she still regards,
And, tho' she plays no more, o'erlooks the cards.
Her joy in gilded chariots, when alive,
And love of Ombre,[2] after death survive.
For when the Fair in all their pride expire,
To their first elements their souls retire.
The sprites of fiery termagants in flame
Mount up, and take a Salamander's name.
Soft yielding minds to water glide away,
And sip, with Nymphs, their elemental tea.
The graver prude sinks downward to a Gnome
In search of mischief still on earth to roam.
The light coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,
And sport and flutter in the fields of air.
"Know further yet: whoever fair and chaste
Rejects mankind, is by some Sylph embraced;
For spirits, freed from mortal laws, with ease
Assume what sexes and what shapes they please.
What guards the purity of melting maids,
In courtly balls, and midnight masquerades,
Safe from the treacherous friend, the daring spark,
The glance by day, the whisper in the dark;
When kind occasion prompts their warm desires,
When music softens, and when dancing fires?
'Tis but their Sylph, the wise Celestials know,
Tho' Honor is the word with men below.
"Some nymphs there are, too conscious of their face,
For life predestined to the Gnome's embrace.
These swell their prospects and exalt their pride,
When offers are disdained, and love denied:
Then gay ideas crowd the vacant brain,
While peers, and dukes, and all their sweeping train,
And garters, stars, and coronets appear,
And in soft sounds, "Your Grace" salutes their ear.
'Tis these that early taint the female soul,
Instruct the eyes of young coquettes to roll,
Teach infant cheeks a bidden blush to know,
And little hearts to flutter at a Beau.
"Oft, when the world imagine women stray,
The Sylphs thro' mystic mazes guide their way;
Thro' all the giddy circle they pursue,
And old impertinence expel by new.
What tender maid but must a victim fall
To one man's treat, but for another's ball?
When Florio speaks, what virgin could withstand,
If gentle Damon did not squeeze her hand?
With varying vanities, from every part,
They shift the moving toyshop of their heart;
Where wigs with wigs, with sword-knots sword-knots strive,
Beaux banish beaux, and coaches coaches drive.
This erring mortals levity may call;
Oh blind to truth! the Sylphs contrive it all.
"Of these am I, who thy protection claim,
A watchful sprite, and Ariel is my name.
Late, as I ranged the crystal wilds of air,
In the clear mirror of thy ruling star
I saw, alas! some dread event impend,
Ere to the main this morning sun descend,
But Heaven reveals not what, or how or where.
Warned by the Sylph, O pious maid, beware!
This to disclose is all thy guardian can:
Beware of all, but most beware of Man!"
He said; when Shock, who thought she slept too long,
Leaped up, and waked his mistress with his tongue.
'Twas then, Belinda, if report say true,
Thy eyes first opened on a billet-doux;
Wounds, charms, and ardors were no sooner read,
But all the vision vanished from thy head.
And now, unveiled, the toilet stands displayed,
Each silver vase in mystic order laid.
First, robed in white, the nymph intent adores,
With head uncovered, the cosmetic powers.
A heavenly image in the glass appears;
To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears.
Th' inferior priestess, at her altar's side,
Trembling begins the sacred rites of Pride.
Unnumbered treasures ope at once, and here

1 A circular promenade in Hyde Park.
2 A game of cards.

The various offerings of the world appear;
From each she nicely culls with curious toil,
And decks the Goddess with the glittering spoil.
This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,
And all Arabia breathes from yonder box.
The tortoise here and elephant unite,
Transformed to combs, the speckled, and the white.
Here files of pins extend their shining rows,
Puffs, powders, patches, bibles, billet-doux.
Now awful beauty puts on all its arms;
The Fair each moment rises in her charms,
Repairs her smiles, awakens every grace,
And calls forth all the wonders of her face;
Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,
And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.
The busy Sylphs surround their darling care,
These set the head, and those divide the hair,
Some fold the sleeve, whilst others plait the gown;
And Betty's[1] praised for labors not her own.

## CANTO II

Not with more glories, in th' ethereal plain,
The sun first rises o'er the purpled main,
Than, issuing forth, the rival of his beams
Launched on the bosom of the silver Thames.
Fair nymphs, and well-dressed youths around her shone,
But every eye was fixed on her alone.
On her white breast a sparkling cross she wore,
Which Jews might kiss, and infidels adore.
Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,
Quick as her eyes, and as unfixed as those:
Favors to none, to all she smiles extends;
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.
Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,
And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.
Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,
Might hide her faults, if belles had faults to hide;
If to her share some female errors fall,
Look on her face, and you'll forget 'em all.
This nymph, to the destruction of mankind,
Nourished two locks, which graceful hung behind
In equal curls, and well conspired to deck
With shining ringlets the smooth ivory neck.
Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,
And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.
With hairy springes we the birds betray,
Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey,
Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare,
And beauty draws us with a single hair.
Th' adventurous Baron the bright locks admired;
He saw, he wished, and to the prize aspired.
Resolved to win, he meditates the way,
By force to ravish, or by fraud betray;
For when success a lover's toil attends,
Few ask if fraud or force attained his ends.
For this, ere Phœbus rose, he had implored
Propitious Heaven, and every Power adored,
But chiefly Love — to Love an altar built
Of twelve vast French romances, neatly gilt.
There lay three garters, half a pair of gloves,
And all the trophies of his former loves;
With tender billet-doux he lights the pyre,
And breathes three amorous sighs to raise the fire.
Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent eyes
Soon to obtain, and long possess the prize:
The Powers gave ear, and granted half his prayer,
The rest the winds dispersed in empty air.
But now secure the painted vessel glides,
The sunbeams trembling on the floating tides;
While melting music steals upon the sky,
And softened sounds along the waters die:
Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently play,
Belinda smiled, and all the world was gay.
All but the Sylph — with careful thoughts opprest
Th' impending woe sat heavy on his breast.
He summons straight his denizens of air;
The lucid squadrons round the sails repair:
Soft o'er the shrouds aërial whispers breathe
That seemed but zephyrs to the train beneath.
Some to the sun their insect-wings unfold,
Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold;
Transparent forms too fine for mortal sight,
Their fluid bodies half dissolved in light,
Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,
Thin glittering textures of the filmy dew,
Dipt in the richest tincture of the skies,
Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes,
While every beam new transient colors flings,
Colors that change whene'er they wave their wings.
Amid the circle, on the gilded mast,
Superior by the head was Ariel placed;
His purple pinions opening to the sun,

[1] Belinda's maid, the "inferior priestess."

He raised his azure wand, and thus begun:
"Ye Sylphs and Sylphids, to your chief give ear.
Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves, and Dæmons, hear!
Ye know the spheres and various tasks assigned
By laws eternal to th' aërial kind.
Some in the fields of purest ether play,
And bask and whiten in the blaze of day:
Some guide the course of wandering orbs on high,
Or roll the planets thro' the boundless sky:
Some, less refined, beneath the moon's pale light
Pursue the stars that shoot athwart the night
Or suck the mists in grosser air below,
Or dip their pinions in the painted bow,
Or brew fierce tempests on the wintry main,
Or o'er the glebe distil the kindly rain.
Others, on earth, o'er human race preside,
Watch all their ways, and all their actions guide:
Of these the chief the care of nations own,
And guard with arms divine the British Throne.
"Our humbler province is to tend the Fair,
Not a less pleasing, tho' less glorious care;
To save the Powder from too rude a gale;
Nor let th' imprisoned Essences exhale;
To draw fresh colors from the vernal flowers;
To steal from rainbows ere they drop in showers
A brighter Wash; to curl their waving hairs,
Assist their blushes and inspire their airs;
Nay oft, in dreams invention we bestow,
To change a Flounce, or add a Furbelow.
"This day black omens threat the brightest Fair,
That e'er deserved a watchful spirit's care;
Some dire disaster, or by force or slight;
But what, or where, the Fates have wrapt in night.
Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law,
Or some frail China jar receive a flaw;
Or stain her honor, or her new brocade,
Forget her prayers, or miss a masquerade,
Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball;
Or whether Heaven has doomed that Shock[1] must fall.
Haste, then, ye Spirits! to your charge repair:
The fluttering fan be Zephyretta's care;
The drops to thee, Brillante, we consign;
And, Momentilla, let the watch be thine;
Do thou, Crispissa, tend her favorite Lock;
Ariel himself shall be the guard of Shock.
"To fifty chosen sylphs, of special note,
We trust th' important charge, the petticoat;
Oft have we known that seven-fold fence to fail,
Tho' stiff with hoops, and armed with ribs of whale.
Form a strong line about the silver bound,
And guard the wide circumference around.
"Whatever spirit, careless of his charge,
His post neglects, or leaves the Fair at large,
Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o'ertake his sins:
Be stopped in vials, or transfixed with pins,
Or plunged in lakes of bitter washes lie,
Or wedged whole ages in a bodkin's eye;
Gums and pomatums shall his flight restrain,
While clogged he beats his silken wings in vain,
Or alum styptics with contracting power
Shrink his thin essence like a rivelled flower:
Or, as Ixion fixed, the wretch shall feel
The giddy motion of the whirling mill,
In fumes of burning chocolate shall glow,
And tremble at the sea that froths below!"
He spoke; the spirits from the sails descend;
Some, orb in orb, around the nymph extend;
Some thread the mazy ringlets of her hair;
Some hang upon the pendants of her ear;
With beating hearts the dire event they wait,
Anxious, and trembling for the birth of Fate.

[1] Belinda's lap-dog.

## CANTO III

Close by those meads, for ever crowned with flowers,
Where Thames with pride surveys his rising towers
There stands a structure of majestic frame,
Which from the neighboring Hampton takes its name.[1]
Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall foredoom
Of foreign tyrants, and of nymphs at home;
Here, thou, great ANNA! whom three realms obey,
Dost sometimes counsel take — and sometimes tea.
Hither the Heroes and the Nymphs resort,
To taste awhile the pleasures of a court;
In various talk th' instructive hours they past,
Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last;
One speaks the glory of the British Queen,

[1] Hampton Court, a royal palace near London.

And one describes a charming Indian screen;
A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes;
At every word a reputation dies.
Snuff, or the fan, supply each pause of chat,
With singing, laughing, ogling, *and all that.*
Meanwhile, declining from the noon of day,
The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray;
The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,
And wretches hang that jurymen may dine;[1]
The merchant from th' Exchange returns in peace,
And the long labors of the toilet cease.
Belinda now, whom thirst of fame invites,
Burns to encounter two adventurous knights,
At Ombre singly to decide their doom,
And swells her breast with conquests yet to come.
Straight the three bands prepare in arms to join,
Each band the number of the sacred Nine.
Soon as she spreads her hand, th' aërial guard
Descend, and sit on each important card:
First Ariel perched upon a Matadore,[2]
Then each according to the rank they bore;
For Sylphs, yet mindful of their ancient race,
Are, as when women, wondrous fond of place.
Behold four Kings in majesty revered,
With hoary whiskers and a forky beard;
And four fair Queens, whose hands sustain a flower
Th' expressive emblem of their softer power;
Four Knaves, in garbs succinct,[3] a trusty-band,
Caps on their heads, and halberts in their hand
And party-colored troops, a shining train,
Draw forth to combat on the velvet plain.
The skilful nymph reviews her force with care;
"Let Spades be trumps!" she said, and trumps they were.
Now move to war her sable Matadores,
In show like leaders of the swarthy Moors.
Spadillio[4] first, unconquerable lord!
Led off two captive trumps, and swept the board.
As many more Manillio[5] forced to yield,
And marched a victor from the verdant field.
Him Basto[6] followed, but his fate more hard
Gained but one trump and one plebeian card.
With his broad sabre next, a chief in years,
The hoary Majesty of Spades appears,
Puts forth one manly leg, to sight revealed;
The rest his many colored robe concealed.
The rebel Knave, who dares his prince engage,
Proves the just victim of his royal rage.
Even mighty Pam,[1] that kings and queens o'erthrew,
And mowed down armies in the fights of Loo,
Sad chance of war! now destitute of aid,
Falls undistinguished by the victor Spade.
Thus far both armies to Belinda yield;
Now to the Baron Fate inclines the field.
His warlike amazon her host invades,
Th' imperial consort of the crown of Spades.
The Club's black tyrant first her victim died,
Spite of his haughty mien and barbarous pride:
What boots the regal circle on his head,
His giant limbs, in state unwieldy spread;
That long behind he trails his pompous robe,
And of all monarchs only grasps the globe?
The Baron now his Diamonds pours apace;
Th' embroidered King who shows but half his face,
And his refulgent Queen, with powers combined,
Of broken troops an easy conquest find.
Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, in wild disorder seen,
With throngs promiscuous strew the level green.
Thus when dispersed a routed army runs,
Of Asia's troops, and Afric's sable sons,
With like confusion different nations fly,
Of various habit, and of various dye;
The pierced battalions disunited fall
In heaps on heaps; one fate o'erwhelms them all.
The Knave of Diamonds tries his wily arts,
And wins (oh shameful chance!) the Queen of Hearts.
At this, the blood the virgin's cheek forsook,
A livid paleness spreads o'er all her look;
She sees, and trembles at th' approaching ill,
Just in the jaws of ruin, and Codille.[2]
And now (as oft in some distempered state)
On one nice trick depends the general fate!
An Ace of Hearts steps forth: the King unseen
Lurked in her hand, and mourned his captive Queen.

1 Dinner was at three or four o'clock.
2 In the game of ombre the three highest cards were called matadores.
3 close-fitting.
4 The ace of spades.
5 The deuce of clubs, the second highest card if spades are trumps.
6 The ace of clubs, third in order of the "matadores."

1 The Knave of Clubs, the highest card in the game of loo.
2 Belinda and the Baron have each won four tricks. If the Baron wins the odd trick, he will "set" her, or "give her Codille."

He springs to vengeance with an eager pace,
And falls like thunder on the prostrate Ace.[1]
The nymph, exulting, fills with shouts the sky;
The walls, the woods, and long canals reply.
Oh thoughtless mortals! ever blind to fate,
Too soon dejected, and too soon elate.
Sudden these honors shall be snatched away,
And cursed for ever this victorious day.
For lo! the board with cups and spoons is crowned,
The berries[2] crackle, and the mill turns round;
On shining altars of japan they raise
The silver lamp; the fiery spirits blaze:
From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,
While China's earth receives the smoking tide.
At once they gratify their scent and taste,
And frequent cups prolong the rich repast.
Straight hover round the Fair her airy band;
Some, as she sipped, the fuming liquor fanned,
Some o'er her lap their careful plumes displayed,
Trembling, and conscious of the rich brocade.
Coffee (which makes the politician wise,
And see thro' all things with his half-shut eyes)
Sent up in vapors to the Baron's brain
New stratagems, the radiant Lock to gain.
Ah, cease, rash youth! desist ere 'tis too late,
Fear the just Gods, and think of Scylla's fate!
Changed to a bird, and sent to flit in air,
She dearly pays for Nisus' injured hair!
But when to mischief mortals bend their will,
How soon they find fit instruments of ill!
Just then, Clarissa drew with tempting grace
A two-edged weapon from her shining case:
So ladies in romance assist their knight,
Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.
He takes the gift with reverence, and extends
The little engine on his fingers' ends;
This just behind Belinda's neck he spread,
As o'er the fragrant steams she bends her head.
Swift to the Lock a thousand sprites repair;
A thousand wings, by turns, blow back the hair;
And thrice they twitched the diamond in her ear;
Thrice she looked back, and thrice the foe drew near.

1 Except as one of the "matadores," the ace is low.
2 i.e. coffee-beans.

Just in that instant, anxious Ariel sought
The close recesses of the virgin's thought.
As on the nosegay in her breast reclined,
He watched th' ideas rising in her mind,
Sudden he viewed, in spite of all her art,
An earthly Lover lurking at her heart.
Amazed, confused, he found his power expired,
Resigned to fate, and with a sigh retired.
The Peer now spreads the glittering forfex wide,
To inclose the Lock; now joins it, to divide.
Even then, before the fatal engine closed,
A wretched Sylph too fondly interposed;
Fate urged the shears, and cut the Sylph in twain
(But airy substance soon unites again).
The meeting points the sacred hair dissever
From the fair head, for ever, and for ever!
Then flashed the living lightning from her eyes,
And screams of horror rend th' affrighted skies.
Not louder shrieks to pitying Heaven are cast,
When husbands, or when lapdogs breathe their last;
Or when rich China vessels, fallen from high,
In glittering dust and painted fragments lie!
"Let wreaths of triumph now my temples twine,"
The Victor cried, "the glorious prize is mine!
While fish in streams, or birds delight in air,
Or in a coach and six the British Fair,
As long as Atalantis[1] shall be read,
Or the small pillow grace a lady's bed,
While visits shall be paid on solemn days,
When numerous wax-lights in bright order blaze:
While nymphs take treats, or assignations give,
So long my honor, name, and praise shall live!
What Time would spare, from Steel receives its date,
And monuments, like men, submit to Fate!
Steel could the labor of the Gods destroy,
And strike to dust th' imperial towers of Troy;
Steel could the works of mortal pride confound
And hew triumphal arches to the ground.

1 *The New Atalantis*, by Mrs. Manley, published 1709. The slanders of persons of quality which it contained, led to the author's arrest. The book was read by everybody.

What wonder, then, fair Nymph! thy hairs should feel
The conquering force of unresisted steel?"

## CANTO IV

But anxious cares the pensive nymph oppprest,
And secret passions labored in her breast.
Not youthful kings in battle seized alive,
Not scornful virgins who their charms survive,
Not ardent lovers robbed of all their bliss,
Not ancient ladies when refused a kiss,
Not tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,
Not Cynthia when her mantua's pinned awry,
E'er felt such rage, resentment, and despair,
As thou, said Virgin! for thy ravished hair.
For, that sad moment, when the Sylphs withdrew,
And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,
Umbriel, a dusky, melancholy sprite
As ever sullied the fair face of light,
Down to the central earth, his proper scene,
Repaired to search the gloomy cave of Spleen.[1]
Swift on his sooty pinions flits the Gnome,
And in a vapor reached the dismal dome.
No cheerful breeze this sullen region knows,
The dreaded East is all the wind that blows.
Here in a grotto sheltered close from air,
And screened in shades from day's detested glare,
She sighs for ever on her pensive bed,
Pain at her side, and Megrim [2] at her head.
Two handmaids wait the throne; alike in place,
But differing far in figure and in face.
Here stood Ill-nature, like an ancient maid,
Her wrinkled form in black and white arrayed!
With store of prayers for mornings, nights, and noons,
Her hand is filled; her bosom with lampoons.
There Affectation, with a sickly mien,
Shows in her cheek the roses of eighteen,
Practised to lisp, and hang the head aside,
Faints into airs, and languishes with pride;
On the rich quilt sinks with becoming woe,
Wrapt in a gown for sickness and for show.
The fair ones feel such maladies as these,
When each new night-dress gives a new disease.
A constant vapor o'er the palace flies
Strange phantoms rising as the mists arise;
Dreadful as hermits' dreams in haunted shades,
Or bright as visions of expiring maids:
Now glaring fiends, and snakes on rolling spires,
Pale spectres, gaping tombs, and purple fires;
Now lakes of liquid gold, Elysian scenes,
And crystal domes, and angels in machines.
Unnumbered throngs on every side are seen,
Of bodies changed to various forms by Spleen.
Here living Teapots stand, one arm held out,
One bent; the handle this, and that the spout:
A Pipkin there, like Homer's Tripod walks;
Here sighs a Jar, and there a Goose-pie talks;
Men prove with child, as powerful fancy works,
And maids turned bottles call aloud for corks.
Safe passed the Gnome thro' this fantastic band,
A branch of healing spleenwort in his hand.
Then thus addressed the Power — "Hail, wayward Queen!
Who rule the sex to fifty from fifteen:
Parent of Vapors and of female wit,
Who give th' hysteric or poetic fit,
On various tempers act by various ways,
Make some take physic, others scribble plays;
Who cause the proud their visits to delay,
And send the godly in a pet to pray.
A nymph there is that all your power disdains,
And thousands more in equal mirth maintains.
But oh! if e'er thy Gnome could spoil a grace,
Or raise a pimple on a beauteous face,
Like citron-waters [1] matrons' cheeks inflame,
Or change complexions at a losing game;
If e'er with airy horns I planted heads,
Or rumpled petticoats, or tumbled beds,
Or caused suspicion when no soul was rude,
Or discomposed the head-dress of a prude,
Or e'er to costive lapdog gave disease,
Which not the tears of brightest eyes could ease,
Hear me, and touch Belinda with chagrin;
That single act gives half the world the spleen."
The Goddess, with a discontented air,
Seems to reject him tho' she grants his prayer.

1 The spleen was thought of as the seat of ill-humor and depression, the "vapors." Spleen is here the personification of ill-humor.

2 sick-headache.

1 spirits distilled from citron-rind.

A wondrous Bag with both her hands she binds,
Like that where once Ulysses held the winds;
There she collects the force of female lungs,
Sighs, sobs, and passions, and the war of tongues.
A Vial next she fills with fainting fears,
Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing tears.
The Gnome rejoicing bears her gifts away,
Spreads his black wings, and slowly mounts to day.
Sunk in Thalestris' arms the nymph he found,
Her eyes dejected, and her hair unbound.
Full o'er their heads the swelling Bag he rent,
And all the Furies issued at the vent.
Belinda burns with more than mortal ire,
And fierce Thalestris fans the rising fire.
"O wretched maid!" she spread her hands, and cried
(While Hampton's echoes, "Wretched maid!" replied),
Was it for this you took such constant care
The bodkin, comb, and essence to prepare?
For this your locks in paper durance bound?
For this with torturing irons wreathed around?
For this with fillets strained your tender head,
And bravely bore the double loads of lead?
Gods! shall the ravisher display your hair,
While the fops envy, and the ladies stare!
Honor forbid! at whose unrivalled shrine
Ease, Pleasure, Virtue, all, our sex resign.
Methinks already I your tears survey,
Already hear the horrid things they say,
Already see you a degraded toast,
And all your honor in a whisper lost!
How shall I, then, your hapless fame defend?
'Twill then be infamy to seem your friend!
And shall this prize, th' inestimable prize,
Exposed thro' crystal to the gazing eyes,
And heightened by the diamond's circling rays,
On that rapacious hand for ever blaze?
Sooner shall grass in Hyde Park Circus grow,
And Wits take lodgings in the sound of Bow;[1]
Sooner let earth, air, sea, to chaos fall,
Men, monkeys, lapdogs, parrots, perish all!"
She said; then raging to Sir Plume repairs,
And bids her beau demand the precious hairs
(Sir Plume, of amber snuff-box justly vain,
And the nice conduct of a clouded cane):
With earnest eyes, and round unthinking face,
He first the snuff-box opened, then the case,
And thus broke out — "My lord, why, what the devil!
Z—ds! damn the Lock! 'fore Gad, you must be civil!
Plague on 't! 'tis past a jest — nay, prithee, pox!
Give her the hair." — He spoke, and rapped his box.
"It grieves me much," replied the Peer again,
"Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain:
But by this Lock, this sacred Lock, I swear
(Which never more shall join its parted hair;
Which never more its honors shall renew,
Clipped from the lovely head where late it grew),
That, while my nostrils draw the vital air,
This hand, which won it, shall for ever wear."
He spoke, and speaking, in proud triumph spread
The long-contended honors of her head.
But Umbriel, hateful Gnome, forbears not so;
He breaks the Vial whence the sorrows flow.
Then see! the nymph in beauteous grief appears,
Her eyes half-languishing, half drowned in tears;
On her heaved bosom hung her drooping head,
Which with a sigh she raised, and thus she said:
"For ever cursed be this detested day,
Which snatched my best, my favorite curl away!
Happy! ah, ten times happy had I been,
If Hampton Court these eyes had never seen!
Yet am not I the first mistaken maid,
By love of courts to numerous ills betrayed.
O had I rather unadmired remained
In some lone isle, or distant northern land;
Where the gilt chariot never marks the way,
Where none learn Ombre, none e'er taste Bohea!
There kept my charms concealed from mortal eye,
Like roses, that in deserts bloom and die.
What moved my mind with youthful lords to roam?

[1] Within the sound of the bells of the church of St. Mary-le-Bow — not a fashionable quarter.

O had I stayed, and said my prayers at home;
'Twas this the morning omens seemed to tell,
Thrice from my trembling hand the patch-box fell;
The tottering china shook without a wind;
Nay, Poll sat mute, and Shock was most unkind!
A Sylph, too, warned me of the threats of fate,
In mystic visions, now believed too late!
See the poor remnants of these slighted hairs!
My hands shall rend what even thy rapine spares.
These, in two sable ringlets taught to break,
Once gave new beauties to the snowy neck;
The sister-lock now sits uncouth alone,
And in its fellow's fate foresees its own;
Uncurled it hangs, the fatal shears demands,
And tempts once more thy sacrilegious hands.
O hadst thou, cruel! been content to seize
Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these!"

## CANTO V

She said: the pitying audience melt in tears;
But Fate and Jove had stopped the Baron's ears.
In vain Thalestris with reproach assails,
For who can move when fair Belinda fails?
Not half so fixed the Trojan [1] could remain,
While Anna begged and Dido raged in vain;
Then grave Clarissa graceful waved her fan;
Silence ensued, and thus the nymph began:
"Say, why are beauties praised and honored most,
The wise man's passion, and the vain man's toast?
Why decked with all that land and sea afford,
Why angels called, and angel-like adored?
Why round our coaches crowd the white-gloved beaux?
Why bows the side-box from its inmost rows?
How vain are all these glories, all our pains,
Unless Good Sense preserve what Beauty gains;
That men may say when we the front-box grace,
'Behold the first in virtue as in face!'
Oh! if to dance all night, and dress all day,
Charmed the smallpox, or chased old age away;

1 Æneas.

Who would not scorn what housewife's cares produce,
Or who would learn one earthly thing of use?
To patch, nay, ogle, might become a saint,
Nor could it sure be such a sin to paint.
But since, alas! frail beauty must decay,
Curled or uncurled, since locks will turn to gray;
Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,
And she who scorns a man must die a maid;
What then remains, but well our power to use,
And keep good humor still whate'er we lose?
And trust me, dear, good humor can prevail,
When airs, and flights, and screams, and scolding fail.
Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll;
Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the soul."
So spoke the dame, but no applause ensued;
Belinda frowned, Thalestris called her prude.
"To arms, to arms!" the fierce virago cries,
And swift as lightning to the combat flies.
All side in parties, and begin th' attack;
Fans clap, silks rustle, and tough whalebones crack;
Heroes' and heroines' shouts confusedly rise,
And bass and treble voices strike the skies.
No common weapons in their hands are found,
Like Gods they fight nor dread a mortal wound.
So when bold Homer makes the Gods engage,
And heavenly breasts with human passions rage;
'Gainst Pallas, Mars; Latona, Hermes arms;
And all Olympus rings with loud alarms;
Jove's thunder roars, Heaven trembles all around,
Blue Neptune storms, the bellowing deeps resound:
Earth shakes her nodding towers, the ground gives way,
And the pale ghosts start at the flash of day!
Triumphant Umbriel, on a sconce's height,
Clapped his glad wings, and sat to view the fight:
Propped on their bodkin-spears, the sprites survey
The growing combat, or assist the fray.
While thro' the press enraged Thalestris flies,
And scatters death around from both her eyes,
A Beau and Witling perished in the throng,

One died in metaphor, and one in song:
"O cruel Nymph! a living death I bear,"
Cried Dapperwit, and sunk beside his chair.
A mournful glance Sir Fopling upwards cast,
"Those eyes are made so killing" — was his last.
Thus on Mæander's flowery margin lies
Th' expiring swan, and as he sings he dies.
When bold Sir Plume had drawn Clarissa down,
Chloe stepped in, and killed him with a frown;
She smiled to see the doughty hero slain,
But, at her smile, the beau revived again.
Now Jove suspends his golden scales in air,
Weighs the men's wits against the lady's hair;
The doubtful beam long nods from side to side;
At length the wits mount up, the hairs subside.
See fierce Belinda on the Baron flies,
With more than usual lightning in her eyes;
Nor feared the chief th' unequal fight to try,
Who sought no more than on his foe to die.
But this bold lord, with manly strength endued,
She with one finger and a thumb subdued:
Just where the breath of life his nostrils drew,
A charge of snuff the wily virgin threw;
The Gnomes direct, to every atom just,
The pungent grains of titillating dust.
Sudden, with starting tears each eye o'erflows,
And the high dome reëchoes to his nose.
"Now meet thy fate," incensed Belinda cried,
And drew a deadly bodkin from her side.
(The same, his ancient personage to deck,
Her great-great-grandsire wore about his neck,
In three seal-rings; which after, melted down,
Formed a vast buckle for his widow's gown:
Her infant grandame's whistle next it grew,
The bells she jingled, and the whistle blew;
Then in a bodkin graced her mother's hairs,
Which long she wore and now Belinda wears.)
"Boast not my fall," he cried, "insulting foe!
Thou by some other shalt be laid as low;
Nor think to die dejects my lofty mind:
All that I dread is leaving you behind!
Rather than so, ah, let me still survive,
And burn in Cupid's flames — but burn alive."
"Restore the Lock!" she cries; and all around
"Restore the Lock!" the vaulted roofs rebound.

Not fierce Othello in so loud a strain
Roared for the handkerchief that caused his pain.
But see how oft ambitious aims are crossed,
And chiefs contend till all the prize is lost!
The lock, obtained with guilt, and kept with pain,
In every place is sought, but sought in vain:
With such a prize no mortal must be blest.
So Heaven decrees! with Heaven who can contest?
Some thought it mounted to the lunar sphere,
Since all things lost on earth are treasured there.
There heroes' wits are kept in ponderous vases,
And beaux' in snuffboxes and tweezer-cases.
There broken vows, and deathbed alms are found,
And lovers' hearts with ends of riband bound,
The courtier's promises, and sick man's prayers,
The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs,
Cages for gnats, and chains to yoke a flea,
Dried butterflies, and tomes of casuistry.
But trust the Muse — she saw it upward rise,
Tho' marked by none but quick poetic eyes
(So Rome's great founder to the heavens withdrew,
To Proculus alone confessed in view):
A sudden star, it shot thro' liquid air,
And drew behind a radiant trail of hair.
Not Berenice's locks first rose so bright,
The heavens bespangling with dishevelled light.
The Sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,
And pleased pursue its progress thro' the skies.
This the beau monde shall from the Mall survey,
And hail with music its propitious ray;
This the blest lover shall for Venus take,
And send up vows from Rosamonda's lake;
This Partridge [1] soon shall view in cloudless skies,
When next he looks thro' Galileo's eyes;
And hence th' egregious wizard shall foredoom
The fate of Louis, and the fall of Rome.
Then cease, bright Nymph! to mourn thy ravished hair,
Which adds new glory to the shining sphere!

1 John Partridge was a ridiculous star-gazer, who in his almanacks every year never failed to predict the downfall of the Pope and the King of France. (Pope.)

Not all the tresses that fair head can boast
Shall draw such envy as the Lock you lost.
For after all the murders of your eye,
When, after millions slain, yourself shall die;
When those fair suns shall set, as set they must,
And all those tresses shall be laid in dust,
This Lock the Muse shall consecrate to fame,
And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name.

## ELOISA TO ABELARD

1717

*Eloisa to Abelard* is the only one of his longer poems in which Pope has chosen a thoroughly romantic theme. It is such a subject as Byron would have loved to handle. But in spite of its medieval setting, its pathos and passion, it misses the spirit of true romance. It is written with a too rhetorical insistence on the antithesis between "Grace and Nature, Virtue and Passion," rather than with the true psychological realization which marks the best of Browning's dramatic monologues. It is theatrical rather than in the best sense dramatic. But if it is rhetoric, it is at any rate magnificent rhetoric; and nowhere has Pope elicited from his heroic couplet a more sweet and stately music.

ARGUMENT

Abelard and Eloisa flourished in the twelfth century; they were two of the most distinguished persons of their age in Learning and Beauty, but for nothing more famous than for their unfortunate passion. After a long course of calamities, they retired each to a several convent, and consecrated the remainder of their days to Religion. It was many years after this separation that a letter of Abelard's to a friend, which contained the history of his misfortune, fell into the hands of Eloisa. This, awakening all her tenderness, occasioned those celebrated letters (out of which the following is partly extracted), which give so lively a picture of the struggles of Grace and Nature, Virtue and Passion.

In these deep solitudes and awful cells,
Where heavenly-pensive Contemplation dwells,
And ever-musing Melancholy reigns,
What means this tumult in a vestal's veins?
Why rove my thoughts beyond this last retreat?
Why feels my heart its long-forgotten heat?
Yet, yet I love! — From Abelard it came,
And Eloisa yet must kiss the name.
Dear fatal name! rest ever unrevealed,
Nor pass these lips, in holy silence sealed:
Hide it, my heart, within that close disguise,
Where, mixed with God's, his loved idea lies:
O write it not, my hand — the name appears
Already written — wash it out, my tears!
In vain lost Eloisa weeps and prays,
Her heart still dictates, and her hand obeys.
Relentless walls! whose darksome round contains
Repentant sighs, and voluntary pains:
Ye rugged rocks, which holy knees have worn;
Ye grots and caverns shagged with horrid thorn!
Shrines! where their vigils pale-eyed virgins keep,
And pitying saints, whose statues learn to weep!
Tho' cold like you, unmoved and silent grown,
I have not yet forgot myself to stone.
All is not Heaven's while Abelard has part,
Still rebel Nature holds out half my heart;
Nor prayers nor fasts its stubborn pulse restrain,
Nor tears, for ages taught to flow in vain.
Soon as thy letters trembling I unclose,
That well-known name awakens all my woes.
Oh name for ever sad! for ever dear!
Still breathed in sighs, still ushered with a tear.
I tremble too, where'er my own I find,
Some dire misfortune follows close behind.
Line after line my gushing eyes o'erflow,
Led thro' a safe variety of woe:
Now warm in love, now withering in my bloom,
Lost in a convent's solitary gloom!
There stern religion quenched th' unwilling flame,
There died the best of passions, Love and Fame.
Yet write, O write me all, that I may join
Griefs to thy griefs, and echo sighs to thine.
Nor foes nor fortune take this power away;
And is my Abelard less kind than they?
Tears still are mine, and those I need not spare;
Love but demands what else were shed in prayer.
No happier task these faded eyes pursue;
To read and weep is all they now can do.
Then share thy pain, allow that sad relief;
Ah, more than share it, give me all thy grief.
Heaven first taught letters for some wretch's aid,
Some banished lover, or some captive maid;
They live, they speak, they breathe what love inspires,
Warm from the soul, and faithful to its fires;
The virgin's wish without her fears impart,
Excuse the blush, and pour out all the heart,
Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,

And waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole.
Thou know'st how guiltless first I met thy flame,
When Love approached me under Friendship's name;
My fancy formed thee of angelic kind,
Some emanation of th' all-beauteous Mind.
Those smiling eyes, attempering every ray,
Shone sweetly lambent with celestial day,
Guiltless I gazed; Heaven listened while you sung;
And truths divine came mended from that tongue.
From lips like those what precept failed to move?
Too soon they taught me 'twas no sin to love:
Back thro' the paths of pleasing sense I ran,
Nor wished an angel whom I loved a man.
Dim and remote the joys of saints I see;
Nor envy them that Heaven I lose for thee.
How oft, when pressed to marriage, have I said,
Curse on all laws but those which Love has made!
Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,
Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies.
Let Wealth, let Honor, wait the wedded dame,
August her deed, and sacred be her fame;
Before true passion all those views remove;
Fame, Wealth, and Honor! what are you to Love?
The jealous God, when we profane his fires,
Those restless passions in revenge inspires,
And bids them make mistaken mortals groan,
Who seek in love for aught but love alone.
Should at my feet the world's great master fall,
Himself, his throne, his world, I'd scorn 'em all:
Not Cæsar's empress would I deign to prove;
No, make me mistress to the man I love;
If there be yet another name more free,
More fond than mistress, make me that to thee!
O happy state! when souls each other draw,
Where Love is liberty, and Nature law:
All then is full, possessing and possessed,
No craving void left aching in the breast:
Even thought meets thought, ere from the lips it part,
And each warm wish springs mutual from the heart.
This sure is bliss (if bliss on earth there be),
And once the lot of Abelard and me.

Alas, how changed! what sudden horrors rise!
A naked lover bound and bleeding lies![1]
Where, where was Eloise? her voice, her hand,
Her poniard had opposed the dire command.
Barbarian, stay! that bloody stroke restrain;
The crime was common, common be the pain.
I can no more; by shame, by rage suppressed,
Let tears and burning blushes speak the rest.
Canst thou forget that sad, that solemn day,
When victims at yon altar's foot we lay?
Canst thou forget what tears that moment fell,
When, warm in youth, I bade the world farewell?
As with cold lips I kissed the sacred veil,
The shrines all trembled, and the lamps grew pale:
Heaven scarce believed the conquest it surveyed,
And saints with wonder heard the vows I made.
Yet then, to those dread altars as I drew,
Not on the cross my eyes were fixed, but you:
Not grace, or zeal, love only was my call,
And if I lose thy love, I lose my all.
Come! with thy looks, thy words, relieve my woe;
Those still at least are left thee to bestow.
Still on that breast enamored let me lie,
Still drink delicious poison from thy eye,
Pant on thy lip, and to thy heart be pressed;
Give all thou canst — and let me dream the rest.
Ah, no! instruct me other joys to prize,
With other beauties charm my partial eyes!
Full in my view set all the bright abode,
And make my soul quit Abelard for God.
Ah, think at least thy flock deserves thy care,
Plants of thy hand, and children of thy prayer.
From the false world in early youth they fled,
By thee to mountains, wilds, and deserts led.
You raised these hallowed walls; the desert smiled,
And Paradise was opened in the wild.
No weeping orphan saw his father's stores
Our shrines irradiate or emblaze the floors;
No silver saints, by dying misers given,
Here bribed the rage of ill-requited Heaven;
But such plain roofs as piety could raise,
And only vocal with the Maker's praise.

[1] Eloisa's family, on learning that Abelard was her lover, took him unawares, bound and mutilated him.

In these lone walls (their day's eternal bound),
These moss-grown domes with spiry turrets crowned,
Where awful arches make a noonday night,
And the dim windows shed a solemn light,
Thy eyes diffused a reconciling ray,
And gleams of glory brightened all the day.
But now no face divine contentment wears,
'Tis all blank sadness, or continual tears.
See how the force of others' prayers I try,
(O pious fraud of amorous charity!)
But why should I on others' prayers depend?
Come thou, my father, brother, husband, friend!
Ah, let thy handmaid, sister, daughter, move,
And all those tender names in one, thy love!
The darksome pines, that o'er yon rocks reclined,
Wave high, and murmur to the hollow wind,
The wandering streams that shine between the hills,
The grots that echo to the tinkling rills,
The dying gales that pant upon the trees,
The lakes that quiver to the curling breeze —
No more these scenes my meditation aid,
Or lull to rest the visionary maid:
But o'er the twilight groves and dusky caves,
Long-sounding aisles and intermingled graves,
Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws
A death-like silence, and a dread repose:
Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,
Shades every flower, and darkens every green,
Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,
And breathes a browner horror on the woods.
Yet here for ever, ever must I stay;
Sad proof how well a lover can obey!
Death, only Death can break the lasting chain;
And here, even then shall my cold dust remain;
Here all its frailties, all its flames resign,
And wait till 'tis no sin to mix with thine.
Ah, wretch! believed the spouse of God in vain,
Confessed within the slave of Love and man.
Assist me, Heaven! but whence arose that prayer?
Sprung it from piety or from despair?
Even here, where frozen Chastity retires,
Love finds an altar for forbidden fires.
I ought to grieve, but cannot what I ought;
I mourn the lover, not lament the fault;
I view my crime, but kindle at the view,
Repent old pleasures, and solicit new;
Now turned to Heaven, I weep my past offence,
Now think of thee, and curse my innocence.
Of all affliction taught a lover yet,
'Tis sure the hardest science to forget!
How shall I lose the sin, yet keep the sense,
And love th' offender, yet detest th' offence?
How the dear object from the crime remove,
Or how distinguish Penitence from Love?
Unequal task! a passion to resign,
For hearts so touched, so pierced, so lost as mine:
Ere such a soul regains its peaceful state,
How often must it love, how often hate!
How often hope, despair, resent, regret,
Conceal, disdain — do all things but forget!
But let Heaven seize it, all at once 'tis fired;
Not touched, but rapt; not wakened, but inspired!
O come! O teach me Nature to subdue,
Renounce my love, my life, myself — and You:
Fill my fond heart with God alone, for he
Alone can rival, can succeed to thee.
How happy is the blameless vestal's lot!
The world forgetting, by the world forgot;
Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind,
Each prayer accepted, and each wish resigned;
Labor and rest, that equal periods keep;
Obedient slumbers that can wake and weep;
Desires composed, affections ever even;
Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to Heaven.
Grace shines around her with serenest beams,
And whispering angels prompt her golden dreams.
For her th' unfading rose of Eden blooms,
And wings of seraphs shed divine perfumes;
For her the spouse prepares the bridal ring;
For her white virgins hymeneals sing;
To sounds of heavenly harps she dies away,
And melts in visions of eternal day.
Far other dreams my erring soul employ,
Far other raptures of unholy joy.
When at the close of each sad, sorrowing day,
Fancy restores what vengeance snatched away,
Then conscience sleeps, and leaving Nature free,
All my loose soul unbounded springs to thee!
Oh curst, dear horrors of all-conscious night!
How glowing guilt exalts the keen delight!
Provoking demons all restraint remove,

And stir within me every source of love.
I hear thee, view thee, gaze o'er all thy charms,
And round thy phantom glue my clasping arms.
I wake: — no more I hear, no more I view,
The phantom flies me, as unkind as you.
I call aloud; it hears not what I say:
I stretch my empty arms; it glides away.
To dream once more I close my willing eyes;
Ye soft illusions, dear deceits, arise!
Alas, no more! methinks we wandering go
Thro' dreary wastes, and weep each other's woe,
Where round some moldering tower pale ivy creeps,
And low-browed rocks hang nodding o'er the deeps.
Sudden you mount, you beckon from the skies;
Clouds interpose, waves roar, and winds arise.
I shriek, start up, the same sad prospect find,
And wake to all the griefs I left behind.
For thee the Fates, severely kind, ordain
A cool suspense from pleasure and from pain;
Thy life a long dead calm of fixed repose;
No pulse that riots, and no blood that glows.
Still as the sea, ere winds were taught to blow,
Or moving spirit bade the waters flow;
Soft as the slumbers of a saint forgiven,
And mild as opening gleams of promised Heaven.
Come, Abelard! for what hast thou to dread?
The torch of Venus burns not for the dead.
Nature stands checked; Religion disapproves;
Even thou art cold — yet Eloisa loves.
Ah, hopeless, lasting flames; like those that burn
To light the dead, and warm th' unfruitful urn!
What scenes appear where'er I turn my view;
The dear ideas, where I fly, pursue;
Rise in the grove, before the altar rise,
Stain all my soul, and wanton in my eyes.
I waste the matin lamp in sighs for thee,
Thy image steals between my God and me:
Thy voice I seem in every hymn to hear,
With every bead I drop too soft a tear.
When from the censer clouds of fragrance roll,
And swelling organs lift the rising soul,
One thought of thee puts all the pomp to flight,
Priests, tapers, temples, swim before my sight:
In seas of flame my plunging soul is drowned,
While altars blaze, and angels tremble round.
While prostrate here in humble grief I lie,
Kind virtuous drops just gathering in my eye,
While praying, trembling, in the dust I roll,
And dawning grace is opening on my soul:
Come, if thou dar'st, all charming as thou art!
Oppose thyself to Heaven; dispute my heart;
Come, with one glance of those deluding eyes
Blot out each bright idea of the skies;
Take back that grace, those sorrows and those tears,
Take back my fruitless penitence and prayers;
Snatch me, just mounting, from the blest abode:
Assist the fiends, and tear me from my God!
No, fly me, fly me, far as pole from pole;
Rise Alps between us! and whole oceans roll!
Ah, come not, write not, think not once of me,
Nor share one pang of all I felt for thee.
Thy oaths I quit, thy memory resign;
Forget, renounce me, hate whate'er was mine.
Fair eyes, and tempting looks (which yet I view),
Long loved, adored ideas, all adieu!
O Grace serene! O Virtue heavenly fair!
Divine Oblivion of low-thoughted care!
Fresh blooming Hope, gay daughter of the sky!
And Faith, our early immortality!
Enter each mild, each amicable guest;
Receive, and wrap me in eternal rest!
See in her cell sad Eloisa spread,
Propt on some tomb, a neighbor of the dead.
In each low wind methinks a spirit calls,
And more than echoes talk along the walls.
Here, as I watched the dying lamps around,
From yonder shrine I heard a hollow sound:
"Come, sister, come! (it said, or seemed to say)
Thy place is here, sad sister, come away;
Once, like thyself, I trembled, wept, and prayed,
Love's victim then, tho' now a sainted maid:
But all is calm in this eternal sleep;
Here grief forgets to groan, and love to weep;
Even superstition loses every fear:
For God, not man, absolves our frailties here."

I come, I come! prepare your roseate bowers,
Celestial palms, and ever-blooming flowers.
Thither, where sinners may have rest, I go,
Where flames refined in breasts seraphic glow;
Thou, Abelard! the last sad office pay,
And smooth my passage to the realms of day:
See my lips tremble, and my eyeballs roll,
Suck my last breath, and catch my flying soul!
Ah, no — in sacred vestments mayst thou stand,
The hallowed taper trembling in thy hand,
Present the cross before my lifted eye,
Teach me at once, and learn of me, to die.
Ah then, thy once loved Eloisa see!
It will be then no crime to gaze on me.
See from my cheek the transient roses fly!
See the last sparkle languish in my eye!
Till every motion, pulse, and breath be o'er,
And even my Abelard be loved no more.
O Death, all-eloquent! you only prove
What dust we doat on, when 'tis man we love.
Then too, when Fate shall thy fair frame destroy
(That cause of all my guilt, and all my joy),
In trance ecstatic may thy pangs be drowned,
Bright clouds descend, and angels watch thee round;
From opening skies may streaming glories shine,
And saints embrace thee with a love like mine.
May one kind grave unite each hapless name,[1]
And graft my love immortal on thy fame!
Then, ages hence, when all my woes are o'er,
When this rebellious heart shall beat no more;
If ever chance two wandering lovers brings,
To Paraclete's white walls and silver springs,
O'er the pale marble shall they join their heads,
And drink the falling tears each other sheds;
Then sadly say, with mutual pity moved,
"O may we never love as these have loved!"
From the full choir, when loud hosannas rise,
And swell the pomp of dreadful sacrifice,
Amid that scene if some relenting eye
Glance on the stone where our cold relics lie,
Devotion's self shall steal a thought from Heaven,
One human tear shall drop, and be forgiven.
And sure if Fate some future bard shall join
In sad similitude of griefs to mine,
Condemned whole years in absence to deplore,
And image charms he must behold no more, —
Such if there be, who loves so long, so well,
Let him our sad, our tender story tell;
The well-sung woes will soothe my pensive ghost;
He best can paint them who shall feel them most.

1 Abelard and Eloisa were interred in the same grave, or in monuments adjoining, in the Monastery of the Paraclete; he died in the year 1142, she in 1163. (Pope.)

## AN ESSAY ON MAN

When Pope "stooped to truth and moralized his song," leaving the realm of fancy for that of moral and social criticism, he found the province of poetry over which he was best fitted to reign. The didactic poem, the essay in verse, does not require sustained power of creative imagination. Its primary material is intellectual thought; its poetry resides in the splendor of illustration, the beauty of musical phrasing, the intensity of feeling with which this thought is driven home to the reader's mind and heart. The philosophy of the *Essay on Man* is not original with Pope, who gratefully acknowledges that he learned it from his "guide, philosopher and friend," the brilliant but superficial Bolingbroke to whom the poem is dedicated. Its facile optimism, derived ultimately from Leibnitz, which declares that evil is only apparent that "Whatever is, is right," was more acceptable to Pope's contemporaries than to us. Like Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, it speaks to its own generation rather than to ours. But if the philosophy is shallow and outworn, the poetry remains — the terse brilliancy of epigram, the moving lyrical quality of such passages as the third and tenth sections of Epistle I, the haunting power of such a line as

Die of a rose in aromatic pain,

a line which might well have been written by Keats.

The whole work consists of four essays, which were published separately between 1732 and 1734.

### THE DESIGN

Having proposed to write some pieces on Human Life and Manners, such as, to use my Lord Bacon's expression, "come home to men's business and bosoms," I thought it more satisfactory to begin with considering Man in the abstract, his nature and his state: since to prove any moral duty, to enforce any moral precept, or to examine the perfection or imperfection of any creature whatsoever, it is necessary first to know what condition and relation it is placed in, and what is the proper end and purpose of its being.

The science of Human Nature is, like all other sciences, reduced to a few clear points: there are not many certain

truths in this world. It is therefore in the anatomy of the mind, as in that of the body; more good will accrue to mankind by attending to the large, open, and perceptible parts, than by studying too much such finer nerves and vessels, the conformations and uses of which will for ever escape our observation. The disputes are all upon these last; and, I will venture to say, they have less sharpened the wits than the hearts of men against each other, and have diminished the practice more than advanced the theory of morality. If I could flatter myself that this Essay has any merit, it is in steering betwixt the extremes of doctrines seemingly opposite, in passing over terms utterly unintelligible and in forming a temperate, yet not inconsistent, and a short, yet not imperfect, system of ethics.

This I might have done in prose; but I chose verse, and even rhyme, for two reasons. The one will appear obvious; that principles, maxims, or precepts, so written, both strike the reader more strongly at first, and are more easily retained by him afterwards: the other may seem odd, but it is true: I found I could express them more shortly this way than in prose itself; and nothing is more certain than that much of the force as well as grace of arguments or instructions depends on their conciseness. I was unable to treat this part of my subject more in detail without becoming dry and tedious; or more poetically without sacrificing perspicuity to ornament, without wandering from the precision, or breaking the chain of reasoning. If any man can unite all these without diminution of any of them, I freely confess he will compass a thing above my capacity.

What is now published is only to be considered as a general Map of Man, marking out no more than the greater parts, their extent, their limits, and their connexion, but leaving the particular to be more fully delineated in the charts which are to follow; consequently these epistles in their progress (if I have health and leisure to make any progress) will be less dry, and more susceptible of poetical ornament. I am here only opening the fountains, and clearing the passage: to deduce the rivers, to follow them in their course, and to observe their effects, may be a task more agreeable.

## EPISTLE I

## OF THE NATURE AND STATE OF MAN, WITH RESPECT TO THE UNIVERSE

### ARGUMENT

Of Man in the abstract. I. That we can judge only with regard to our own system, being ignorant of the relations of systems and things, verse 17, etc. II. That Man is not to be deemed imperfect, but a being suited to his place and rank in the creation, agreeable to the general order of things, and conformable to ends and relations to him unknown, verse 35, etc. III. That it is partly upon his ignorance of future events, and partly upon the hope of a future state, that all his happiness in the present depends, verse 77, etc. IV. The pride of aiming at more knowledge, and pretending to more perfection, the cause of Man's error and misery. The impiety of putting himself in the place of God, and judging of the fitness or unfitness, perfection or imperfection, justice or injustice, of his dispensations, verse 113, etc. V. The absurdity of conceiting himself the final cause of the creation, or expecting that perfection in the moral world which is not in the natural, verse 131, etc. VI. The unreasonableness of his complaints against Providence, while, on the one hand, he demands the perfections of the angels, and, on the other, the bodily qualifications of the brutes; though to possess any of the sensitive faculties in a higher degree would render him miserable, verse 173, etc. VII. That throughout the whole visible world a universal order and gradation in the sensual and mental faculties is observed, which causes a subordination of creature to creature, and of all creatures to man. The gradations of Sense, Instinct, Thought, Reflection, Reason: that Reason alone countervails all the other faculties, verse 207, etc. VIII. How much further this order and subordination of living creatures may extend above and below us; were any part of which broken, not that part only, but the whole connected creation must be destroyed, verse 213, etc. IX. The extravagance, madness, and pride of such a desire, verse 290, etc. X. The consequence of all, the absolute submission due to Providence, both as to our present and future state, verse 281, etc., to the end.

Awake, my St. John![1] leave all meaner things
To low ambition and the pride of Kings.
Let us, since life can little more supply
Than just to look about us and to die,
Expatiate free o'er all this scene of man;
A mighty maze! but not without a plan;
A wild, where weeds and flowers promiscuous shoot,
Or garden, tempting with forbidden fruit.
Together let us beat this ample field,
Try what the open, what the covert yield;
The latent tracts, the giddy heights, explore
Of all who blindly creep or sightless soar;
Eye Nature's walks, shoot folly as it flies,
And catch the manners living as they rise;
Laugh where we must, be candid[2] where we can,
But vindicate the ways of God to man.

I. Say first, of God above or Man below
What can we reason but from what we know?
Of man what see we but his station here,
From which to reason, or to which refer?
Thro' worlds unnumbered tho' the God be known,
'Tis ours to trace him only in our own.
He who thro' vast immensity can pierce,
See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
Observe how system into system runs,
What other planets circle other suns,
What varied being peoples every star,
May tell why Heaven has made us as we are:
But of this frame, the bearings and the ties,
The strong connexions, nice dependencies,
Gradations just, has thy pervading soul
Looked thro'; or can a part contain the whole?
Is the great chain that draws all to agree,
And drawn supports, upheld by God or thee?

II. Presumptuous man! the reason wouldst thou find,
Why formed so weak, so little, and so blind?
First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess
Why formed no weaker, blinder, and no less!
Ask of thy mother earth why oaks are made
Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade!
Or ask of yonder argent fields above
Why Jove's satellites are less than Jove!

Of systems possible, if 'tis confest
That wisdom infinite must form the best,
Where all must fall or not coherent be,
And all that rises rise in due degree;
Then in the scale of reasoning life 'tis plain
There must be, somewhere, such a rank as Man:
And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)

1 Henry St. John, afterwards Lord Bolingbroke, a close friend of Pope from whom Pope learned most of the philosophical ideas contained in this poem.
2 kindly.

Is only this, — if God has placed him wrong?
Respecting Man, whatever wrong we call,
May, must be right, as relative to all.
In human works, tho' labored on with pain,
A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;
In God's, one single can its end produce,
Yet serve to second too some other use:
So man, who here seems principal alone,
Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,
Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal:
'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.
When the proud steed shall know why man restrains
His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains;
When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,
Is now a victim, and now Egypt's God;
Then shall man's pride and dulness comprehend
His actions', passions', being's, use and end;
Why doing, suffering, checked, impelled; and why
This hour a Slave, the next a Deity.
Then say not man's imperfect, Heaven in fault;
Say rather man's as perfect as he ought;
His knowledge measured to his state and place,
His time a moment, and a point his space.
If to be perfect in a certain sphere,
What matter soon or late, or here or there?
The blest to-day is as completely so
As who began a thousand years ago.
III. Heaven from all creatures hides the book of Fate,
All but the page prescribed, their present state;
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know;
Or who could suffer being here below?
The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
Had he thy reason would he skip and play?
Pleased to the last he crops the flowery food,
And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood.
O blindness to the future! kindly given,
That each may fill the circle marked by Heaven;
Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish or a sparrow fall,
Atoms or systems into ruin hurled,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world.
Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;
Wait the great teacher Death, and God adore.
What future bliss He gives not thee to know,
But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.
Hope springs eternal in the human breast:
Man never is, but always to be, blest.
The soul, uneasy and confined from home,
Rests and expatiates[1] in a life to come.
Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutored mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;
His soul proud Science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk[2] or milky way;
Yet simple nature to his hope has given,
Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler Heaven,
Some safer world in depth of woods embraced,
Some happier island in the watery waste,
Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.
To be, contents his natural desire;
He asks no Angel's wing, no Seraph's fire;
But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company.
IV. Go, wiser thou! and in thy scale of sense
Weigh thy opinion against Providence;
Call imperfection what thou fanciest such;
Say, here he gives too little, there too much;
Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,[3]
Yet cry, if man's unhappy, God's unjust;
If man alone engross not Heaven's high care,
Alone made perfect here, immortal there:
Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
Rejudge his justice, be the god of God.
In pride, in reasoning pride, our error lies;
All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies!
Pride still is aiming at the blessed abodes,
Men would be Angels, Angels would be Gods.
Aspiring to be Gods if Angels fell,
Aspiring to be Angels men rebel:
And who but wishes to invert the laws
Of order, sins against th' Eternal Cause,
V. Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine,
Earth for whose use, — Pride answers, "'Tis for mine:
For me kind Nature wakes her genial power,
Suckles each herb, and spreads out every flower;
Annual for me the grape, the rose, renew
The juice nectareous and the balmy dew;
For me the mine a thousand treasures brings;

1 wanders without restraint.
2 The orbit of the Sun. 3 appetite.

For me health gushes from a thousand springs;
Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;
My footstool earth, my canopy the skies." 140
But errs not Nature from this gracious end,
From burning suns when livid deaths descend,
When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep
Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?
"No," 'tis replied, "the first Almighty Cause
Acts not by partial but by general laws; 146
Th' exceptions few; some change since all began;
And what created perfect?" — Why then man?
If the great end be human happiness,
Then Nature deviates; and can man do less? 150
As much that end a constant course requires
Of showers and sunshine, as of man's desires;
As much eternal springs and cloudless skies,
As men for ever temperate, calm, and wise.
If plagues or earthquakes break not Heaven's design, 155
Why then a Borgia or a Catiline?
Who knows but He, whose hand the lightning forms,
Who heaves old ocean, and who wings the storms;
Pours fierce ambition in a Cæsar's mind,
Or turns young Ammon[1] loose to scourge mankind? 160
From pride, from pride, our very reasoning springs;
Account for moral as for natural things:
Why charge we Heaven in those, in these acquit?
In both, to reason right is to submit.
Better for us, perhaps, it might appear, 165
Were there all harmony, all virtue here;
That never air or ocean felt the wind,
That never passion discomposed the mind:
But all subsists by elemental strife;
And passions are the elements of life. 170
The general order, since the whole began,
Is kept in Nature, and is kept in Man.
VI. What would this Man? Now upward will he soar,
And little less than Angel, would be more;
Now looking downwards, just as grieved appears 175
To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.
Made for his use all creatures if he call,
Say what their use, had he the powers of all?
Nature to these without profusion kind, 179
The proper organs, proper powers assigned;
Each seeming want compensated of course,
Here with degrees of swiftness, there of force;
All in exact proportion to the state;
Nothing to add, and nothing to abate;
Each beast, each insect, happy in its own: 185
Is Heaven unkind to man, and man alone?
Shall he alone, whom rational we call,
Be pleased with nothing if not blessed with all?
The bliss of man (could pride that blessing find)
Is not to act or think beyond mankind; 190
No powers of body or of soul to share,
But what his nature and his state can bear.
Why has not man a microscopic eye?
For this plain reason, man is not a fly.
Say, what the use, were finer optics given, 195
To inspect a mite, not comprehend the Heaven?
Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,
To smart and agonize at every pore?
Or quick effluvia darting thro' the brain,
Die of a rose in aromatic pain? 200
If Nature thundered in his opening ears,
And stunned him with the music of the spheres,
How would he wish that Heaven had left him still
The whispering zephyr and the purling rill?
Who finds not Providence all good and wise, 205
Alike in what it gives and what denies?
VII. Far as creation's ample range extends,
The scale of sensual, mental powers ascends.
Mark how it mounts to man's imperial race
From the green myriads in the peopled grass: 210
What modes of sight betwixt each wide extreme,
The mole's dim curtain and the lynx's beam:
Of smell, the headlong lioness between
And hound sagacious on the tainted green:
Of hearing, from the life that fills the flood 215
To that which warbles thro' the vernal wood.
The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine,
Feels at each thread, and lives along the line:
In the nice bee what sense so subtly true,
From poisonous herbs extracts the healing dew! 220
How instinct varies in the grovelling swine,
Compared, half-reasoning elephant, with thine!
'Twixt that and reason what a nice barrier!
For ever separate, yet for ever near!

[1] Alexander the Great.

Remembrance and reflection how allied!
What thin partitions Sense from Thought divide!
And middle natures how they long to join,
Yet never pass th' insuperable line!
Without this just gradation could they be
Subjected these to those, or all to thee!
The powers of all subdued by thee alone,
Is not thy Reason all these powers in one?
VIII. See thro' this air, this ocean, and this earth
All matter quick, and bursting into birth:
Above, how high progressive life may go!
Around, how wide! how deep extend below!
Vast chain of being! which from God began;
Natures ethereal, human, angel, man,
Beast, bird, fish, insect, who no eye can see,
No glass can reach; from infinite to thee;
From thee to nothing. — On superior powers
Were we to press, inferior might on ours;
Or in the full creation leave a void,
Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroyed:
From Nature's chain whatever link you like,
Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.
And if each system in gradation roll,
Alike essential to th' amazing Whole,
The least confusion but in one, not all
That system only, but the Whole must fall.
Let earth unbalanced from her orbit fly,
Planets and stars run lawless thro' the sky;
Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurled,
Being on being wrecked, and world on world;
Heaven's whole foundations to their centre nod,
And Nature tremble to the throne of God!
All this dread order break — for whom? for thee?
Vile worm! — O madness! pride! impiety!
IX. What if the foot, ordained the dust to tread,
Or hand to toil, aspired to be the head?
What if the head, the eye, or ear repined
To serve mere engines to the ruling mind?
Just as absurd for any part to claim
To be another in this general frame;
Just as absurd to mourn the tasks or pains
The great directing Mind of All ordains.
All are but parts of one stupendous Whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;
That changed thro' all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the earth as in th' ethereal frame,
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;
Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent;
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;
As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,
As the rapt Seraph that adores and burns.
To him no high, no low, no great, no small;
He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all!
X. Cease, then, nor Order imperfection name;
Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.
Know thy own point: this kind, this due degree
Of blindness, weakness, Heaven bestows on thee.
Submit: in this or any other sphere,
Secure to be as blessed as thou canst bear;
Safe in the hand of one disposing Power,
Or in the natal or the mortal hour.
All Nature is but Art unknown to thee;
All chance direction, which thou canst not see;
All discord, harmony not understood;
All partial evil, universal good:
And spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,
One truth is clear, *Whatever is, is right.*

## MORAL ESSAYS

### EPISTLE IV

### To Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington

### OF THE USE OF RICHES

1731

First published with the title: *Of Taste.* Pope had already exemplified his doctrine that good taste is founded on good sense and on nature in the landscape-gardening of his own villa at Twickenham. His precept and example did much to make fashionable the natural garden as opposed to the formal garden with geometrical patterns. The most brilliant passage of the Essay is the description of "Timon's villa," which exemplifies all that is worst in tasteless magnificence, when the builder has not the good sense to consider usefulness and comfort.

ARGUMENT

The vanity of Expense in people of wealth and quality. The abuse of the word Taste. That the first principle and foundation in this, as in everything else, is Good Sense. The chief proof of it is to follow Nature, even in works of mere luxury and elegance. Instanced in Architecture and Gardening, where all must be adapted to the genius and use of the place, and the beauties not forced into it, but resulting from it. How men are disappointed in their most expensive undertakings for want of this true founda-

ion, without which nothing can please long, if at all; and he best examples and rules will but be perverted into omething burdensome and ridiculous. A description of he false taste of Magnificence; the first grand error of which is to imagine that greatness consists in the size and imension, instead of the proportion and harmony, of he whole; and the second, either in joining together parts ncoherent, or too minutely resembling, or, in the repetition of the same too frequently. A word or two of false aste in books, in music, in painting, even in preaching nd prayer, and lastly in entertainments. Yet Providence is justified in giving wealth to be squandered in this manner, since it is dispersed to the poor and laborious part of mankind. What are the proper objects of Magnificence, and a proper field for the expense of great men. And, finally, the great and public works which become a Prince.

'Tis strange the Miser should his cares employ
To gain those riches he can ne'er enjoy:
Is it less strange the Prodigal should waste
His wealth to purchase what he ne'er can taste?
Not for himself he sees, or hears, or eats;
Artists must choose his pictures, music, meats:
He buys for Topham drawings and designs;
For Pembroke statues, dirty gods, and coins;
Rare monkish manuscripts for Hearne alone,
And books for Mead, and butterflies for Sloane.[1]
Think we all these are for himself? no more
Than his fine wife, alas! or finer whore.
For what has Virro painted, built, and planted?
Only to show how many tastes he wanted.
What brought Sir Visto's ill-got wealth to waste?
Some demon whispered, "Visto! have a Taste."
Heaven visits with a Taste the wealthy fool,
And needs no rod but Ripley[2] with a rule.
See! sportive Fate, to punish awkward pride,
Bids Bubo build, and sends him such a guide:
A standing sermon at each year's expense,
That never coxcomb reached Magnificence!
You[3] show us Rome was glorious, not profuse,
And pompous buildings once were things of use;
Yet shall, my Lord, your just, your noble rules
Fill half the land with imitating fools;
Who random drawings from your sheets shall take,
And of one Beauty many Blunders make;
Load some vain church with old theatric state,
Turn arcs of triumph to a garden gate;
Reverse your ornaments, and hang them all
On some patched dog-hole eked with ends of wall,
Then clap four slices of pilaster on 't,
That laced with bits of rustic makes a front;
Shall call the winds thro' long arcades to roar,
Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door:
Conscious they act a true Palladian part,
And if they starve, they starve by rules of Art.
Oft have you hinted to your brother peer
A certain truth, which many buy too dear:
Something there is more needful than expense,
And something previous even to Taste — 'tis Sense;
Good Sense, which only is the gift of Heaven,
And tho' no science, fairly worth the seven;
A light which in yourself you must perceive;
Jones and Le Nôtre[1] have it not to give.
To build, to plant, whatever you intend,
To rear the column, or the arch to bend,
To swell the terrace, or to sink the grot,
In all, let Nature never be forgot.
But treat the Goddess like a modest Fair,
Nor overdress, nor leave her wholly bare;
Let not each beauty everywhere be spied,
Where half the skill is decently to hide.
He gains all points who pleasingly confounds,
Surprises, varies, and conceals the bounds.
Consult the genius of the place in all;
That tells the waters or to rise or fall;
Or helps th' ambitious hill the heavens to scale,
Or scoops in circling theatres the vale,
Calls in the country, catches opening glades,
Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades,
Now breaks, or now directs, th' intending lines;
Paints as you plant, and as you work designs.
Still follow Sense, of every art the soul;
Parts answering parts shall slide into a whole,
Spontaneous beauties all around advance,
Start even from difficulty, strike from chance:
Nature shall join you; time shall make it grow
A work to wonder at — perhaps a Stowe.[2]
Without it, proud Versailles! thy glory falls,

1 Contemporary collectors, scholars, and naturalists.
2 An incompetent architect.
3 The Earl of Burlington was then publishing the designs of Inigo Jones and the *Antiquities of Rome* by Palladio. (Pope.)

1 Landscape-gardener to Louis XIV.
2 The seat and gardens of the Lord Viscount Cobham in Buckinghamshire. (Pope.)

And Nero's terraces desert their walls:
The vast parterres a thousand hands shall make,
Lo! Cobham comes, and floats them with a lake;
Or cut wide views thro' mountains to the plain,
You'll wish your hill or sheltered seat again.
Even in an ornament its place remark,
Nor in a hermitage set Dr. Clarke.[1]
Behold Villario's ten years' toil complete:
His quincunx darkens, his espaliers meet,
The wood supports the plain, the parts unite,
And strength of shade contends with strength of light;
A waving glow the bloomy beds display,
Blushing in bright diversities of day,
With silver quivering rills meandered o'er —
Enjoy them, you! Villario can no more:
Tired of the scene parterres and fountains yield,
He finds at last he better likes a field.
Thro' his young woods how pleased Sabinus strayed,
Or sat delighted in the thickening shade,
With annual joy the reddening shoots to greet,
Or see the stretching branches long to meet.
His son's fine Taste an opener vista loves,
Foe to the dryads of his father's groves;
One boundless green or flourished carpet views,
With all the mournful family of yews;
The thriving plants, ignoble broomsticks made,
Now sweep those alleys they were born to shade.
At Timon's villa[2] let us pass a day,
Where all cry out, "What sums are thrown away";
So proud, so grand; of that stupendous air,
Soft and agreeable come never there;
Greatness with Timon dwells in such a draught
As brings all Brobdingnag[3] before your thought.
To compass this, his building is a town,
His pond an ocean, his parterre a down:
Who but must laugh, the master when he sees,
A puny insect shivering at a breeze!
Lo, what huge heaps of littleness around!
The whole a labored quarry above ground.
Two Cupids squirt before: a lake behind
Improves the keenness of the northern wind.
His gardens next your admiration call;
On every side you look, behold the wall!
No pleasing intricacies intervene;
No artful wildness to perplex the scene;
Grove nods at grove, each alley has a brother.
And half the platform just reflects the other.
The suffering eye inverted Nature sees,
Trees cut to statues, statues thick as trees;
With here a fountain never to be played,
And there a summer-house that knows no shade,
Here Amphitrite sails thro' myrtle bowers,
There gladiators fight or die in flowers;
Unwatered, see the drooping seahorse mourn,
And swallows roost in Nilus' dusty urn.
My Lord advances with majestic mien,
Smit with the mighty pleasure to be seen:
But soft! by regular approach — not yet —
First thro' the length of yon hot terrace sweat;
And when up ten steep slopes you've dragged your thighs,
Just at his study door he'll bless your eyes.
His study! with what authors is it stored?
In books, not authors, curious is my lord.
To all their dated backs he turns you round;
These Aldus printed, those Du Sueil has bound;
Lo, some are vellum, and the rest as good,
For all his lordship knows, — but they are wood.
For Locke or Milton 'tis in vain to look;
These shelves admit not any modern book.
And now the chapel's silver bell you hear
That summons you to all the pride of prayer:
Light quirks of music, broken and uneven,
Make the soul dance upon a jig to Heaven:
On painted ceilings you devoutly stare,
Where sprawl the saints of Verrio or Laguerre,
On gilded clouds in fair expansion lie,
And bring all paradise before your eye:
To rest, the cushion and soft dean invite,
Who never mentions Hell to ears polite.
But hark! the chiming clocks to dinner call;
A hundred footsteps scrape the marble hall!
The rich buffet well-colored serpents grace,
And gaping Tritons spew to wash your face.
Is this a dinner? this a genial room?
No, 'tis a temple and a hecatomb;
A solemn sacrifice performed in state;
You drink by measure, and to minutes eat.
So quick retires each flying course, you'd swear
Sancho's[1] dread doctor and his wand were there.

1 Dr. L. Clarke's busto placed by the Queen in the Hermitage, while the doctor duly frequented the court. (Pope.)

2 See note to *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, line 300.

3 The land of giants in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.

1 The squire of Don Quixote.

Between each act the trembling salvers ring,
From soup to sweet wine, and God bless the King.
In plenty starving, tantalized in state,
And complaisantly helped to all I hate,
Treated, caressed, and tired, I take my leave,
Sick of his civil pride from morn to eve;
I curse such lavish Cost and little Skill,
And swear no day was ever passed so ill.
Yet hence the poor are clothed, the hungry fed;
Health to himself, and to his infants bread
The laborer bears; what his hard heart denies,
His charitable vanity supplies.
Another age shall see the golden ear
Embrown the slope, and nod on the parterre,
Deep harvests bury all his pride has planned,
And laughing Ceres reassume the land.
Who then shall grace, or who improve the soil?
Who plants like Bathurst,[1] or who builds like Boyle?[2]
'Tis use alone that sanctifies expense,
And splendor borrows all her rays from sense.
His father's acres who enjoys in peace,
Or makes his neighbors glad if he increase;
Whose cheerful tenants bless their yearly toil,
Yet to their Lord owe more than to the soil;
Whose ample lawns are not ashamed to feed
The milky heifer and deserving steed;
Whose rising forests, not for pride or show,
But future buildings, future navies, grow:
Let his plantations stretch from down to down,
First shade a country, and then raise a town.
You, too, proceed! make falling arts your care;
Erect new wonders, and the old repair;
Jones and Palladio to themselves restore
And be whate'er Vitruvius[3] was before,
Till kings call forth th' ideas of your mind
(Proud to accomplish what such hands designed),
Bid harbors open, public ways extend,
Bid temples, worthier of the God, ascend,
Bid the broad arch the dangerous flood contain,
The mole projected break the roaring main,
Back to his bounds their subject sea command,
And roll obedient rivers thro' the land.

These honors Peace to happy Britain brings;
These are imperial works, and worthy Kings.

1 The Third Epistle of the Moral Essays was addressed to Allen, Lord Bathurst.
2 Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington.
3 Latin writer on architecture, first century B.C.

## EPISTLE TO DR. ARBUTHNOT

BEING THE PROLOGUE TO THE SATIRES

Dr. John Arbuthnot, who had been physician in ordinary to Queen Anne, was a man of literary and artistic tastes and a most charming gentleman, the close friend of Pope and of Swift. To him Pope addresses what is the most intimate and self-revealing of his poems, published in 1735, and later used as prologue to the collected volume of Pope's *Satires*. It is in a measure Pope's literary autobiography, written at the height of his power and of his fame, his *apologia pro vita sua*, in which he seeks to justify his own position and to dispose once for all of his enemies and detractors. The most famous passage is the "character" of Addison under the name of "Atticus," a satirical portrait which, admitting the greatness of Addison, seizes on and emphasizes the victim's weaker side — his timid jealousy of rivals and a certain smug self-complacency. This portrait is much greater satire than the vindictive "character" of Lord Hervey under the name of "Sporus." Many lines contain thinly veiled references to men and events familiar to Pope's contemporaries, but long since forgotten, save as Pope has given to them a sort of immortality by his satire. The modern reader, unless he is prepared to wade through a mass of annotations, must be content to miss the point of many of these personal thrusts. In easy colloquial grace and terseness of epigram the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* shows Pope at his best.

ADVERTISEMENT

This paper is a sort of bill of complaint, begun many years since, and drawn up by snatches, as the several occasions offered. I had no thoughts of publishing it, till it pleased some Persons of Rank and Fortune (the authors of "Verses to the Imitator of Horace," and of an "Epistle to a Doctor of Divinity from a Nobleman at Hampton Court") to attack, in a very extraordinary manner, not only my Writings (of which, being public, the Public is judge), but my Person, Morals, and Family; whereof, to those who know me not, a truer information may be requisite. Being divided between the necessity to say something of myself, and my own laziness to undertake so awkward a task, I thought it the shortest way to put the last hand to this epistle. If it have any thing pleasing, it will be that by which I am most desirous to please, the Truth and the Sentiment; and if any thing offensive, it will be only to those I am least sorry to offend, the vicious or the ungenerous.

Many will know their own pictures in it, there being not a circumstance but what is true; but I have, for the most part, spared their names, and they may escape being laughed at if they please.

I would have some of them know it was owing to the request of the learned and candid Friend to whom it is inscribed, that I make not as free use of theirs as they have done of mine. However, I shall have this advantage and honor on my side, that whereas, by their proceeding, any abuse may be directed at any man, no injury can possibly be done by mine, since a nameless character can never be found out but by its truth and likeness.

*P.* "Shut, shut the door, good John!" [1] fatigued, I said;
"Tie up the knocker, say I'm sick, I'm dead."
The Dog-star rages! nay, 'tis past a doubt
All Bedlam [2] or Parnassus is let out:
Fire in each eye, and papers in each hand,
They rave, recite, and madden round the land.
What walls can guard me, or what shades can hide?
They pierce my thickets, thro' my grot they glide,
By land, by water, they renew the charge,
They stop the chariot, and they board the barge.
No place is sacred, not the church is free,
Even Sunday shines no Sabbath-day to me:
Then from the Mint [3] walks forth the man of rhyme,
Happy to catch me just at dinner time.
Is there a Parson much bemused in beer,
A maudlin Poetess, a rhyming Peer,
A clerk foredoomed his father's soul to cross,
Who pens a stanza when he should engross?
Is there who, locked from ink and paper, scrawls
With desperate charcoal round his darkened walls?
All fly to TWIT'NAM [4] and in humble strain,
Apply to me to keep them mad or vain.
Arthur, whose giddy son neglects the laws,
Imputes to me and my damned works the cause:
Poor Cornus sees his frantic wife elope,
And curses Wit and Poetry, and Pope.
Friend to my life (which did not you prolong,
The world had wanted many an idle song)!
What Drop or Nostrum can this plague remove?
Or which must end me, a fool's wrath or love?
A dire dilemma! either way I'm sped;
If foes, they write, if friends, they read me dead.
Seized and tied down to judge, how wretched I!
Who can't be silent, and who will not lie.
To laugh were want of goodness and of grace,
And to be grave exceeds all power of face.
I sit with sad civility, I read
With honest anguish and an aching head,
And drop at last, but in unwilling ears,
This saving counsel, "Keep your piece nine years."
"Nine years!" cries he, who, high in Drury lane,
Lulled by soft zephyrs thro' the broken pane,
Rhymes ere he wakes, and prints before Term [1] ends,
Obliged by hunger and request of friends:
"The piece, you think, is incorrect? why, take it!
I'm all submission: what you'd have it — make it."
Three things another's modest wishes bound,
"My friendship, and a Prologue, and ten pound."
Pitholeon sends to me: "You know his Grace,
I want a patron; ask him for a place."
Pitholeon libelled me — "But here's a letter
Informs you, Sir, 'twas when he knew no better.
Dare you refuse him? Curll [2] invites to dine,
He'll write a *Journal*, or he'll turn Divine."
Bless me! a packet. — 'Tis a stranger sues,
A Virgin Tragedy, an Orphan Muse.
If I dislike it, "Furies, death, and rage!"
If I approve, "Commend it to the stage."
There (thank my stars) my whole commission ends,
The players and I are, luckily, no friends.
Fired that the house rejects him, "'Sdeath I'll print it,
And shame the fools — your interest, Sir, with Lintot." [3]
Lintot, dull rogue, will think your price too much:
"Not, Sir, if you revise it, and retouch."
All my demurs but double his attacks;
At last he whispers, "Do, and we go snacks."
Glad of a quarrel, straight I clap the door;
"Sir, let me see your works and you no more."
'Tis sung, when Midas' ears began to spring
(Midas, a sacred person and a king),
His very Minister who spied them first
(Some say his Queen) was forced to speak or burst.
And is not mine, my friend, a sorer case,
When every coxcomb perks them in my face
*A.* Good friend, forbear! you deal in dangerous things;
I'd never name Queens, Ministers, or Kings

1 Pope's servant.
2 The great London hospital for the insane.
3 A region of London in which debtors could not be arrested. No debtors could be arrested on Sunday.
4 Pope's villa was at Twickenham, on the banks of the Thames not far from London.

1 The London "season."
2 The piratical bookseller who published Pope's letters.
3 One of the most respected booksellers of the day. He published Pope's Homer.

Keep close to ears, and those let asses prick,
'Tis nothing — *P.* Nothing! if they bite and kick?
Out with it, DUNCIAD! let the secret pass,
That secret to each fool, that he's an ass:
The truth once told (and wherefore should we lie?)
The Queen of Midas slept, and so may I.
You think this cruel? take it for a rule,
No creature smarts so little as a fool.
Let peals of laughter, Codrus! round thee break,
Thou unconcerned canst hear the mighty crack:
Pit, Box, and Gallery in convulsions hurled,
Thou stand'st unshook amidst a bursting world.
Who shames a Scribbler? break one cobweb thro',
He spins the slight self-pleasing thread anew:
Destroy his fib, or sophistry — in vain!
The creature's at his dirty work again,
Throned in the centre of his thin designs,
Proud of a vast extent of flimsy lines.
Whom have I hurt? has Poet yet or Peer
Lost the arched eyebrow or Parnassian sneer?
And has not Colley still his lord and whore?
His butchers Henley? his freemasons Moore?
Does not one table Bavius still admit?
Still to one Bishop Philips seem a wit?
Still Sappho — *A.* Hold! for God's sake — you'll offend.
No names — be calm — learn prudence of a friend.
I too could write, and I am twice as tall;
But foes like these — *P.* One flatterer's worse than all.
Of all mad creatures, if the learned are right,
It is the slaver kills, and not the bite.
A fool quite angry is quite innocent:
Alas! 'tis ten times worse when they repent.
One dedicates in high heroic prose,
And ridicules beyond a hundred foes;
One from all Grub-street will my fame defend,
And, more abusive, calls himself my friend:
This prints my *Letters*, that expects a bribe,
And others roar aloud, "Subscribe, subscribe!"
There are who to my person pay their court:
I cough like Horace; and tho' lean, am short;
Ammon's great son [1] one shoulder had too high,
Such Ovid's nose, and "Sir! you have an eye —"

1 Alexander the Great.

Go on, obliging creatures! make me see
All that disgraced my betters met in me.
Say, for my comfort, languishing in bed,
"Just so immortal Maro [1] held his head":
And when I die, be sure you let me know
Great Homer died three thousand years ago.
Why did I write? what sin to me unknown
Dipped me in ink, my parents', or my own?
As yet a child, nor yet a fool to fame,
I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came:
I left no calling for this idle trade,
No duty broke, no father disobeyed:
The Muse but served to ease some friend, not wife,
To help me thro' this long disease my life,
To second, ARBUTHNOT! thy art and care,
And teach the being you preserved, to bear.
*A.* But why then publish? *P.* Granville [2] the polite,
And knowing Walsh, would tell me I could write;
Well-natured Garth inflamed with early praise,
And Congreve loved, and Swift endured my lays;
The courtly Talbot, Somers, Sheffield, read;
Even mitred Rochester would nod the head,
And St. John's self (great Dryden's friends before)
With open arms received one poet more.
Happy my studies, when by these approved!
Happier their author, when by these beloved!
From these the world will judge of men and books,
Not from the Burnets, Oldmixons, and Cookes.[3]
Soft were my numbers; who could take offence
While pure description held the place of sense?
Like gentle Fanny's was my flowery theme,
"A painted mistress, or a purling stream."
Yet then did Gildon draw his venal quill;
I wished the man a dinner, and sat still:
Yet then did Dennis [4] rave in furious fret;
I never answered; I was not in debt.
If want provoked, or madness made them print,
I waged no war with Bedlam or the Mint.
Did some more sober critic come abroad;
If wrong, I smiled, if right, I kissed the rod.

1 Virgil.

2 The men mentioned in lines 135–140 were wits and critics of the preceding generation, who encouraged Pope in his boyhood and youth.

3 Authors of secret and scandalous history. (Pope.)

4 A well-known literary critic, who had attacked Pope's *Essay on Criticism.*

Pains, reading, study, are their just pretence,
And all they want is spirit, taste, and sense.
Commas and points they set exactly right,
And 'twere a sin to rob them of their mite.
Yet ne'er one sprig of laurel graced these ribalds,
From slashing Bentleys down to piddling Tibbalds.[1]
Each wight who reads not, and but scans and spells,
Each word-catcher that lives on syllables,
Even such small critics some regard may claim,
Preserved in Milton's or in Shakespeare's name.
Pretty! in amber to observe the forms
Of hairs, or straws, or dirt, or grubs, or worms!
The things, we know, are neither rich nor rare,
But wonder how the devil they got there.
Were others angry: I excused them too;
Well might they rage, I gave them but their due.
A man's true merit 'tis not hard to find;
But each man's secret standard in his mind,
That casting-weight Pride adds to emptiness,
This, who can gratify? for who can guess?
The bard whom pilfered pastorals renown,
Who turns a Persian tale for half-a-crown,
Just writes to make his barrenness appear,
And strains from hard-bound brains eight lines a year;
He who still wanting, tho' he lives on theft,
Steals much, spends little, yet has nothing left;
And he who now to sense, now nonsense, leaning,
Means not, but blunders round about a meaning:
And he whose fustian 's so sublimely bad,
It is not poetry, but prose run mad:
All these my modest satire bade translate,
And owned that nine such poets made a Tate.[2]
How did they fume, and stamp, and roar, and chafe!
And swear not ADDISON himself was safe.
Peace to all such! but were there one[3] whose fires
True Genius kindles, and fair Fame inspires,
Blessed with each talent and each art to please,
And born to write, converse, and live with ease;
Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne;
View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,
And hate for arts that caused himself to rise;
Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
And without sneering teach the rest to sneer;
Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,
Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike;
Alike reserved to blame or to commend,
A timorous foe, and a suspicious friend;
Dreading even fools; by flatterers besieged,
And so obliging that he ne'er obliged;
Like Cato, give his little Senate laws,
And sit attentive to his own applause:
While Wits and Templars[1] every sentence raise,
And wonder with a foolish face of praise —
Who but must laugh if such a man there be?
Who would not weep, if Atticus were he?
What tho' my name stood rubric[2] on the walls,
Or plastered posts, with claps,[3] in capitals?
Or smoking forth, a hundred hawkers load,
On wings of winds came flying all abroad?
I sought no homage from the race that write;
I kept, like Asian Monarchs, from their sight:
Poems I heeded (now berhymed so long)
No more than thou, great George![4] a birth-day song.
I ne'er with Wits or Witlings passed my day
To spread about the itch of verse and praise;
Nor like a puppy daggled thro' the town
To fetch and carry sing-song up and down;
Nor at rehearsals sweat, and mouthed, and cried,
With handkerchief and orange at my side;
But sick of fops, and poetry, and prate,
To Bufo left the whole Castalian state.
Proud as Apollo on his forked hill
Sat full-blown Bufo, puffed by every quill:
Fed with soft dedication all day long,
Horace and he went hand in hand in song.
His library (where busts of poets dead,
And a true Pindar stood without a head)
Received of Wits an undistinguished race,
Who first his judgment asked, and then place:
Much they extolled his pictures, much his seat,

1 Editors of Milton and of Shakespeare whom Pope had satirized in the *Dunciad*.
2 Nahum Tate, the poet laureate.
3 Addison, satirized under the name of "Atticus."

1 law-students. 2 in red letters. 3 posters
4 King George II was utterly indifferent to literature

nd flattered every day, and some days eat:
ill grown more frugal in his riper days,
le paid some bards with port, and some with praise;
o some a dry rehearsal was assigned,
nd others (harder still) he paid in kind.[1]
)ryden alone (what wonder?) came not nigh;
)ryden alone escaped this judging eye:
ut still the great have kindness in reserve;
le helped to bury whom he helped to starve.
lay some choice patron bless each gray goose quill!
lay every Bavius [2] have his Bufo still!
o when a statesman wants a day's defence,
)r Envy holds a whole week's war with Sense,
)r simple Pride for flattery makes demands,
lay dunce by dunce be whistled off my hands!
lessed be the great! for those they take away,
nd those they left me — for they left me Gay; [3]
eft me to see neglected Genius bloom,
eglected die, and tell it on his tomb:
)f all thy blameless life the sole return
ly Verse, and Queensbury weeping o'er thy urn!
Oh let me live my own, and die so too
To live and die is all I have to do)!
laintain a poet's dignity and ease,
nd see what friends, and read what books I please;
bove a Patron, tho' I condescend
ometimes to call a minister my Friend.
was not born for courts or great affairs;
pay my debts, believe, and say my prayers;
an sleep without a poem in my head,
or know if Dennis be alive or dead.
Why am I asked what next shall see the light?
leavens! was I born for nothing but to write?
las life no joys for me? or (to be grave)
lave I no friend to serve, no soul to save?
'I found him close with Swift" — "Indeed? no doubt
Cries prating Balbus) something will come out."
'is all in vain, deny it as I will;
'No, such a genius never can lie still":
nd then for mine obligingly mistakes
he first lampoon Sir Will or Bubo makes.
oor guiltless I! and can I choose but smile,
When every coxcomb knows me by my style?
Curst be the verse, how well soe'er it flow,
That tends to make one worthy man my foe,
Give Virtue scandal, Innocence a fear,
Or from the soft-eyed virgin steal a tear!
But he who hurts a harmless neighbor's peace,
Insults fallen Worth, or Beauty in distress,
Who loves a lie, lame Slander helps about,
Who writes a libel, or who copies out;
That fop whose pride affects a patron's name,
Yet absent, wounds an author's honest fame;
Who can your merit selfishly approve,
And show the sense of it without the love;
Who has the vanity to call you friend,
Yet wants the honor, injured, to defend;
Who tells whate'er you think, whate'er you say,
And, if he lie not, must at least betray;
Who to the Dean and Silver Bell can swear,
And sees at Canons what was never there: [1]
Who reads but with a lust to misapply,
Make satire a lampoon, and fiction lie:
A lash like mine no honest man shall dread,
But all such babbling blockheads in his stead.
Let Sporus [2] tremble — *A.* What? that thing of silk,
Sporus, that mere white curd of Ass's milk?
Satire or sense, alas! can Sporus feel?
Who breaks a butterfly upon a wheel?
*P.* Yet let me flap this bug with gilded wings,
This painted child of dirt, that stinks and stings;
Whose buzz the witty and the fair annoys,
Yet Wit ne'er tastes, and Beauty ne'er enjoys;
So well-bred spaniels civilly delight
In mumbling of the game they dare not bite.
Eternal smiles his emptiness betray,
As shallow streams run dimpling all the way,
Whether in florid impotence he speaks,
And, as the prompter breathes, the puppet squeaks,
Or at the ear of Eve, familiar toad,
Half froth, half venom, spits himself abroad,
In puns, or politics, or tales, or lies,
Or spite, or smut, or rhymes, or blasphemies;
His wit all see-saw between *that* and *this*,
Now high, now low, now master up, now miss,
And he himself one vile Antithesis.
Amphibious thing! that acting either part,

1 i.e., with poems of his own.
2 i.e., every bad poet.
3 Author of the *Beggar's Opera*, and close friend of Pope.

1 The account of "Timon's Villa" in the fourth *Moral Essay* (lines 99–168) was declared by Pope's enemies to be a satire on Canons, the country seat of the Duke of Chandos, where Pope had been entertained as a guest.
2 Lord Hervey, a well-known court favorite, and one of Pope's bitter enemies. The name Sporus is that of a eunuch, a favorite of the Emperor Nero.

The trifling head, or the corrupted heart;
Fop at the toilet, flatterer at the board,
Now trips a lady, and now struts a lord.
Eve's tempter thus the Rabbins have exprest,
A cherub's face, a reptile all the rest;
Beauty that shocks you, Parts that none will trust,
Wit that can creep, and Pride that licks the dust.
Not Fortune's worshipper, nor Fashion's fool,
Not Lucre's madman, nor Ambition's tool,
Not proud nor servile; — be one poet's praise,
That if he pleased, he pleased by manly ways:
That flattery even to Kings, he held a shame,
And thought a lie in verse or prose the same;
That not in fancy's maze he wandered long,
But stooped to truth, and moralized his song;
That not for Fame, but Virtue's better end,
He stood the furious foe, the timid friend,
The damning critic, half approving wit,
The coxcomb hit, or fearing to be hit;
Laughed at the loss of friends he never had,
The dull, the proud, the wicked, and the mad;
The distant threats of vengeance on his head,
The blow unfelt, the tear he never shed;
The tale revived, the lie so oft o'erthrown,
Th' imputed trash and dulness not his own;
The morals blackened when the writings 'scape,
The libelled person, and the pictured shape;
Abuse on all he loved, or loved him, spread,
A friend in exile, or a father dead;
The whisper, that, to greatness still too near,
Perhaps yet vibrates on his SOVEREIGN'S ear —
Welcome for thee, fair Virtue! all the past:
For thee, fair Virtue! welcome even the last!

*A.* But why insult the poor? affront the great?

*P.* A knave's a knave to me in every state;
Alike my scorn, if he succeed or fail,
Sporus at court, or Japhet in a jail;
A hireling scribbler, or a hireling peer,
Knight of the post corrupt, or of the shire;
If on a Pillory, or near a Throne,
He gain his prince's ear, or lose his own.

Yet soft by nature, more a dupe than wit,
Sappho can tell you how this man was bit:
This dreaded Satirist Dennis will confess
Foe to his pride, but friend to his distress:
So humble, he has knocked at Tibbald's door,
Has drunk with Cibber, nay, has rhymed for Moore.
Full ten years slandered, did he once reply?
Three thousand suns went down on Welsted's lie.
To please a mistress one aspersed his life;
He lashed him not, but let her be his wife:
Let Budgell charge low Grub-street on his quill,
And write whate'er he pleased, except his will
Let the two Curlls of town and court abuse
His father, mother, body, soul, and muse:
Yet why? that father held it for a rule,
It was a sin to call our neighbor fool;
That harmless mother thought no wife a whore:
Hear this, and spare his family, James Moore!
Unspotted names, and memorable long,
If there be force in Virtue, or in Song.
Of gentle blood (part shed in honor's cause,
While yet in Britain honor had applause)
Each parent sprung — *A.* What fortune, pray? —

*P.* Their own;
And better got than Bestia's from the throne
Born to no pride, inheriting no strife,
Nor marrying discord in a noble wife,[1]
Stranger to civil and religious rage,
The good man walked innoxious thro' his age.
No courts he saw, no suits would ever try,
Nor dared an oath, nor hazarded a lie.
Unlearned, he knew no schoolman's subtle art
No language but the language of the heart.
By Nature honest, by Experience wise,
Healthy by Temperance and by Exercise;
His life, tho' long, to sickness passed unknown
His death was instant and without a groan.
O grant me thus to live, and thus to die!
Who sprung from kings shall know less joy than I.

O friend! may each domestic bliss be thine
Be no unpleasing melancholy mine:
Me, let the tender office long engage
To rock the cradle of reposing Age,
With lenient arts extend a Mother's breath
Make Languor smile, and smooth the bed of Death;
Explore the thought, explain the asking eye
And keep a while one parent from the sky!
On cares like these if length of days attend
May Heaven, to bless those days, preserve my friend!
Preserve him social, cheerful, and serene,
And just as rich as when he served a Queen[2]

*A.* Whether that blessing be denied or given,
Thus far was right; — the rest belongs to Heaven.

1 Addison married the Countess of Warwick.
2 Pope was a devoted son to his aged mother.

# JOHN GAY (1685–1732)

John Gay has been called the "spoiled child of the Queen Anne wits." Swift and Pope and Dr. Arbuthnot were his devoted friends, and continually gave him literary advice and financial assistance. His first important poem, *Rural Sports* (1713), was dedicated to Mr. Pope. Then at Pope's suggestion he wrote *The Shepherd's Week*, a set of pastorals which substitutes for the conventional shepherds and shepherdesses usual in the artificial pastoral the actual country folk of rural England. For the best of his longer poems, *Trivia, or the Art of Walking the Streets of London* (1716), which treats with the mock seriousness of the didactic poem the bustling life of the great city, Gay received "several hints" from Swift. In 1720, he published by subscription his collected poems. From this edition he made about a thousand pounds, which he promptly lost by speculating in South Sea stock. In 1727 was published the first series of *Fables*. (A second series appeared five years after his death.)

The great success of Gay's life came in 1728 with the production of the *Beggar's Opera*, written at the suggestion of Swift, and with the counsel of Pope and Arbuthnot. This brilliantly witty musical farce of criminal life, in which the chief criminal is the satiric counterpart of Sir Robert Walpole, the great Whig minister, had the extraordinary run of sixty-two nights. Its sequel, *Polly*, prohibited by the censor because of its political satire, was printed in 1729 and brought its author a thousand pounds. In the songs written for his operas, Gay shows a lyrical power which in vivacious light-hearted gayety rivals that of the great Elizabethan song-writers.

Gay died at the age of forty-seven, and was given a public funeral in Westminster Abbey. On his tomb is cut a graceful tribute composed by Pope, which is followed by the famous epitaph written by Gay himself —

> Life is a jest, and all things show it,
> I thought so once, and now I know it.

Most of his writing is in the spirit of jest — the playful wit of *Trivia* and the *Fables*, the rollicking satire of the *Beggar's Opera*. His poetical style is always easy and graceful, but it never pretends to the manner of great poetry.

The best edition of Gay is that edited by G. C. Faber for the Oxford Edition of Standard Authors (1926). His life has been written by Lewis Melville (London, 1921).

## TRIVIA, OR THE ART OF WALKING THE STREETS OF LONDON

1716

*Trivia*, from the Latin *trivium* (*ter* + *via*), where three roads meet, is an epithet describing one of the aspects of the goddess Diana. *Diana Trivia* is "Diana of the Crossways," and hence an appropriate patroness for the "art of walking the streets." Book I deals with "the Implements for walking the Streets, and the Signs of the Weather." The following passages are selected from the second and third books.

### Book II

#### OF WALKING THE STREETS BY DAY

Thus far the Muse has traced in useful lays,
The proper implements for wintry ways;
Has taught the walker, with judicious eyes,
To read the various warnings of the skies.
Now venture, Muse, from home, to range the town,
And for the public safety risk thy own.

*The Morning*

For ease and for dispatch the morning's best;
No tides of passengers the street molest.
You'll see a draggled damsel, here and there,
From Billingsgate her fishy traffic bear;
On doors the sallow milk-maid chalks her gains;
Ah! how unlike the milk-maid of the plains!
Before proud gates attending asses bray,
Or arrogate with solemn pace the way;
These grave physicians with their milky cheer
The love-sick maid and dwindling beau repair;[1]
Here rows of drummers stand in martial file,
And with their vellom thunder shake the pile,
To greet the new-made bride. Are sounds like these
The proper prelude to a state of peace?
Now industry awakes her busy sons,
Full charged with news the breathless hawker runs;
Shops open, coaches roll, carts shake the ground,
And all the streets with passing cries resound.

*Of Narrow Streets*

Though expedition bids, yet never stray
Where no ranged posts defend the rugged way.

1 The milk of asses was a fashionable remedy for the ailing.

Here laden carts with thundering wagons meet,
Wheels clash with wheels, and bar the narrow street;
The lashing whip resounds, the horses strain,
And blood in anguish bursts the swelling vein.
O barbarous men, your cruel breasts assuage,
Why vent ye on the generous steed your rage?
Does not his service earn your daily bread?
Your wives, your children by his labors fed!
If, as the Samian [1] taught, the soul revives,
And, shifting seats, in other bodies lives;
Severe shall be the brutal coachman's change,
Doomed in a hackney horse the town to range:
Carmen, transformed, the groaning load shall draw,
Whom other tyrants with the lash shall awe.

. . . . . .

*The Pell-mell Celebrated*

O bear me to the paths of fair Pell-mell,
Safe are thy pavements, grateful is thy smell!
At distance rolls along the gilded coach,
Nor sturdy carmen on thy walks encroach;
No lets would bar thy ways were chairs denied
The soft supports of laziness and pride;
Shops breathe perfumes, thro' sashes ribbons glow,
The mutual arms of ladies, and the beau.
Yet still even here, when rains the passage hide,
Oft the loose stone spirts up a muddy tide
Beneath thy careless foot; and from on high,
Where masons mount the ladder, fragments fly;
Mortar, and crumbled lime in showers descend,
And o'er thy head destructive tiles impend.

*The Pleasure of Walking through an Alley*

But sometimes let me leave the noisy roads,
And silent wander in the close abodes
Where wheels ne'er shake the ground; there pensive stray,
In studious thought, the long uncrowded way.
Here I remark each walker's different face,
And in their look their various business trace.

1 Pythagoras, who taught the doctrine of the transmigration of souls.

The broker here his spacious beaver wears,
Upon his brow sit jealousies and cares;
Bent on some mortgage (to avoid reproach)
He seeks bye streets, and saves th' expensive coach.
Soft, at low doors, old lechers tap their cane,
For fair recluse, who travels Drury-lane;
Here roams uncombed the lavish rake, to shun
His Fleet-street draper's everlasting dun.

. . . . . .

*The Dangers of Foot-ball*

Where Covent-Garden's famous temple stands,
That boasts the work of Jones' [1] immortal hands;
Columns with plain magnificence appear,
And graceful porches lead along the square:
Here oft my course I bend, when lo! from far
I spy the furies of the foot-ball war:
The 'prentice quits his shop, to join the crew,
Increasing crowds the flying game pursue.
Thus, as you roll the ball o'er snowy ground,
The gathering globe augments with every round.
But whither shall I run? the throng draws nigh,
The ball now skims the street, now soars on high;
The dexterous glazier strong returns the bound,
And jingling sashes on the pent-house sound.

. . . . . .

## Book III

OF WALKING THE STREETS BY NIGHT

O Trivia, Goddess, leave these low abodes,
And traverse o'er the wide ethereal roads,
Celestial Queen, put on thy robes of light,
Now Cynthia [2] named, fair regent of the night.
At sight of thee the villain sheaths his sword,
Nor scales the wall, to steal the wealthy hoard.
O may thy silver lamp from heaven's high bower
Direct my footsteps in the midnight hour!

. . . . . .

*Of Pick-Pockets*

Where the mob gathers, swiftly shoot along,
Nor idly mingle in the noisy throng.
Lured by the silver hilt, amid the swarm,
The subtil artist will thy side disarm.

1 Inigo Jones (1573–1652), the famous architect.
2 Diana as the Moon.

Nor is thy flaxen wig with safety worn;
High on the shoulder, in a basket born,
Lurks the sly boy; whose hand to rapine bred,
Plucks off the curling honors of thy head.
Here dives the skulking thief with practised slight,
And unfelt fingers make thy pocket light.
Where's now thy watch, with all its trinkets, flown?
And thy late snuff-box is no more thy own.
But lo! his bolder theft some tradesman spies,
Swift from his prey the scudding lurcher[1] flies;
Dexterous he 'scapes the coach with nimble bounds,
Whilst every honest tongue "stop thief" resounds.
So speeds the wily fox, alarmed by fear,
Who lately filched the turkey's callow care;
Hounds following hounds grow louder as he flies,
And injured tenants join the hunter's cries.
Breathless he stumbling falls: Ill-fated boy!
Why did not honest work thy youth employ?
Seized by rough hands, he's dragged amid the rout,
And stretched beneath the pump's incessant spout:
Or plunged in miry ponds, he gasping lies,
Mud chokes his mouth, and plasters o'er his eyes.

. . . . . .

*Of Crossing the Street*

If wheels bar up the road, where streets are crost,
With gentle words the coachman's ear accost:
He ne'er the threat, or harsh command obeys,
But with contempt the spattered shoe surveys.
Now man with utmost fortitude thy soul,
To cross the way where carts and coaches roll;
Yet do not in thy hardy skill confide,
Nor rashly risk the kennel's[2] spacious stride;
Stay till afar the distant wheel you hear,
Like dying thunder in the breaking air;
Thy foot will slide upon the miry stone,
And passing coaches crush thy tortured bone,
Or wheels enclose the road; on either hand
Pent round with perils, in the midst you stand,
And call for aid in vain; the coachman swears,
And car-men drive, unmindful of thy prayers.

1 thief. 2 gutter.

Where wilt thou turn? ah! whither wilt thou fly?
On every side the pressing spokes are nigh.
So sailors, while Carybdis' gulf they shun,
Amazed, on Scylla's craggy dangers run.

. . . . . .

*Of Watchmen*

Yet there are watchmen, who with friendly light
Will teach thy reeling steps to tread aright;
For sixpence will support thy helpless arm,
And home conduct thee, safe from nightly harm;
But if they shake their lanthorns, from afar
To call their brethren to confederate war
When rakes resist their power; if hapless you
Should chance to wander with the scouring[1] crew;
Though fortune yield thee captive, ne'er despair,
But seek the constable's considerate ear;
He will reverse the watchman's harsh decree,
Moved by the rhetoric of a silver fee.
Thus would you gain some favorite courtier's word;
Fee not the petty clerks, but bribe my Lord.

. . . . . .

## SWEET WILLIAM'S FAREWELL TO BLACK-EYED SUSAN

A BALLAD

1

All in the Downs[2] the fleet was moored,
The streamers waving in the wind,
When black-eyed Susan came aboard.
"Oh! where shall I my true love find!
Tell me, ye jovial sailors, tell me true,
If my sweet William sails among the crew."

2

William, who high upon the yard,
Rocked with the billow to and fro,
Soon as her well-known voice he heard,
He sighed and cast his eyes below:
The cord slides swiftly through his glowing hands,
And (quick as lightning), on the deck he stands.

3

So the sweet lark, high-poised in air,
Shuts close his pinions to his breast,
(If, chance, his mate's shrill call he hear)

1 roistering. 2 A roadstead off the coast of Kent.

And drops at once into her nest.
The noblest captain in the British fleet,
Might envy William's lip those kisses sweet.

4

"O Susan, Susan, lovely dear,
My vows shall ever true remain;
Let me kiss off that falling tear,
We only part to meet again.
Change, as ye list, ye winds; my heart shall be
The faithful compass that still points to thee.

5

"Believe not what the landmen say,
Who tempt with doubts thy constant mind:
They'll tell thee, sailors, when away,
In every port a mistress find.
Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee so,
For thou art present wheresoe'er I go.

6

"If to far India's coast we sail,
Thy eyes are seen in diamonds bright,
Thy breath is Africk's spicy gale,
Thy skin is ivory, so white.
Thus every beauteous object that I view,
Wakes in my soul some charm of lovely Sue.

7

"Though battle call me from thy arms,
Let not my pretty Susan mourn;
Though cannons roar, yet safe from harms,
William shall to his Dear return.
Love turns aside the balls that round me fly,
Lest precious tears should drop from Susan's eye."

8

The boatswain gave the dreadful word,
The sails their swelling bosom spread,
No longer must she stay aboard:
They kissed, she sighed, he hung his head;
Her lessening boat, unwilling rows to land:
Adieu, she cries! and waved her lily hand.

Publ. 1720.

## FABLES

1727

### THE MONKEY WHO HAD SEEN THE WORLD[1]

A Monkey, to reform the times,
Resolved to visit foreign climes;
For men in distant regions roam
To bring politer manners home:
So forth he fares, all toil defies;
Misfortune serves to make us wise.
At length the treacherous snare was laid,
Poor Pug was caught, to town conveyed,
There sold; (How envied was his doom,
Made captive in a lady's room!)
Proud as a lover of his chains,
He day by day her favor gains.
Whene'er the duty of the day,
The toilette calls; with mimic play
He twirls her knots, he cracks her fan,
Like any other gentleman.
In visits too his parts and wit,
When jests grew dull, were sure to hit.
Proud with applause, he thought his mind
In every courtly art refined,
Like Orpheus burned with public zeal,
To civilize the monkey weal;
So watched occasion, broke his chain,
And sought his native woods again.
The hairy sylvans round him press,
Astonished at his strut and dress,
Some praise his sleeve, and others gloat
Upon his rich embroidered coat,
His dapper periwig commending
With the black tail behind depending,
His powdered back, above, below,
Like hoary frosts, or fleecy snow;
But all, with envy and desire,
His fluttering shoulder-knot admire.
"Hear and improve," he pertly cries,
"I come to make a nation wise;
Weigh your own worth; support your place,
The next in rank to human race.
In cities long I passed my days,
Conversed with men, and learnt their ways:
Their dress, their courtly manners see;
Reform your state, and copy me.
Seek ye to thrive? In flattery deal,
Your scorn, your hate, with that conceal;
Seem only to regard your friends,
But use them for your private ends,
Stint not to truth the flow of wit,
Be prompt to lie, whene'er 'tis fit;
Bend all your force to spatter merit;
Scandal is conversation's spirit;
Boldly to every thing pretend,
And men your talents shall commend;
I knew the Great. Observe me right,
So shall you grow like man polite."
He spoke and bowed. With muttering jaws
The wondering circle grinned applause.
Now, warm with malice, envy, spite,
Their most obliging friends they bite,

[1] Fable XIV, First Series.

nd fond to copy human ways,
ractise new mischiefs all their days.

Thus the dull lad, too tall for school,
/ith travel finishes the fool,
tudious of every coxcomb's airs,
e drinks, games, dresses, whores, and swears,
'erlooks with scorn all virtuous arts,
or vice is fitted to his parts.

## THE FOX AT THE POINT OF DEATH [1]

Fox, in life's extreme decay,
/eak, sick and faint, expiring lay;
ll appetite had left his maw,
nd age disarmed his mumbling jaw.
is numerous race around him stand
o learn their dying sire's command;
e raised his head with whining moan,
nd thus was heard the feeble tone.
"Ah sons, from evil ways depart,
y crimes lie heavy on my heart.
e, see, the murdered geese appear!
hy are those bleeding turkeys there?
hy all around this cackling train,
ho haunt my ears for chicken slain?"
The hungry foxes round them stared,
nd for the promised feast prepared.
"Where, Sir, is all this dainty cheer?
or turkey, goose, nor hen is here:
hese are the phantoms of your brain,
nd your sons lick their lips in vain."
"O gluttons," says the drooping sire,
Restrain inordinate desire;
our liquorish [2] taste you shall deplore,
hen peace of conscience is no more.
oes not the hound betray our pace,
nd gins and guns destroy our race?
hieves dread the searching eye of power,
nd never feel the quiet hour.
d-age, (which few of us shall know,)
ow puts a period to my woe.
ould you true happiness attain,
t honesty your passions rein;
o live in credit and esteem,
nd, the good name you lost, redeem."
"The counsel's good," a fox replies,
Could I perform what you advise.
hink, what our ancestors have done;
line of thieves from son to son;
o us descends the long disgrace,
nd infamy hath marked our race.
hough we, like harmless sheep, should feed,
onest in thought, in word, and deed,
hatever hen-roost is decreased,
e shall be thought to share the feast.
The change shall never be believed,
A lost good name is ne'er retrieved."
"Nay then," replies the feeble Fox,
"(But, hark! I hear a hen that clocks)
Go, but be moderate in your food;
A chicken too might do me good."

1 Fable XXIX, First Series. 2 luxurious.

## THE HARE AND MANY FRIENDS [1]

Friendship, like love, is but a name,
Unless to one you stint the flame,
The child, whom many fathers share,
Hath seldom known a father's care;
'Tis thus in friendships; who depend
On many, rarely find a friend.
A Hare, who, in a civil way,
Complied with every thing, like Gay,
Was known by all the bestial train,
Who haunt the wood, or graze the plain:
Her care was, never to offend,
And every creature was her friend.
As forth she went at early dawn
To taste the dew-besprinkled lawn,
Behind she hears the hunter's cries,
And from the deep-mouthed thunder flies;
She starts, she stops, she pants for breath,
She hears the near advance of death,
She doubles, to mis-lead the hound,
And measures back her mazy round;
'Till, faining in the public way,
Half dead with fear she gasping lay.
What transport in her bosom grew,
When first the horse appeared in view!
"Let me," says she, "your back ascend,
And owe my safety to a friend,
You know my feet betray my flight,
To friendship every burthen's light."
The horse replied, "poor honest puss,
It grieves my heart to see thee thus;
Be comforted, relief is near;
For all your friends are in the rear."
She next the stately bull implored;
And thus replied the mighty lord:
"Since every beast alive can tell
That I sincerely wish you well,
I may, without offence, pretend
To take the freedom of a friend;
Love calls me hence; a favorite cow
Expects me near yon barley mow:
And when a lady's in the case,
You know, all other things give place.
To leave you thus might seem unkind;
But see, the goat is just behind."
The goat remarked her pulse was high,
Her languid head, her heavy eye;
"My back," says he, "may do you harm;
The sheep's at hand, and wool is warm."

1 Fable L, First Series.

The sheep was feeble, and complained,
His sides a load of wool sustained,
Said he was slow, confessed his fears;
For hounds eat sheep as well as hares.
She now the trotting calf addressed,
To save from death a friend distressed.
"Shall I," says he, "of tender age,
In this important care engage?
Older and abler passed you by;
How strong are those! how weak am I!
Should I presume to bear you hence,
Those friends of mine may take offence.
Excuse me then. You know my heart.
But dearest friends, alas, must part!
How shall we all lament! Adieu.
For see the hounds are just in view."

## OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY

(From *Beggar's Opera*, Act I, Scene XII)

*Macheath.* Were I laid on Greenland's coast,
And in my arms embraced my lass;
Warm amidst eternal frost,
Too soon the half year's night would pass.
*Polly.* Were I sold on Indian soil,
Soon as the burning day was closed,
I could mock the sultry toil,
When on my charmer's breast reposed.
*Macheath.* And I would love you all the day,
*Polly.* Every night would kiss and play,
*Macheath.* If with me you'd fondly stray
*Polly.* Over the hills and far away.

1728.

## YOUTH'S THE SEASON

(From *Beggar's Opera*, Act II, Scene IV)

Youth's the season made for joys,
Love is then our duty;
She alone who that employs,
Well deserves her beauty.
Let's be gay,
While we may,
Beauty's a flower despised in decay.
*Chorus.* Youth's the season, etc.

Let us drink and sport to-day,
Ours is not to-morrow.
Love with youth flies swift away,
Age is nought but sorrow.
Dance and sing,
Time's on the wing,
Life never knows the return of spring.
*Chorus.* Let us drink, etc.

1728.

## COME, SWEET LASS

(From *Beggar's Opera*, Act III, Scene VIII)

Come, sweet lass,
Let's banish sorrow
'Till to-morrow;
Come, sweet lass,
Let's take a chirping [1] glass.
Wine can clear
The vapors of despair;
And make us light as air;
Then drink, and banish care.

1728.

## LOVE'S RESORT

(From *Acis and Galatea*, Act I)

Love in her eyes sits playing,
And sheds delicious death;
Love in her lips sits straying,
And warbling in her breath.
Love on her breast sits panting,
And swells with soft desire,
No grace, no charm is wanting,
To set the heart on fire.
Love in, etc.

Publ. 1732.

## GALATEA

(From *Acis and Galatea*, Act II)

O ruddier than the cherry,
O sweeter than the berry,
O nymph more bright
Than moonshine night,
Like kidlings blithe and merry.
Ripe as the melting cluster,
No lily has such lustre,
Yet hard to tame,
As raging flame,
And fierce as storms that bluster.
O ruddier, etc.

Publ. 1732.

## WOMAN'S CHIEFEST DUTY

(From *Achilles*, Act III, Scene VIII)

Think of dress in every light;
'Tis woman's chiefest duty;
Neglecting that, our selves we slight
And undervalue beauty.
That allures the lover's eye,
And graces every action;
Besides, when not a creature's by,
'Tis inward satisfaction.

Publ. 1733.

1 merry.

# JAMES THOMSON (1700–1748)

James Thomson was a Scotchman, born in September, 1700, at Ednam in the county of Roxburgh, where his father was minister of the parish. His boyhood was spent at Southdean in the same Scottish county, whither his father moved two months after his birth. There he had about him the beautiful natural scenery of the Cheviots; and these surroundings of his early years may help to explain the fact that he became a poet of landscape. At the age of fifteen he entered the university at Edinburgh by way of preparation for the ministry of the Presbyterian Kirk. But he never entered the ministry. His university course finished, he suddenly decided to try his fortunes in London as a poet. Thither he journeyed in the early months of 1725. A year later he published *Winter*, the first installment of *The Seasons*, which was an immediate success, and established him at once as a recognized poet. By 1730 he had completed *The Seasons*. With less success, he tried his hand at tragedies and at a didactic epic poem, *Liberty*. The later years of his life, which were marked with a growing indolence of character, were spent in a pleasant suburban house in Richmond, where among other friends he entertained the poet Pope, who greatly admired *The Seasons*. Here was written *The Castle of Indolence*, a playful fantasy in the Spenserian stanza and abounding in passages of exquisite description, which was published in 1748, shortly before his death.

*The Seasons*, which in the final edition of 1746 extends to the very considerable length of 5541 lines, is an original and epoch-making work in that never before had any poet, ancient or modern, devoted a poem of anything like such length primarily to the description of natural scenery. Written while Pope was at the height of his power, it deals with a subject matter very different from his; it is bucolic rather than urban, descriptive of the rural countryside and its inhabitants as the succeeding seasons change the face of nature and the occupations of men. It is written not in the heroic couplet of Pope, but in a blank verse avowedly imitated from that of Milton, and in a poetic style which, unlike that of Pope, abounds in the Latinisms and "elevated" diction of *Paradise Lost*. But if epoch-making, it was in no sense revolutionary. It was read with eager delight by the same generation of readers who bought and admired the poems of Pope, and by Pope himself, who gave to the younger poet the most generous encouragement. Though its sweeping panorama of natural scenery includes wild romantic mountains as well as more peaceful rural scenes, and extends from the rugged regions of Lapland to the burning suns of the tropics, it is not in its temper romantic. It is in all essentials in full accord with the spirit of neo-classical poetry. With the eye of a great painter, Thomson sees the forms and glowing colors of external nature, and poetically records them with perfect fidelity to truth. He is completely objective, never interposing his own personality between the reader and the scene described, never touching that note of mystic yearning which is so characteristic of Wordsworth. Though his scenes abound in concrete detail, his description has that universal appeal on which neo-classical criticism insists; an American who has never visited Great Britain has no difficulty in realizing his landscapes. But the subject of *The Seasons* made the poem a popular one with the poets of the early nineteenth century, who found little to admire in Pope; and Thomson was accordingly hailed as a "precursor" of the Romantic Movement. If Thomson is "romantic," it is as the poet of *The Castle of Indolence* rather than of *The Seasons*.

A good life of Thomson is that of G. C. Macaulay in the English Men of Letters series, which contains also a sound and discriminating criticism of his poetry. The best edition of his poems is that of J. Logie Robertson in the Oxford Edition of Standard Authors (Oxford University Press).

## THE SEASONS

### WINTER (lines 1–321)

First published, 1726. The following selection is from the much expanded text of the final edition of the *Seasons*, 1746.

The subject proposed. Address to the Earl of Wilmington. First approach of Winter. According to the natural course of the season, various storms described. Rain. Wind. Snow. The driving of the snows: a man perishing among them; whence reflections on the wants and miseries of human life. The wolves descending from the Alps and Apennines. A winter evening described; as spent by philosophers; by the country people; in the city. Frost. A view of Winter within the polar circle. A thaw. The whole concluding with moral reflections on a future state.

See, Winter comes, to rule the varied year,
Sullen and sad, with all his rising train —
Vapors, and clouds, and storms. Be these my theme,
These, that exalt the soul to solemn thought,
And heavenly musing. Welcome, kindred glooms!
Congenial horrors, hail! with frequent foot,
Pleased have I, in my cheerful morn of life,
When nursed by careless solitude I lived,
And sung of Nature with unceasing joy,
Pleased have I wandered through your rough domain;
Trod the pure virgin-snows, myself as pure;
Heard the winds roar, and the big torrent burst;
Or seen the deep-fermenting tempest brewed,

In the grim evening-sky. Thus passed the time,
Till through the lucid chambers of the south
Looked out the joyous Spring, looked out, and smiled.
To thee, the patron of this first essay,
The Muse, O Wilmington! renews her song.
Since has she rounded the revolving year:
Skimmed the gay Spring; on eagle-pinions borne,
Attempted through the Summer-blaze to rise;
Then swept o'er Autumn with the shadowy gale;
And now among the Wintry clouds again,
Rolled in the doubling storm, she tries to soar;
To swell her note with all the rushing winds;
To suit her sounding cadence to the floods;
As is her theme, her numbers wildly great:
Thrice happy, could she fill thy judging ear
With bold description, and with manly thought.
Nor art thou skilled in awful schemes alone,
And how to make a mighty people thrive;
But equal goodness, sound integrity,
A firm, unshaken, uncorrupted soul
Amid a sliding age, and burning strong,
Not vainly blazing, for thy country's weal,
A steady spirit, regularly free —
These, each exalting each, the statesman's light
Into the patriot; these, the public hope
And eye to thee converting, bid the Muse
Record what envy dares not flattery call.
Now when the cheerless empire of the sky
To Capricorn the Centaur-Archer yields,
And fierce Aquarius stains the inverted year;[1]
Hung o'er the farthest verge of heaven, the sun
Scarce spreads o'er ether the dejected day.
Faint are his gleams, and ineffectual shoot
His struggling rays, in horizontal lines,
Through the thick air; as clothed in cloudy storm,
Weak, wan, and broad, he skirts the southern sky;
And, soon descending, to the long dark night,
Wide-shading all, the prostrate world resigns.

Nor is the night unwished; while vital heat
Light, life, and joy the dubious day forsake.
Meantime, in sable cincture, shadows vast,
Deep tinged and damp, and congregated clouds,
And all the vapory turbulence of heaven,
Involve the face of things. Thus Winter falls,
A heavy gloom oppressive o'er the world,
Through Nature shedding influence malign,
And rouses up the seeds of dark disease.
The soul of man dies in him, loathing life,
And black with more than melancholy views.
The cattle droop; and o'er the furrowed land,
Fresh from the plough, the dun discolored flocks,
Untended spreading, crop the wholesome root.
Along the woods, along the moorish fens,
Sighs the sad genius of the coming storm;
And up among the loose disjointed cliffs,
And fractured mountains wild, the brawling brook,
And cave, presageful, send a hollow moan,
Resounding long in listening fancy's ear.
Then comes the father of the tempest forth,
Wrapt in black glooms. First, joyless rains obscure
Drive through the mingling skies with vapor foul,
Dash on the mountain's brow, and shake the woods,
That grumbling wave below. The unsightly plain
Lies a brown deluge; as the low-bent clouds
Pour flood on flood, yet unexhausted still
Combine, and deepening into night, shut up
The day's fair face. The wanderers of heaven,
Each to his home, retire; save those that love
To take their pastime in the troubled air,
Or skimming flutter round the dimply pool.
The cattle from the untasted fields return,
And ask, with meaning low, their wonted stalls,
Or ruminate in the contiguous shade.
Thither the household feathery people crowd,
The crested cock, with all his female train,
Pensive, and dripping; while the cottage-hind
Hangs o'er th' enlivening blaze, and taleful there
Recounts his simple frolic: much he talks,
And much he laughs, nor recks the storm that blows

[1] The Sun leaves the sign of Sagittarius ("the Centaur-Archer") and enters the sign of Capricorn on December 21; a month later it enters the sign of Aquarius.

ithout, and rattles on his humble roof.
Wide o'er the brim, with many a torrent swelled,
nd the mixed ruin of its banks o'erspread,
last the roused-up river pours along:
esistless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes,
om the rude mountain and the mossy wild,
umbling through rocks abrupt, and sounding far;
nen o'er the sanded valley floating spreads,
alm, sluggish, silent; till again, constrained
etween two meeting hills, it bursts away,
here rocks and woods o'erhang the turbid stream;
nere gathering triple force, rapid and deep,
boils, and wheels, and foams, and thunders through.
Nature! great parent! whose unceasing hand
olls round the seasons of the changeful year,
ow mighty, how majestic, are thy works!
ith what a pleasing dread they swell the soul,
hat sees astonished! and astonished sings!
e too, ye winds! that now begin to blow
ith boisterous sweep, I raise my voice to you.
here are your stores, ye powerful beings! say,
here your aerial magazines reserved,
o swell the brooding terrors of the storm?
n what far-distant region of the sky,
ushed in deep silence, sleep ye when 'tis calm?
When from the pallid sky the Sun descends,
ith many a spot, that o'er his glaring orb
ncertain wanders, stained; red fiery streaks
egin to flush around. The reeling clouds
tagger with dizzy poise, as doubting yet
hich master to obey; while, rising slow,
lank in the leaden-colored east, the moon
ears a wan circle round her blunted horns.
een through the turbid, fluctuating air,
he stars obtuse emit a shivering ray;
r frequent seem to shoot athwart the gloom,
nd long behind them trail the whitening blaze.
natched in short eddies, plays the withered leaf;
nd on the flood the dancing feather floats.
ith broadened nostrils to the sky upturned,
he conscious heifer snuffs the stormy gale.
'en as the matron, at her nightly task,
ith pensive labor draws the flaxen thread,
he wasted taper and the crackling flame
Foretell the blast. But chief the plumy race,
The tenants of the sky, its changes speak.
Retiring from the downs, where all day long
They picked their scanty fare, a blackening train
Of clamorous rooks thick-urge their weary flight,
And seek the closing shelter of the grove;
Assiduous, in his bower, the wailing owl
Plies his sad song. The cormorant on high
Wheels from the deep, and screams along the land.
Loud shrieks the soaring hern; and with wild wing
The circling sea-fowl cleave the flaky clouds.
Ocean, unequal pressed, with broken tide
And blind commotion heaves; while from the shore,
Eat into caverns by the restless wave,
And forest-rustling mountains, comes a voice
That, solemn sounding, bids the world prepare.
Then issues forth the storm with sudden burst,
And hurls the whole precipitated air
Down in a torrent. On the passive main
Descends the ethereal force, and with strong gust
Turns from its bottom the discolored deep.
Through the black night that sits immense around,
Lashed into foam, the fierce conflicting brine
Seems o'er a thousand raging waves to burn:
Meantime the mountain-billows, to the clouds
In dreadful tumult swelled, surge above surge,
Burst into chaos with tremendous roar,
And anchored navies from their stations drive,
Wild as the winds, across the howling waste
Of mighty waters: now the inflated wave
Straining they scale, and now impetuous shoot
Into the secret chambers of the deep,
The wintry Baltic thundering o'er their head.
Emerging thence again, before the breath
Of full-exerted heaven they wing their course,
And dart on distant coasts — if some sharp rock,
Or shoal insidious, break not their career,
And in loose fragments fling them floating round.

Nor less at hand the loosened tempest reigns:
The mountain thunders; and its sturdy sons
Stoop to the bottom of the rocks they shade.
Lone on the midnight steep, and all aghast,
The dark wayfaring stranger breathless toils,
And, often falling, climbs against the blast.
Low waves the rooted forest, vexed, and sheds
What of its tarnished honors yet remain —
Dashed down, and scattered by the tearing wind's
Assiduous fury, its gigantic limbs.
Thus struggling through the dissipated grove,
The whirling tempest raves along the plain;
And, on the cottage thatched, or lordly roof,
Keen-fastening, shakes them to the solid base,
Sleep frighted flies; and round the rocking dome,
For entrance eager, howls the savage blast.
Then too, they say, through all the burthened air,
Long groans are heard, shrill sounds, and distant sighs,
That uttered by the demon of the night,
Warned the devoted[1] wretch of woe and death.
Huge uproar lords it wide. The clouds commixed
With stars swift-gliding, sweep along the sky.
All Nature reels: till Nature's King, who oft
Amid tempestuous darkness dwells alone,
And on the wings of the careering wind
Walks dreadfully serene, commands a calm:
Then straight air, sea, and earth, are hushed at once.
As yet 'tis midnight deep. The weary clouds,
Slow-meeting, mingle into solid gloom.
Now, while the drowsy world lies lost in sleep,
Let me associate with the serious Night,
And Contemplation, her sedate compeer;
Let me shake off the intrusive cares of day,
And lay the meddling senses all aside.
Where now, ye lying vanities of life!
Ye ever-tempting, ever-cheating train!
Where are you now? and what is your amount?
Vexation, disappointment, and remorse.
Sad, sickening thought! And yet, deluded man,
A scene of crude disjointed visions past,

[1] doomed.

And broken slumbers, rises still resolved,
With new-flushed hopes, to run the gidd round.
Father of light and life! thou Good Su preme!
O teach me what is good! teach me Thyself
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit; and feed my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtu pure —
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!
The keener tempests come: and fumin dun
From all the livid east, or piercing north,
Thick clouds ascend: in whose capaciou womb
A vapory deluge lies, to snow congealed.
Heavy they roll their fleecy world along;
And the sky saddens with the gathere storm.
Through the hushed air the whitenin shower descends,
At first thin-wavering; till at last th flakes
Fall broad and wide and fast, dimming th day,
With a continual flow. The cherished field
Put on their winter-robe of purest white.
'Tis brightness all; save where the new snow melts
Along the mazy current. Low the woods
Bow their hoar head; and, ere the languid sun
Faint from the west emits his evening ray,
Earth's universal face, deep-hid, and chill,
Is one wild dazzling waste, that buries wid
The works of man. Drooping, the laborer ox
Stands covered o'er with snow, and the demands
The fruit of all his toil. The fowls of heaven
Tamed by the cruel season, crowd around
The winnowing store, and claim the littl boon
Which Providence assigns them. On alone,
The redbreast, sacred to the household gods
Wisely regardful of the embroiling sky,
In joyless fields, and thorny thickets, leave
His shivering mates, and pays to trusted ma
His annual visit. Half afraid, he first
Against the window beats; then brisk alight
On the warm hearth; then, hopping o'er th floor,
Eyes all the smiling family askance,
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is —
Till, more familiar grown, the table-crumbs

ttract his slender feet. The foodless wilds
our forth their brown inhabitants. The hare,
hough timorous of heart, and hard beset
y death in various forms, dark snares, and dogs,
nd more unpitying men, the garden seeks,
rged on by fearless want. The bleating kind
ye the bleak heaven, and next the glistening earth,
ith looks of dumb despair; then, sad dispersed,
ig for the withered herb through heaps of snow.
Now, shepherds, to your helpless charge be kind:
affle the raging year, and fill their pens
ith food at will; lodge them below the storm,
nd watch them strict; for from the bellowing east,
n this dire season, oft the whirlwind's wing
weeps up the burden of whole wintry plains
n one wide waft, and o'er the hapless flocks,
id in the hollow of two neighboring hills,
he billowy tempest whelms; till, upward urged,
he valley to a shining mountain swells,
ipped with a wreath high-curling in the sky.
As thus the snows arise, and, foul and fierce,
ll Winter drives along the darkened air,
n his own loose-revolving fields, the swain
isastered stands: sees other hills ascend,
f unknown joyless brow; and other scenes,
f horrid prospect, shag the trackless plain:
or finds the river nor the forest, hid
eneath the formless wild: but wanders on
rom hill to dale, still more and more astray —
mpatient flouncing through the drifted heaps,
tung with the thoughts of home; the thoughts of home
ush on his nerves, and call their vigor forth
n many a vain attempt. How sinks his soul!
hat black despair, what horror fills his heart,
hen, for the dusky spot which fancy feigned
His tufted cottage rising through the snow,
He meets the roughness of the middle waste,
Far from the track and blest abode of man;
While round him night resistless closes fast,
And every tempest, howling o'er his head,
Renders the savage wilderness more wild.
Then throng the busy shapes into his mind,
Of covered pits, unfathomably deep,
A dire descent! beyond the power of frost;
Of faithless bogs; of precipices huge,
Smoothed up with snow; and, what is land, unknown,
What water, of the still unfrozen spring,
In the loose marsh or solitary lake,
Where the fresh fountain from the bottom boils.
These check his fearful steps; and down he sinks
Beneath the shelter of the shapeless drift,
Thinking o'er all the bitterness of death,
Mixed with the tender anguish nature shoots
Through the wrung bosom of the dying man —
His wife, his children, and his friends unseen.
In vain for him the officious wife prepares
The fire fair-blazing, and the vestment warm;
In vain his little children, peeping out
Into the mingling storm, demand their sire,
With tears of artless innocence. Alas!
Nor wife, nor children, more shall he behold;
Nor friends, nor sacred home. On every nerve
The deadly Winter seizes, shuts up sense,
And, o'er his inmost vitals creeping cold,
Lays him along the snows, a stiffened corse!
Stretched out and bleaching in the northern blast.

## RULE, BRITANNIA

From the last scene of *Alfred: a Masque*, published 1740 and written in collaboration with David Mallet.

When Britain first, at Heaven's command,
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of the land,
And guardian angels sang this strain:
Rule, Britannia, Britannia rules the waves!
Britons never will be slaves!

The nations not so blest as thee,
Must in their turns to tyrants fall,
Whilst thou shalt flourish great and free,

The dread and envy of them all.
Rule, Britannia, etc.

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
More dreadful from each foreign stroke;
As the loud blast that tears the skies
Serves but to root thy native oak.
Rule, Britannia, etc.

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame;
And their attempts to bend thee down
Will but arouse thy generous flame,
But work their woe and thy renown.
Rule, Britannia, etc.

To thee belongs the rural reign;
Thy cities shall with commerce shine;
All thine shall be the subject main,
And every shore it circles thine.
Rule, Britannia, etc.

The Muses, still with freedom found,
Shall to thy happy coast repair;
Blest isle, with matchless beauty crowned,
And manly hearts to guard the fair!
Rule, Britannia, Britannia rules the waves;
Britons never will be slaves.

## THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE

*The Castle of Indolence*, in two cantos, was published in 1748, the year of Thomson's death. Unlike most poetry of the eighteenth century, it moves not in the world of actuality, but in a region of playfully romantic fantasy. It is written in the Spenserian stanza, and in a diction which echoes that of Spenser; and is one of the finest examples of the "Spenserian revival" which marks the poetry of the mid-eighteenth century, and which culminates in Byron's *Childe Harold*. Its quality of unreality made it less popular than *The Seasons* with contemporary readers, but recommended it strongly to the romantic poets of a later generation.

### CANTO I

*The Castle hight of Indolence,*
*And its false luxury,*
*Where for a little time, alas!*
*We lived right jollily.*

1

O mortal man! who livest here by toil,
Do not complain of this thy hard estate;
That like an emmet thou must ever moil,
Is a sad sentence of an ancient date:
And, certes, there is for it reason great;
For though sometimes it makes thee weep and wail,
And curse thy stars, and early drudge, and late,
Withouten that would come an heavier bale,
Loose life, unruly passions, and diseases pal

2

In lowly dale, fast by a river's side,
With woody hill o'er hill encompassed roun
A most enchanting wizard did abide,
Than whom a fiend more fell is nowhe
found.
It was, I ween, a lovely spot of ground;
And there a season atween June and May,
Half prankt with spring, with summer ha
embrowned,
A listless climate made, where, sooth to sa
No living wight could work, ne cared eve
for play.

3

Was nought around but images of rest:
Sleep-soothing groves, and quiet lawns b
tween;
And flowery beds that slumberous influen
kest [1]
From poppies breathed; and beds of pleasa
green,
Where never yet was creeping creature see
Meantime unnumbered glittering streamle
played,
And hurlèd everywhere their waters sheen
That, as they bickered through the sun
glade,
Though restless still themselves, a lulli
murmur made.

4

Joined to the prattle of the purling rills,
Were heard the lowing herds along t
vale,
And flocks loud-bleating from the dista
hills,
And vacant shepherds piping in the dale;
And now and then sweet Philomel [2] wou
wail,
Or stock-doves plain amid the forest deep
That drowsy rustled to the sighing gale;
And still a coil the grasshopper did keep;
Yet all these sounds yblent inclined all
sleep.

5

Full in the passage of the vale, above,
A sable, silent, solemn, forest stood,
Where nought but shadowy forms were se
to move,

1 cast. 2 the nightingale.

As Idless fancied in her dreaming mood;
And up the hills, on either side, a wood
Of blackening pines, ay waving to and fro,
Sent forth a sleepy horror through the blood;
And where this valley winded out, below,
The murmuring main was heard, and scarcely heard to flow.

6

A pleasing land of drowsyhed it was,
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye,
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
For ever flushing round a summer sky;
There eke the soft delights, that witchingly
Instil a wanton sweetness through the breast,
And the calm pleasures, always hovered nigh;
But whate'er smacked of noyance, or unrest,
Was far, far off expelled from this delicious nest.

7

The landskip such, inspiring perfect ease,
Where INDOLENCE (for so the wizard hight)
Close hid his Castle mid embowering trees,
That half shut out the beams of Phœbus bright,
And made a kind of checkered day and night;
Meanwhile, unceasing at the massy gate,
Beneath a spacious palm, the wicked wight
Was placed, and to his lute, of cruel fate,
And labor harsh, complained, lamenting man's estate.

8

Thither continual pilgrims crowded still,
From all the roads of earth that pass there by;
For as they chaunced to breathe on neighboring hill,
The freshness of this valley smote their eye,
And drew them ever and anon more nigh;
Till clustering round the enchanter false they hung,
Ymolten with his syren melody,
While o'er the enfeebling lute his hand he flung,
And to the trembling chords these tempting verses sung: —

9

"Behold! ye pilgrims of this earth, behold!
See all but man with unearned pleasure gay;
See her bright robes the butterfly unfold,
Broke from her wintry tomb in prime of May.
What youthful bride can equal her array!
Who can with her for easy pleasure vie?
From mead to mead with gentle wing to stray,
From flower to flower on balmy gales to fly,
Is all she has to do beneath the radiant sky.

10

"Behold the merry minstrels of the morn,
The swarming songsters of the careless grove,
Ten thousand throats that, from the flowering thorn,
Hymn their good God, and carol sweet of love,
Such grateful kindly raptures them emove:
They neither plough nor sow; ne, fit for flail,
E'er to the barn the nodding sheaves they drove;
Yet theirs each harvest dancing in the gale,
Whatever crowns the hill, or smiles along the vale.

11

"Outcast of Nature, man! the wretched thrall
Of bitter-dropping sweat, of sweltry pain,
Of cares that eat away thy heart with gall,
And of the vices an inhuman train,
That all proceed from savage thirst of gain;
For when hard-hearted Interest first began
To poison earth, Astræa left the plain;
Guile, Violence, and Murder, seized on man,
And for soft milky streams, with blood the rivers ran.

12

"Come, ye, who still the cumbrous load of life
Push hard up hill; but as the farthest steep
You trust to gain, and put an end to strife,
Down thunders back the stone with mighty sweep,
And hurls your labors to the valley deep,
Forever vain; come, and withouten fee
I in oblivion will your sorrows steep,
Your cares, your toils; will steep you in a sea
Of full delight; O come, ye weary wights, to me!

13

"With me you need not rise at early dawn,
To pass the joyless day in various stounds;[1]
Or, louting low, on upstart fortune fawn,
And sell fair honor for some paltry pounds;
Or through the city take your dirty rounds,
To cheat, and dun, and lie, and visit pay,

[1] misfortunes.

Now flattering base, now giving secret wounds.
Or prowl in courts of law for human prey,
In venal senate thieve, or rob on broad highway.

14

"No cocks, with me, to rustic labor call,
From village on to village sounding clear;
To tardy swain no shrill-voiced matrons squall;
No dogs, no babes, no wives, to stun your ear;
No hammers thump; no horrid blacksmith sear,
Ne noisy tradesman your sweet slumbers start
With sounds that are a misery to hear;
But all is calm as would delight the heart
Of Sybarite of old, all nature, and all art.

15

"Here nought but candor reigns, indulgent ease,
Good-natured lounging, sauntering up and down;
They who are pleased themselves must always please;
On other's ways they never squint a frown,
Nor heed what haps in hamlet or in town:
Thus, from the source of tender Indolence,
With milky blood the heart is overflown,
Is soothed and sweetened by the social sense;
For interest, envy, pride, and strife, are banished hence.

16

"What, what is virtue but repose of mind?
A pure ethereal calm, that knows no storm,
Above the reach of wild ambition's wind,
Above those passions that this world deform,
And torture man, a proud malignant worm!
But here, instead, soft gales of passion play,
And gently stir the heart, thereby to form
A quicker sense of joy; as breezes stray
Across th' enlivened skies, and make them still more gay.

17

"The best of men have ever loved repose;
They hate to mingle in the filthy fray,
Where the soul sours, and gradual rancor grows,
Imbittered more from peevish day to day.
Even those whom Fame has lent her fairest ray,
The most renowned of worthy wights of yore,
From a base world at last have stolen away:
So Scipio, to the soft Cumæan shore,
Retiring, tasted joy he never knew before.

18

"But if a little exercise you chuse,
Some zest for ease, 'tis not forbidden here.
Amid the groves you may indulge the muse,[1]
Or tend the blooms, and deck the vernal year;
Or, softly stealing, with your watery gear,
Along the brooks, the crimson-spotted fry
You may delude; the whilst, amused, you hear
Now the hoarse stream, and now the zephyr's sigh,
Attunèd to the birds and woodland melody.

19

"O grievous folly! to heap up estate,
Losing the days you see beneath the sun;
When, sudden, comes blind unrelenting Fate,
And gives the untasted portion you have won
With ruthless toil, and many a wretch undone,
To those who mock you gone to Pluto's reign,
There with sad ghosts to pine, and shadows dun;
But sure it is of vanities most vain,
To toil for what you here untoiling may obtain."

20

He ceased; but still their trembling ears retained
The deep vibrations of his witching song,
That, by a kind of magic power, constrained
To enter in, pell-mell, the listening throng,
Heaps poured on heaps, and yet they slipt along,
In silent ease: as when beneath the beam
Of summer moons, the distant woods among,
Or by some flood all silvered with the gleam,
The soft-embodied fays through airy portal stream.

21

By the smooth demon so it ordered was,
And here his baneful bounty first began;
Though some there were who would no further pass,
And his alluring baits suspected han.

1 write poetry.

The wise distrust the too fair-spoken man.
Yet through the gate they cast a wishful eye:
Not to move on, perdie, is all they can;
Or, do their very best, they cannot fly,
But often each way look, and often sorely sigh.

22

When this the watchful wicked wizard saw,
With sudden spring he leaped upon them strait,
And soon as touched by his unhallowed paw,
They found themselves within the cursèd gate,
Full hard to be repassed, like that of Fate.
Not stronger were of old the giant-crew,
Who sought to pull high Jove from regal state;
Though feeble wretch he seemed, of sallow hue,
Certes, who bides his grasp, will that encounter rue.

23

For whomsoe'er the villain takes in hand,
Their joints unknit, their sinews melt apace;
As lithe they grow as any willow-wand,
And of their vanished force remains no trace:
So when a maiden fair, of modest grace,
In all her buxom blooming May of charms,
Is seizèd in some losel's hot embrace,
She waxeth very weakly as she warms,
Then, sighing, yields her up to love's delicious harms.

24

Waked by the crowd, slow from his bench arose
A comely full-spread porter, swoln with sleep;
His calm, broad, thoughtless, aspect breathed repose,
And in sweet torpor he was plungèd deep,
Ne could himself from ceaseless yawning keep;
While o'er his eyes the drowsy liquor ran,
Through which his half-waked soul would faintly peep,
Then taking his black staff, he called his man,
And roused himself as much as rouse himself he can.

25

The lad leaped lightly at his master's call;
He was, to weet, a little roguish page,
Save sleep and play who minded nought at all,
Like most the untaught striplings of his age.
This boy he kept each band to disengage,
Garters and buckles, task for him unfit,
But ill-becoming his grave personage,
And which his portly paunch would not permit,
So this same limber page to all performèd it.

26

Mean time the master-porter wide displayed
Great store of caps, of slippers, and of gowns,
Wherewith he those who entered in arrayed,
Loose as the breeze that plays along the downs,
And waves the summer woods when evening frowns.
O fair undress, best dress! it checks no vein,
But every flowing limb in pleasure drowns,
And heightens ease with grace. This done, right fain
Sir Porter sat him down, and turned to sleep again.

27

Thus easy robed, they to the fountain sped,
That in the middle of the court up-threw
A stream, high-spouting from its liquid bed,
And falling back again in drizzly dew;
There each deep draughts, as deep he thirsted, drew.
It was a fountain of Nepenthe[1] rare,
Whence, as Dan Homer sings, huge pleasaunce grew,
And sweet oblivion of vile earthly care,
Fair gladsome waking thoughts, and joyous dreams more fair.

28

This rite performed, all inly pleased and still,
Withouten trump, was proclamation made: —
"Ye sons of Indolence, do what you will,
And wander where you list, through hall or glade:
Be no man's pleasure for another's staid!
Let each as likes him best his hours employ,
And curst be he who minds his neighbor's trade!
Here dwells kind Ease and unreproving Joy:
He little merits bliss who others can annoy."

1 A drug which brings oblivion to sorrow.

29

Strait of these endless numbers, swarming round
As thick as idle motes in sunny ray,
Not one eftsoons in view was to be found,
But every man strolled off his own glad way.
Wide o'er this ample court's blank area,
With all the lodges that thereto pertained,
No living creature could be seen to stray;
While solitude and perfect silence reigned,
So that to think you dreamt you almost was constrained.

30

As when a shepherd of the Hebrid Isles,
Placed far amid the melancholy main,
(Whether it be lone fancy him beguiles,
Or that aerial beings sometimes deign
To stand embodied to our senses plain)
Sees on the naked hill or valley low,
The whilst in ocean Phœbus dips his wain,
A vast assembly moving to and fro;
Then all at once in air dissolves the wondrous show.

31

Ye gods of quiet, and of sleep profound,
Whose soft dominion o'er this Castle sways,
And all the widely-silent places round,
Forgive me, if my trembling pen displays
What never yet was sung in mortal lays.
But how shall I attempt such arduous string?
I who have spent my nights and nightly days
In this soul-deadening place, loose-loitering —
Ah! how shall I for this uprear my moulted wing?

32

Come on, my muse, nor stoop to low despair,
Thou imp[1] of Jove, touched by celestial fire!
Thou yet shalt sing of war, and actions fair,
Which the bold sons of Britain will inspire;
Of ancient bards thou yet shalt sweep the lyre;
Thou yet shalt tread in tragic pall the stage,
Paint love's enchanting woes, the hero's ire,
The sage's calm, the patriot's noble rage,
Dashing corruption down through every worthless age.

33

The doors, that knew no shrill alarming bell,
Ne cursèd knocker plied by villain's hand,
Self-opened into halls, where who can tell
What elegance and grandeur wide expand,
The pride of Turkey and of Persia land?
Soft quilts on quilts, on carpets carpets spread,
And couches stretched around in seemly band;
And endless pillows rise to prop the head,
So that each spacious room was one full-swelling bed.

34

And everywhere huge covered tables stood,
With wines high-flavored, and rich viands crowned;
Whatever sprightly juice or tasteful food
On the green bosom of this Earth are found,
And all old Ocean genders in his round —
Some hand unseen these silently displayed,
Even undemanded by a sigh or sound;
You need but wish, and, instantly obeyed,
Fair ranged the dishes rose, and thick the glasses played.

35

Here freedom reigned without the least alloy;
Nor gossip's tale, nor ancient maiden's gall,
Nor saintly spleen, durst murmur at our joy,
And with envenomed tongue our pleasures pall.
For why? there was but one great rule for all;
To wit, that each should work his own desire,
And eat, drink, study, sleep, as it may fall,
Or melt the time in love, or wake the lyre,
And carol what, unbid, the Muses might inspire.

36

The rooms with costly tapestry were hung,
Where was inwoven many a gentle tale,
Such as of old the rural poets[1] sung,
Or of Arcadian or Sicilian vale;
Reclining lovers, in the lonely dale,
Poured forth at large the sweetly-tortured heart,
Or, looking tender passion, swelled the gale,
And taught charmed Echo to resound their smart,
While flocks, woods, streams around, repose and peace impart.

1 child.

1 Virgil and Theocritus.

37

Those pleased the most, where, by a cunning hand,
epeinten was the patriarchal age;
/hat time Dan Abraham left the Chaldee land,
nd pastured on from verdant stage to stage,
/here fields and fountains fresh could best engage.
oil was not then. Of nothing they took heed,
ut with wild beasts the silvan war to wage,
nd o'er vast plains their herds and flocks to feed:
lest sons of nature they! true golden age indeed!

38

Sometimes the pencil, in cool airy halls,
ade the gay gloom of vernal landskips rise,
r Autumn's varied shades imbrown the walls:
ow the black tempest strikes the astonished eyes;
ow down the steep the flashing torrent flies;
he trembling sun now plays o'er ocean blue,
nd now rude mountains frown amid the skies;
hate'er Lorrain light-touched with softening hue,
r savage Rosa dashed, or learned Poussin drew.[1]

39

Each sound, too, here to languishment inclined,
ulled the weak bosom, and inducèd ease.
erial music in the warbling wind,
t distance rising oft, by small degrees,
earer and nearer came, till o'er the trees
t hung, and breathed such soul-dissolving airs
s did, alas! with soft perdition please:
ntangled deep in its enchanting snares,
he listening heart forgot all duties and all cares.

40

A certain music, never known before,
lere lulled the pensive melancholy mind;
ull easily obtained. Behooves no more,
ut sidelong to the gently-waving wind,
To lay the well-tuned instrument reclined,
From which, with airy flying fingers light,
Beyond each mortal touch the most refined,
The god of winds drew sounds of deep delight,
Whence, with just cause, *The Harp of Æolus* it hight.

41

Ah me! what hand can touch the string so fine?
Who up the lofty diapason roll
Such sweet, such sad, such solemn airs divine,
Then let them down again into the soul?
Now rising love they fanned; now pleasing dole
They breathed, in tender musings, through the heart;
And now a graver sacred strain they stole,
As when seraphic hands an hymn impart:
Wild warbling Nature all, above the reach of Art.

42

Such the gay splendor, the luxurious state,
Of Caliphs old, who on the Tygris' shore,
In mighty Bagdat, populous and great,
Held their bright court, where was of ladies store;
And verse, love, music still the garland wore;
When sleep was coy, the bard, in waiting there,
Cheered the lone midnight with the muse's lore,
Composing music bade his dreams be fair,
And music lent new gladness to the morning air.

43

Near the pavillions where we slept, still ran
Soft-tinkling streams, and dashing waters fell,
And sobbing breezes sighed, and oft began
(So worked the wizard) wintry storms to swell,
As heaven and earth they would together mell:[1]
At doors and windows, threatening, seemed to call
The demons of the tempest, growling fell;
Yet the least entrance found they none at all;
Whence sweeter grew our sleep, secure in massy hall.

1 Claude Lorraine (1600–1682), Salvator Rosa (1615–73), Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665), famous landscape-painters.

1 mingle.

44

And hither Morpheus sent his kindest dreams,
Raising a world of gayer tinct and grace;
O'er which were shadowy cast Elysian gleams,
That played, in waving lights, from place to place,
And shed a roseate smile on nature's face.
Not Titian's pencil e'er could so array,
So fleece with clouds the pure ethereal space;
Ne could it e'er such melting forms display,
As loose on flowery beds all languishingly lay.

45

No, fair illusions! artful phantoms, no!
My muse will not attempt your fairy-land:
She has no colors that like you can glow;
To catch your vivid scenes too gross her hand.
But sure it is, was ne'er a subtler band
Than these same guileful angel-seeming sprights,
Who thus in dreams voluptuous, soft, and bland,
Poured all the Arabian heaven upon our nights,
And blessed them oft besides with more refined delights.

46

They were in sooth a most enchanting train,
Even feigning virtue; skilful to unite
With evil good, and strew with pleasure pain.
But, for those fiends whom blood and broils delight,
Who hurl the wretch, as if to hell outright,
Down, down black gulfs, where sullen waters sleep,
Or hold him clambering all the fearful night
On beetling cliffs, or pent in ruins deep —
They, till due time should serve, were bid far hence to keep.

47

Ye guardian spirits, to whom man is dear,
From these foul demons shield the midnight gloom!
Angels of fancy and of love, be near,
And o'er the wilds of sleep diffuse a bloom:
Evoke the sacred shades of Greece and Rome,
And let them virtue with a look impart;
But chief, a while, O! lend us from the tomb
Those long-lost friends for whom in love we smart,
And fill with pious awe and joy-mixt woe the heart!

48

Or are you sportive? — bid the morn of youth
Rise to new light, and beam afresh the days
Of innocence, simplicity, and truth,
To cares estranged, and manhood's thornless ways.
What transport to retrace our boyish plays,
Our easy bliss, when each thing joy supplied!
The woods, the mountains, and the wand'bling maze
Of the wild brooks! — But, fondly wandering wide,
My muse, resume the task that yet doth thee abide.

49

One great amusement of our household was
In a huge crystal magic globe to spy,
Still as you turned it, all things that do pass,
Upon this ant-hill earth; where constantly
Of idly-busy men the restless fry
Run bustling to and fro with foolish haste
In search of pleasures vain, that from them fly,
Or which, obtained, the caitiffs dare not taste:
When nothing is enjoyed, can there be greater waste?

50

Of Vanity the mirror this was called.
Here you a muckworm of the town might see
At his dull desk, amid his ledgers stalled,
Eat up with carking care and penurie,
Most like to carcase parched on gallow-tree.
"A penny savèd is a penny got;" —
Firm to this scoundrel maxim keepeth he,
Ne of its rigor will he bate a jot,
Till it has quenched his fire and banishèd his pot.

51

Strait from the filth of this low grub, behold!
Comes fluttering forth a gaudy spendthrift heir,

ll glossy gay, enamelled all with gold,
he silly tenant of the summer-air,
n folly lost, of nothing takes he care;
imps, lawyers, stewards, harlots, flatterers vile,
nd thieving tradesmen him among them share;
is father's ghost from Limbo-lake, the while,
ees this, which more damnation doth upon him pile.

52

This globe portrayed the race of learned men,
till at their books, and turning o'er the page
ackwards and forwards: oft they snatch the pen
s if inspired, and in a Thespian [1] rage,
hen write, and blot, as would your ruth engage.
Vhy, authors, all this scrawl and scribbling sore?
'o lose the present, gain the future age,
raisèd to be when you can hear no more,
nd much enriched with fame when useless worldly store?

53

Then would a splendid city rise to view,
Vith carts, and cars, and coaches, roaring all:
Vide-poured abroad behold the prowling crew;
ee how they dash along from wall to wall!
t every door, hark how they thundering call!
ood Lord! what can this giddy rout excite?
Vhy? Each on each to prey, by guile or gall;
Vith flattery these, with slander those to blight,
nd make new tiresome parties for the coming night.

54

The puzzling sons of party next appeared,
n dark cabals and nightly juntos met,
nd now they whispered close, now shrugging reared
he important shoulder; then, as if to get
ew light, their twinkling eyes were inward set.
o sooner Lucifer [2] recalls affairs,
hen forth they various rush in mighty fret;
When, lo! pushed up to power, and crowned their cares,
In comes another set, and kicketh them down stairs.

55

But what most showed the vanity of life
Was to behold the nations all on fire,
In cruel broils engaged, and deadly strife,
Most Christian kings,[1] inflamed by black desire,
With honorable ruffians in their hire,
Cause war to rage, and blood around to pour.
Of this sad work when each begins to tire,
They sit them down just where they were before,
Till for new scenes of woe peace shall their force restore.

56

To number up the thousands dwelling here,
An useless were, and eke an endless task —
From kings, and those who at the helm appear,
To gipsies brown in summer-glades who bask.
Yea, many a man, perdie, I could unmask,
Whose desk and table make a solemn show,
With tape-tied trash, and suits of fools that ask
For place or pension, laid in decent row;
But these I passen by, with nameless numbers moe.

57

Of all the gentle tenants of the place,
There was a man of special grave remark;
A certain tender gloom o'erspread his face,
Pensive, not sad; in thought involved, not dark;
As soote [2] this man could sing as morning-lark,
And teach the noblest morals of the heart;
But these his talents were yburied stark;
Of the fine stores he nothing would impart,
Which or boon nature gave, or nature-painting art.

58

To noontide shades incontinent he ran,
Where purls the brook with sleep-inviting sound;
Or when Dan Sol to slope his wheels began,
Amid the broom he basked him on the ground,

1 Thespis was the father of Greek tragic poetry.
2 The morning star.

1 The kings of France had the title of "most Christian king."
2 sweetly.

Where the wild thyme and camomil are found;
There would he linger, till the latest ray
Of light sat quivering on the welkin's bound,
Then homeward through the twilight shadows stray,
Sauntering and slow. So had he passèd many a day.

59

Yet not in thoughtless slumber were they past;
For oft the heavenly fire, that lay concealed
Emongst the sleeping embers, mounted fast,
And all its native light anew revealed;
Oft as he traversed the cerulean field,
And marked the clouds that drove before the wind,
Ten thousand glorious systems would he build,
Ten thousand great ideas filled his mind;
But with the clouds they fled, and left no trace behind.

60

With him was sometimes joined in silent walk
(Profoundly silent, for they never spoke)
One shyer still, who quite detested talk;
Oft, stung by spleen, at once away he broke,
To groves of pine and broad o'ershadowing oak;
There inly thrilled, he wandered all alone,
And on himself his pensive fury wroke,
Ne ever uttered word, save when first shone
The glittering star of eve — "Thank heaven! the day is done."

61

Here lurked a wretch who had not crept abroad
For forty years, ne face of mortal seen —
In chamber brooding like a loathly toad;
And sure his linen was not very clean.
Through secret loophole, that had practised been
Near to his bed, his dinner vile he took;
Unkempt, and rough, of squalid face and mien,
Our Castle's shame! whence from his filthy nook,
We drove the villain out for fitter lair to look.

62

One day there chanced into these halls to rove
A joyous youth, who took you at first sight;
Him the wild wave of pleasure hither drove,
Before the sprightly tempest tossing light.
Certes, he was a most engaging wight,
Of social glee, and wit humane though keen,
Turning the night to day and day to night:
For him the merry bells had rung, I ween,
If in this nook of quiet, bells had ever been.

63

But not even pleasure to excess is good:
What most elates then sinks the soul as low:
When spring-tide joy pours in with copious flood,
The higher still the exulting billows flow,
The farther back again they flagging go,
And leave us grovelling on the dreary shore:
Taught by this son of joy, we found it so,
Who, whilst he staid, kept in a gay uproar
Our maddened Castle all, the abode of sleep no more.

64

As when in prime of June a burnished fly,
Sprung from the meads, o'er which he sweeps along,
Cheered by the breathing bloom and vital sky,
Tunes up amid these airy halls his song,
Soothing at first the gay-reposing throng;
And oft he sips their bowl; or nearly drowned,
He, thence recovering, drives their beds among,
And scares their tender sleep, with trump profound,
Then out again he flies, to wing his mazy round.

65

Another guest there was, of sense refined,
Who felt each worth, — for every worth he had;
Serene yet warm, humane yet firm his mind,
As little touched as any man's with bad:
Him through their inmost walks the Muses lad,
To him the sacred love of Nature lent;
And sometimes would he make our valley glad.
Whenas we found he would not here be pent
To him the better sort this friendly message sent: —

66

"Come, dwell with us, true son of virtue, come!
But if, alas! we cannot thee persuade

To lie content beneath our peaceful dome,
Ne ever more to quit our quiet glade,
Yet, when at last thy toils, but ill apaid,
Shall dead thy fire, and damp its heavenly spark,
Thou wilt be glad to seek the rural shade,
There to indulge the muse, and nature mark;
We then a lodge for thee will rear in Hagley-Park." [1]

67

Here whilom ligged the Esopus of the age,[2]
But called by fame, in soul yprickèd deep,
A noble pride restored him to the stage,
And roused him like a giant from his sleep.
Even from his slumbers we advantage reap:
With double force the astonished scene he wakes,
Yet quits not nature's bounds. He knows to keep
Each due decorum: now the heart he shakes,
And now with well-urged sense the enlightened judgment takes.

68

A bard [3] here dwelt, more fat than bard beseems,
Who, void of envy, guile, and lust of gain,
On virtue still, and nature's pleasing themes,
Poured forth his unpremeditated strain,
The world forsaking with a calm disdain;
Here laughed he careless in his easy seat:
Here quaffed, encircled with the joyous train,
Oft moralizing sage; his ditty sweet
He loathèd much to write, ne carèd to repeat.

69

Full oft by holy feet our ground was trod;
Of clerks good plenty here you mote espy;
A little, round, fat, oily man of God,
Was one I chiefly marked among the fry:
He had a roguish twinkle in his eye,
And shone all glittering with ungodly dew,
If a tight [4] damsel chanced to trippen by;
Which, when observed, he shrunk into his mew,
And straight would recollect his piety anew.

70

Nor be forgot a tribe who minded nought
(Old inmates of the place) but state-affairs:
They looked, perdie, as if they deeply thought;
And on their brow sat every nation's cares.
The world by them is parcelled out in shares,
When in the Hall of Smoke [1] they congress hold,
And the sage berry sun-burnt Mocha bears
Has cleared their inward eye: then, smoke-enrolled,
Their oracles break forth, mysterious as of old.

71

Here languid Beauty kept her pale-faced court:
Bevies of dainty dames of high degree
From every quarter hither made resort;
Where, from gross mortal care and business free,
They lay poured out in ease and luxury:
Or, should they a vain show of work assume,
Alas! and well-a-day! what can it be?
To knot, to twist, to range the vernal bloom;
But far is cast the distaff, spinning-wheel, and loom.

72

Their only labor was to kill the time;
And labor dire it is, and weary woe.
They sit, they loll, turn o'er some idle rhyme;
Then, rising sudden, to the glass they go,
Or saunter forth, with tottering step and slow:
This soon too rude an exercise they find;
Straight on the couch their limbs again they throw,
Where, hours on hours, they sighing lie reclined,
And court the vapory god soft-breathing in the wind.

73

Now must I mark the villainy we found,
But, ah! too late, as shall eftsoons be shown.
A place here was, deep, dreary, under ground,
Where still our inmates, when unpleasing grown,
Diseased, and loathsome, privily were thrown.
Far from the light of heaven they languished there,
Unpitied, uttering many a bitter groan;
For of these wretches taken was no care:
Fierce fiends and hags of hell their only nurses were.

1 The seat of Lord Lyttelton.
2 James Quin, the actor.
3 Thomson himself. "The following lines of this stanza were writ by a friend of the author." — Thomson's note.
4 neat and trim.

1 the smoking room.

74[1]

Alas the change! from scenes of joy and rest
To this dark den, where Sickness tossed alway.
Here Lethargy, with deadly sleep opprest,
Stretched on his back, a mighty lubbard, lay
Heaving his sides, and snorèd night and day:
To stir him from his traunce, it was not eath,
And his half-opened eyne he shut straightway;
He led, I wot, the softest way to death,
And taught withouten pain and strife to yield the breath.

75

Of limbs enormous, but withal unsound,
Soft-swoln and pale, here lay the Hydropsy:
Unwieldy man! with belly monstrous round,
For ever fed with watery supply;
For still he drank, and yet he still was dry.
And moping here did Hypochondria sit,
Mother of Spleen, in robes of various dye,
Who vexèd was full oft with ugly fit;
And some her frantic deemed, and some her deemed a wit.

76

A lady proud she was, of ancient blood,
Yet oft her fear her pride made crouchen low:
She felt, or fancièd, in her fluttering mood,
All the diseases which the spittles[1] know,
And sought all physic which the shops bestow,
And still new leaches and new drugs would try,
Her humor ever wavering to and fro;
For sometimes she would laugh, and sometimes cry,
Then sudden waxèd wroth, and all she knew not why.

77

Fast by her side a listless maiden pined,
With aching head, and squeamish heartburnings;
Pale, bloated, cold, she seemed to hate mankind,
Yet loved in secret all forbidden things.
And here the Tertian shakes his chilling wings
The sleepless Gout here counts the crowing cocks —
A wolf now gnaws him, now a serpent stings
Whilst Apoplexy crammed Intemperance knocks
Down to the ground at once, as butcher felleth ox.[2]

1 The four concluding stanzas were written by Thomson's friend, John Armstrong, M.D.

1 hospitals.

2 A second canto, much inferior to the first, concludes the poem.

## THOMAS GRAY (1716–1771)

Gray is a poet whose importance is in striking contrast with the very slender volume of his work. He was by profession a scholar, one of the most learned men of his generation — though in the field of scholarship also he published very little. Poetry was his recreation, but a recreation to which he gave the most painstaking labor, writing and rewriting until his verse should satisfy his exacting poetic taste.

From Eton School, where he made the friendship of Horace Walpole, connoisseur and "Prince of letter-writers," and of Richard West, whose early death was the occasion of a fine sonnet, he went to Cambridge. Leaving the university, he traveled on the Continent in the company of Walpole, and then settled down with his mother for two years in the little village of Stoke Poges the scene of his Country Churchyard. The rest of his life he spent in college rooms at Cambridge in scholarly seclusion, seeing little company, taking no part in the affairs of the university, reading and annotating the Greek classic authors, studying zoölogy and botany. He never married His letters, written to his close friends, present a very charming personality.

His poetry exhibits within its narrow compass a striking literary development. The odes on Spring and on Eton College reflect the conventions of mid-eighteenth century verse of the school which had broken away from the wit and good sense and the heroic couplet of Pope, and had turned back for literary inspiration to Spenser and Milton. There is an excessive use of personification and of "elevated" diction. The famous *Elegy*, the most continuously popular poem in the English language, while continuing in this tradition, rises above it. It expresses in perfectly chiseled phrases, and in exquisite harmonies, a mood of tender melancholy thoroughly characteristic of its author. In the words of Dr. Johnson, it "abounds with images which find a mirror in every mind, and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo." *The Bard* is in a manner wholly different. There is but little personification and no moralizing. The scene is no longer the quiet English countryside but the wild mountains of Wales; and the time is in the Middle Ages.

The theme is as romantic as the setting. Gray's contemporaries, who had been eager to praise the *Elegy*, found the *Bard* strange and hopelessly obscure.

A convenient edition of Gray, which includes all his important poems, and a selection from his letters, is that of W. L. Phelps in the Athenæum Press Series (Ginn & Co.). For his life, see the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

## ODE ON THE SPRING

Lo! where the rosy-bosomed Hours,
Fair VENUS' train appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
And wake the purple year!
The Attic warbler[1] pours her throat,
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
The untaught harmony of spring:
While, whispering pleasure as they fly,
Cool Zephyrs thro' the clear blue sky
Their gathered fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
A broader browner shade;
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'er-canopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the muse shall sit, and think
(At ease reclined in rustic state)
How vain the ardor of the crowd,
How low, how little are the proud,
How indigent the great!

Still is the toiling hand of care:
The panting herds repose:
Yet hark, how thro' the peopled air
The busy murmur glows!
The insect youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honied spring,
And float amid the liquid noon:
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some shew their gaily-gilded trim
Quick-glancing to the sun.

To contemplation's sober eye
Such is the race of man:
And they that creep, and they that fly,
Shall end where they began.
Alike the busy and the gay
But flutter thro' life's little day,
In fortune's varying colors drest:
Brushed by the hand of rough mischance,
Or chilled by age, their airy dance
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear in accents low
The sportive kind reply:
Poor moralist! and what art thou?
A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
No painted plumage to display:
On hasty wings thy youth is flown;
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone —
We frolic, while 'tis May.

1742; published 1748.

1 The nightingale.

## ODE ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE

Ye distant spires, ye antique towers,
That crown the wat'ry glade,
Where grateful Science still adores
Her HENRY'S[1] holy Shade;
And ye, that from the stately brow
Of WINDSOR'S heights th' expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
Wanders the hoary Thames along
His silver-winding way.

Ah happy hills! ah, pleasing shade!
Ah fields beloved in vain,
Where once my careless childhood strayed
A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales that from ye blow,
A momentary bliss bestow,
As waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to sooth,
And, redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.

Say, Father THAMES, for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race
Disporting on thy margent green
The paths of pleasure trace;
Who foremost now delight to cleave
With pliant arm thy glassy wave?
The captive linnet which enthrall?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed,[2]
Or urge the flying ball?

While some on earnest business bent
Their murmuring labors ply
'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint
To sweeten liberty:
Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign,[3]
And unknown regions dare descry:
Still as they run they look behind,

1 King Henry the Sixth, Founder of the College. (Gray.)
2 i.e., to roll hoops. 3 i.e., break bounds.

They hear a voice in every wind,
And snatch a fearful joy.[1]

Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed,
Less pleasing when possest;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast:
Theirs buxom health of rosy hue,
Wild wit, invention ever-new
And lively cheer of vigor born;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light,
That fly th' approach of morn.

Alas, regardless of their doom,
The little victims play!
No sense have they of ills to come,
Nor care beyond to-day:
Yet see how all around 'em wait
The ministers of human fate,
And black Misfortune's baleful train!
Ah, shew them where in ambush stand
To seize their prey the murderous band!
Ah, tell them they are men!

These shall the fury Passions tear,
The vultures of the mind,
Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,
And Shame that skulks behind;
Or pining Love shall waste their youth,
Or Jealousy with rankling tooth,
That inly gnaws the secret heart,
And Envy wan, and faded Care,
Grim-visaged comfortless Despair,
And Sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,
And grinning infamy.
The stings of Falsehood those shall try,
And hard Unkindness' altered eye,
That mocks the tear it forced to flow;
And keen Remorse with blood defiled,
And moody Madness laughing wild
Amid severest woe.

Lo, in the vale of years beneath
A grisly troop are seen,
The painful family of Death,
More hideous than their Queen:
This racks the joints, this fires the veins,
That every laboring sinew strains,
Those in the deeper vitals rage:
Lo, Poverty, to fill the band,
That numbs the soul with icy hand,
And slow-consuming Age.

[1] a joy mingled with fear.

To each his sufferings: all are men,
Condemned alike to groan;
The tender for another's pain,
Th' unfeeling for his own.
Yet, ah! why should they know their fate
Since sorrow never comes too late,
And happiness too swiftly flies?
Thought would destroy their paradise.
No more; where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise.

1742; published 1747.

## SONNET

ON THE DEATH OF MR. RICHARD WEST

In vain to me the smiling mornings shine
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden f
The birds in vain their amorous descant j
Or cheerful fields resume their green att
These ears, alas! for other notes repine,
A different object do these eyes require
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mi
And in my breast the imperfect joys expi
Yet morning smiles the busy race to chee
And new-born pleasure brings to happ
men;
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear
To warm their little loves the birds co
plain:
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear
And weep the more, because I weep in va

1742; published 1775.

## ODE ON THE DEATH OF A FAVORITE CAT

DROWNED IN A TUB OF GOLD-FISHES[1]

'Twas on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had dyed
The azure flowers, that blow;
Demurest of the tabby kind,
The pensive Selima reclined,
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared;
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat, that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
She saw; and purred applause.

Still had she gazed; but 'midst the tide
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The Genii of the stream:
Their scaly armor's Tyrian hue

[1] The cat belonged to Gray's friend, Horace Walpole

Thro' richest purple to the view
Betrayed a golden gleam.

The hapless Nymph with wonder saw:
A whisker first, and then a claw,
With many an ardent wish,
She stretched in vain to reach the prize: —
What female heart can gold despise?
What Cat's averse to fish?

Presumptuous Maid! with looks intent
Again she stretched, again she bent,
Nor knew the gulf between.
(Malignant Fate sat by, and smiled)
The slippery verge her feet beguiled,
She tumbled headlong in.

Eight times emerging from the flood
She mewed to every watery God,
Some speedy aid to send.
No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirred:
Nor cruel Tom, nor Susan heard.
A favorite has no friend!

From hence, ye beauties undeceived,
Know, one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold.
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize:
Nor all, that glisters, gold.

1747; published 1748.

## ELEGY

### WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower,
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such, as wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits[1] alike th' inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where thro' the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honor's voice provoke[2] the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to extasy the living lyre.

1 The subject is *hour*. 2 call forth.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood;
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbad: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbad to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind;

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet even these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unlettered muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply:
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Even from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
Even in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonored dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate, —

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove;
Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

"One morn I missed him on the customed hill
Along the heath and near his favorite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he.

"The next, with dirges due in sad array
Slow thro' the church-way path we saw him borne; —
Approach and read (for thou can'st read) the lay,
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

*THE EPITAPH*

*Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth,*
*A youth, to fortune and to fame unknown:*
*Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,*
*And Melancholy marked him for her own.*

*Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,*
*Heaven did a recompence as largely send:*

*He gave to Misery (all he had), a tear,*
*He gained from Heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.*

*No farther seek his merits to disclose,*
*Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,*
*(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)*
*The bosom of his Father and his God.*

1750; published 1751.

## THE PROGRESS OF POESY

### A PINDARIC ODE

#### I. 1

Awake, Æolian lyre, awake
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.
From Helicon's harmonious springs
A thousand rills their mazy progress take:[1]
The laughing flowers, that round them blow,
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
Thro' verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign:
Now rolling down the steep amain,
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour:
The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

#### I. 2

Oh! Sovereign of the willing soul,[2]
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell! the sullen Cares,
And frantic Passions hear thy soft controul.
On Thracia's Hills the Lord of War
Has curbed the fury of his car,
And dropped his thirsty lance at thy command.
Perching on the sceptered hand
Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feathered king
With ruffled plumes, and flagging wing:
Quenched in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye.

#### I. 3

Thee the voice, the dance, obey,[3]
Tempered to thy warbled lay.
O'er Idalia's velvet-green
The rosy-crownèd Loves are seen
On Cytherea's day
With antic Sports, and blue-eyed Pleasures,
Frisking light in frolic measures;
Now pursuing, now retreating,
Now in circling troops they meet:
To brisk notes in cadence beating
Glance their many-twinkling feet.
Slow melting strains their Queen's[1] approach declare:
Where'er she turns the Graces homage pay.
With arms sublime,[2] that float upon the air,
In gliding state she wins her easy way:
O'er her warm cheek, and rising bosom, move
The bloom of young Desire, and purple light of Love.

#### II. 1

Man's feeble race what ills await,
Labor, and Penury, the racks of Pain,
Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,
And Death, sad refuge from the storms of Fate!
The fond complaint, my song, disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove.
Say, has he given in vain the heavenly Muse?
Night, and all her sickly dews,
Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry,
He gives to range the dreary sky:
Till down the eastern cliffs afar
Hyperion's march they spy, and glittering shafts of war.

#### II. 2

In[3] climes beyond the solar road,
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,
The Muse has broke the twilight-gloom
To cheer the shivering Native's dull abode.
And oft, beneath the odorous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat
In loose numbers wildly sweet
Their feather-cinctured chiefs, and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the Goddess roves,
Glory pursue, and generous shame,
Th' unconquerable mind, and Freedom's holy flame.

#### II. 3

Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,[4]
Isles, that crown th' Ægean deep,
Fields, that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Mæander's amber waves

1 i.e., many streams of poetry have their rise in the fountain of the Muses on Mount Helicon.

2 Power of harmony to calm the turbulent sallies of the soul. The thoughts are borrowed from the first Pythian of Pindar. (Gray.)

3 Power of harmony to produce all the graces of motion in the body. (Gray.)

1 i.e.; Venus. 2 uplifted.

3 Extensive influence of poetic genius over the remotest and most uncivilized nations: its connection with liberty, and the virtues that naturally attend it. (Gray.)

4 Progress of poetry from Greece to Italy, and from Italy to England. (Gray.)

In lingering labyrinths creep,
How do your tuneful echoes languish,
Mute, but to the voice of Anguish!
Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around;
Every shade and hallowed fountain
Murmured deep a solemn sound:
Till the sad Nine in Greece's evil hour
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains.
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant-power,
And coward Vice, that revels in her chains.
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, oh, Albion! next thy sea-encircled coast.

III. 1

Far from the sun and summer-gale,
In thy green lap was Nature's [1] darling laid,
What time, where lucid Avon strayed,
To him the mighty mother did unveil
Her awful face: The dauntless child
Stretched forth his little arms, and smiled.
"This pencil take (she said) whose colors clear
Richly paint the vernal year:
Thine too these golden keys, immortal boy!
This can unlock the gates of Joy;
Of Horror that, and thrilling Fears,
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears."

III. 2

Nor second He,[2] that rode sublime
Upon the seraph-wings of Extasy,
The secrets of th' abyss to spy.
He passed the flaming bounds of place and time:
The living throne, the sapphire-blaze,
Where Angels tremble, while they gaze,
He saw; but blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold where Dryden's less presumptuous car,
Wide o'er the fields of glory bear
Two coursers of ethereal race,[3]
With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding pace.

III. 3

Hark, his hands the lyre explore!
Bright-eyed Fancy hovering o'er
Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.
But ah! 'tis heard no more ——

1 Shakespeare. (Gray.) 2 Milton. (Gray.)
3 Meant to express the stately march and sounding energy of Dryden's rhimes. (Gray.)

Oh! Lyre divine, what daring Spirit
Wakes thee now? tho' he inherit
Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,
That the Theban Eagle [1] bear
Sailing with supreme dominion
Thro' the azure deep of air:
Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms, as glitter in the Muse's ray
With orient hues, unborrowed of the sun:
Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,
Beneath the good how far — but far above the great.

1754; published 1757.

## THE BARD

### A PINDARIC ODE [2]

I. 1

"Ruin seize thee, ruthless King!
Confusion on thy banners wait,
Tho' fanned by Conquest's crimson wing
They mock the air with idle state.
Helm, nor hauberk's [3] twisted mail,
Nor e'en thy virtues, Tyrant, shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
From Cambria's [4] curse, from Cambria's tears!"
Such were the sounds, that o'er the crested pride
Of the first Edward scattered wild dismay,
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side
He wound with toilsome march his long array.
Stout Glos'ter stood aghast in speechless trance: [5]
To arms! cried Mortimer, and couched his quivering lance.[6]

I. 2

On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes the Poet stood;
(Loose his beard, and hoary hair
Streamed, like a meteor, to the troubled air)

1 Pindar. (Gray.)
2 This Ode is founded on a Tradition current in Wales that Edward the First, when he completed the conquest of that country, ordered all the Bards that fell into his hands to be put to death. (Gray.)
3 The Hauberk was a texture of steel ringlets, or rings interwoven, forming a coat of mail, that sat close to the body, and adapted itself to every motion. (Gray.)
4 Wales.
5 Gilbert de Clare, surnamed the Red, Earl of Gloucester and Hertford, son-in-law to King Edward. (Gray.)
6 Edmond de Mortimer, Lord of Wigmore.
They both were *Lords-Marchers*, whose lands lay on the borders of Wales, and probably accompanied the King in this expedition. (Gray.)

And with a master's hand, and prophet's fire,
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.
"Hark, how each giant-oak, and desert cave,
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!
O'er thee, oh King! their hundred arms they wave,
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe;
Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

I. 3

"Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hushed the stormy main:
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed;
Mountains, ye mourn in vain,
Modred, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon[1] bow his cloud-topped head.
On dreary Arvon's shore they lie,[2]
Smeared with gore, and ghastly pale:
Far, far aloof th' affrighted ravens sail;
The famished eagle screams, and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear, as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear, as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country's cries —
No more I weep. They do not sleep.
On yonder cliffs, a grisly band,
I see them sit, they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land:
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.

II. 1

"Weave the warp, and weave the woof,
The winding-sheet of Edward's race.
Give ample room, and verge enough
The characters of hell to trace.
Mark the year, and mark the night,
When Severn shall re-echo with affright
The shrieks of death, thro' Berkley's roof that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing King![3]
She-wolf of France, with unrelenting fangs,[4]
That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled mate,
From thee be born, who o'er thy country hangs,
The scourge of Heaven. What terrors round him wait!
Amazement in his van, with Flight combined,
And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude behind.

II. 2

"Mighty Victor, mighty Lord,
Low on his funeral couch he lies!
No pitying heart, no eye, afford
A tear to grace his obsequies.
Is the sable Warrior fled?[1]
Thy son is gone. He rests among the dead.
The swarm, that in thy noon-tide beam were born?
Gone to salute the rising morn.
Fair laughs[2] the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes;
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That, hushed in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

II. 3

"Fill high the sparkling bowl,[3]
The rich repast prepare,
Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast:
Close by the regal chair
Fell Thirst and Famine scowl
A baleful smile upon their baffled guest.
Heard ye the din of battle bray,[4]
Lance to lance, and horse to horse?
Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
And thro' the kindred squadrons mow their way.
Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murder fed,[5]
Revere his consort's[6] faith, his father's[7] fame,
And spare the meek usurper's holy head.[8]
Above, below, the rose of snow,[9]
Twined with her blushing foe, we spread:
The bristled boar in infant gore[10]

1 A mountain in Wales.
2 The shores of Caernarvonshire opposite to the Isle of Anglesey. (Gray.)
3 Edward the Second, cruelly butchered in Berkley-Castle. (Gray.)
4 Isabel of France, Edward the Second's adulterous Queen. (Gray.)

1 Edward, the Black Prince, dead some time before his Father. (Gray.)
2 Magnificence of Richard the Second's reign. (Gray.)
3 Richard the Second was starved to death. (Gray.)
4 The civil wars of York and Lancaster. (Gray.)
5 Henry the Sixth, George Duke of Clarence, Edward the Fifth, Richard Duke of York, &c. believed to be murdered secretly in the Tower of London. The oldest part of that structure is vulgarly attributed to Julius Cæsar. (Gray.)
6 Margaret of Anjou, a woman of heroic spirit, who struggled hard to save her Husband and her Crown. (Gray.)
7 Henry the Fifth. (Gray.)
8 Henry the Sixth, very near being canonized. The line of Lancaster had no right of inheritance to the Crown. (Gray.)
9 The white and red roses, devices of York and Lancaster. (Gray.)
10 The silver Boar was the badge of Richard the Third; whence he was usually known, in his own time, by the name of *the Boar*. (Gray.)

Wallows beneath the thorny shade.
Now, brothers, bending o'er th' accursed loom,
Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

III. 1

"Edward, lo! to sudden fate
(Weave we the woof. The thread is spun.)
Half of thy heart we consecrate.
(The web is wove. The work is done.)"
"Stay, oh stay! nor thus forlorn
Leave me unblessed, unpitied, here to mourn:
In yon bright track, that fires the western skies,
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.
But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height
Descending slow their glittering skirts unroll?
Visions of glory, spare my aching sight,
Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my soul!
No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.[1]
All hail, ye genuine Kings, Britannia's issue, hail.[2]

III. 2

"Girt with many a Baron bold
Sublime their starry fronts they rear;
And gorgeous dames, and statesmen old
In bearded majesty, appear.
In the midst a form divine!
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-line;
Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face.
Attempered sweet to virgin-grace.[3]

What strings symphonious tremble in th air,
What strains of vocal transport round he play!
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin,[1] hear;
They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
Bright Rapture calls, and soaring, as sh sings,
Waves in the eye of Heaven her many colored wings.

III. 3

"The verse adorn again
Fierce War, and faithful Love,
And Truth severe, by fairy fiction drest.[2]
In buskined measures move [3]
Pale Grief, and pleasing Pain,
With Horror, tyrant of the throbbin breast.
A voice as of the cherub-choir,[4]
Gales from blooming Eden bear;
And distant warblings lessen on my ear,
That lost in long futurity expire.[5]
Fond impious Man, think'st thou yon sa guine cloud,
Raised by thy breath, has quenched the o of day?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
And warms the nations with redoubled ra
Enough for me: with joy I see
The different doom our fates assign.
Be thine Despair, and sceptered Care,
To triumph, and to die, are mine."
He spoke, and headlong from the mountai height
Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endl night.

1757.

1 It was the common belief of the Welsh nation, that King Arthur was still alive in Fairy-Land, and should return again to reign over Britain. (Gray.)

2 Both Merlin and Taliessin had prophesied, that the Welsh should regain their sovereignty over this island; which seemed to be accomplished in the House of Tudor. (Gray.)

3 Speed, relating an audience given by Queen Elizabeth to Paul Dzialinski, Ambassador of Poland, says: "And thus she, lion-like rising, daunted the malapert Orator no less with her stately port and majestical deporture, than with the tartnesse of her princelie checkes." (Gray.)

1 Taliessin, Chief of the Bards, flourished in the si Century. His works are still preserved, and his mem held in high veneration among his Countrymen. (Gr

2 Spenser.

3 Shakespeare. (Gray.)

4 Milton. (Gray.)

5 The succession of Poets after Milton's time. (Gr

## WILLIAM COLLINS (1721–1759)

William Collins was educated at Winchester School and at Oxford, where he took his B degree in 1743. While still an undergraduate at Oxford, he published his *Persian Eclogues*, rep lished in 1757 as *Oriental Eclogues*. He settled down in London as a literary hack writer; but health and a natural indolence kept him from accomplishing the work that he undertook. a short period he was confined in a madhouse. His odes appeared in December, 1746, with date 1747. He died at the age of thirty-seven.

The total bulk of his poetry is very small, but the best of it is of a high order of excelle In spite of certain mannerisms characteristic of the mid-eighteenth century, such as an exces use of personified abstractions, his instinct for the right imaginative phrase, the delicate subt of his rhythms, his perfect balance of poetic sentiment and classic restraint, mark his ode permanent masterpieces of English lyric verse.

## ODE TO EVENING

If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
Like thy own solemn springs,
Thy springs, and dying gales;

O nymph reserved, while now the bright-haired sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede[1] ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed:

Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat,
With short shrill shriek, flits by on leathern wing;
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum:
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breathe some softened strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit;
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return!

For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
The fragrant Hours, and elves
Who slept in flowers the day,

And many a nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge,
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,
The pensive Pleasures sweet,
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then lead, calm votaress, where some sheety lake
Cheers the lone heath, or some time-hallowed pile,
Or upland fallows grey,
Reflect its last cool gleam.

But when chill blustering winds, or driving rain,
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut,
That from the mountain's side,
Views wilds, and swelling floods,

[1] embroidery.

And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires,
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve!
While Summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light;

While sallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves;
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes;

So long, sure-found beneath the sylvan shed,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, rose-lipped Health,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And hymn thy favorite name!

1746.

## THE PASSIONS

AN ODE FOR MUSIC

When Music, heavenly maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
Thronged around her magic cell,
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possest beyond the Muse's painting:
By turns they felt the glowing mind
Disturbed, delighted, raised, refined;
Till once, 'tis said, when all were fired,
Filled with fury, rapt, inspired,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatched her instruments of sound;
And, as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each (for Madness ruled the hour)
Would prove his own expressive power.

First Fear his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewildered laid,
And back recoiled, he knew not why,
E'en at the sound himself had made.

Next Anger rushed; his eyes, on fire,
In lightnings owned his secret stings;
In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
And swept with hurried hand the strings.

With woful measures wan Despair
Low, sullen sounds his grief beguiled;

A solemn, strange, and mingled air
'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.

But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delighted measure?
Still it whispered promised pleasure,
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail!
Still would her touch the strain prolong;
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
She called on Echo still, through all the song;
And, where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at every close,
And Hope enchanted smiled, and waved her golden hair.

And longer had she sung; — but, with a frown,
Revenge impatient rose;
He threw his blood-stained sword, in thunder, down;
And with a withering look,
The war-denouncing trumpet took,
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe.
And, ever and anon, he beat
The doubling drum, with furious heat;
And though sometimes, each dreary pause between,
Dejected Pity, at his side,
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unaltered mien,
While each strained ball of sight seemed bursting from his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fixed;
Sad proof of thy distressful state;
Of differing themes the veering song was mixed;
And now it courted Love, now raving called on Hate.

With eyes upraised, as one inspired,
Pale Melancholy sate retired;
And, from her wild sequestered seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Poured through the mellow horn her pensive soul:
And, dashing soft from rocks around,
Bubbling runnels joined the sound;
Through glades and glooms the mingled measure stole,
Or, over some haunted stream, with fond delay,
Round an holy calm diffusing,
Love of Peace, and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.

But O! how altered was its sprightlier tone,
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
Her bow across her shoulder flung,
Her buskins gemmed with morning dew,
Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
The hunter's call, to faun and dryad known!
The oak-crowned sisters,[1] and their chaste-eyed queen,[2]
Satyrs and sylvan boys, were seen,
Peeping from forth their alleys green:
Brown Exercise rejoiced to hear;
And Sport leapt up, and seized his beechen spear.

Last came Joy's ecstatic trial:
He, with viny crown advancing,
First to the lively pipe his hand addrest;
But soon he saw the brisk awakening viol,
Whose sweet entrancing voice he loved the best;
They would have thought, who heard the strain,
They saw, in Tempe's vale, her native maids,
Amidst the festal sounding shades,
To some unwearied minstrel dancing,
While, as his flying fingers kissed the strings,
Love framed with Mirth a gay fantastic round:
Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound;
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repay,
Shook thousand odors from his dewy wings.

O Music! sphere-descended maid,
Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid!
Why, goddess! why, to us denied,
Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
As, in that loved Athenian bower,
You learned an all commanding power,
Thy mimic soul, O Nymph endeared,
Can well recall what then it heard;
Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
Arise, as in that elder time,

1 wood-nymphs. 2 Diana.

Warm, energic,[1] chaste, sublime!
Thy wonders, in that godlike age,
Fill thy recording sister's page —
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age;
E'en all at once together found,
Cecilia's mingled world of sound.[2]
O bid our vain endeavors cease;
Revive the just designs of Greece:
Return in all thy simple state!
Confirm the tales her sons relate!

1746

## ODE

WRITTEN IN THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR 1746

How sleep the brave, who sink to rest,
By all their country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mold,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There Honor comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall a while repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there!

1 full of energy.
2 i.e. the music of the organ.

## DIRGE IN CYMBELINE

SUNG BY GUIDERIUS AND ARVIRAGUS OVER FIDELE[1] SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD

To fair Fidele's grassy tomb
Soft maids and village hinds shall bring
Each opening sweet of earliest bloom,
And rifle all the breathing spring.

No wailing ghost shall dare appear
To vex with shrieks this quiet grove;
But shepherd lads assemble here,
And melting virgins own their love.

No withered witch shall here be seen;
No goblins lead their nightly crew:
The female fays shall haunt the green,
And dress thy grave with pearly dew!

The redbreast oft, at evening hours,
Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss, and gathered flowers,
To deck the ground where thou art laid.

When howling winds, and beating rain,
In tempests shake the sylvan cell;
Or midst the chase, on every plain,
The tender thought on thee shall dwell;

Each lonely scene shall thee restore;
For thee the tear be duly shed;
Beloved till life can charm no more,
And mourned till Pity's self be dead.

1744

1 Characters in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*.

# SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709–1784)

Samuel Johnson was born in Lichfield, where his father was a bookseller of humble means. The story of his life, entirely devoid of any striking episodes, is the narrative of a heroic struggle against poverty and bad health, a struggle which brought him from the straitened obscurity of his young manhood to a position of supreme eminence as one of the dominating figures of his day.

He was a student at Pembroke College, Oxford, but because of poverty was compelled to leave without a degree. After an unsuccessful attempt at running a private school, he came to London as a miscellaneous hack-writer, where for many years he picked up a precarious and often insufficient livelihood. In 1762 he was, in recognition of his literary distinction, granted a pension of three hundred pounds a year, which enabled him to live in quiet comfort for the remainder of his life. His outstanding qualities of mind and character won for him also the friendship of the most distinguished men of his time — Sir Joshua Reynolds the painter, the great orator Burke, David Garrick the actor, who had been his pupil at Lichfield, Goldsmith, James Boswell greatest of biographers, Gibbon the historian. These men are among the members of The Club, a literary circle at whose meetings Johnson was the dominant personality. In 1775, he received from Oxford the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.

Johnson's writings give but an imperfect presentment of his greatness. His two poems, *London* (1738) and the *Vanity of Human Wishes* (1749), are vigorous, but not brilliant, satires modeled on those of Juvenal. His essays in the *Rambler* (1750–52) and the *Idler* (1758–60) contain much wise observation and sound thought, but lack the variety and the sprightliness of manner which mark the essays of the *Spectator*. *Rasselas* (1759), a philosophical romance, in which a slender thread of story serves as occasion for a series of discussions on the theme of man's vain pursuit of happiness, is,

despite the fact that it was dashed off in a single week, his most perfect work of literary art. Here and in the *Lives of the English Poets* (1779–81), a series of biographical and critical prefaces written for a collected edition of the English poets, his prose style is at its best — a style which is rhetorical rather than familiar, which is sometimes heavy and pompous, but which at its finest is vigorous, spirited, eloquent. He is content only with the word and phrase which shall with exact accuracy express his thought — even though the right word may be a ponderous polysyllable.

Johnson, as "literary dictator" in the second half of the eighteenth century, was the stout defender of discipline and order. In politics a Tory, he regarded with bitter enmity the popular catchwords, "liberty" and "equality." Rousseau, with his cry of "return to nature," his disparagement of civilization, was anathema to him. And so in literature he set himself manfully against all those tendencies which we group together under the term "romanticism," tendencies which in his judgment made for shallow thinking, spurious idealism, pretentious obscurity, the anarchy of unrestrained individualism. Whether one think these opinions of his right or wrong, one cannot but feel admiration for the reasoned consistency and clear sincerity with which he held them, and the fearless vigor with which he expressed them.

Johnson's character, with all its lights and shades, lives for all time in the matchless biography of his devoted friend, Boswell. There more than in his own writings the man stands revealed. A convenient volume of selections from Johnson's works is that of C. G. Osgood (Henry Holt & Co.). G. B. Hill has edited his letters and the *Lives of the English Poets* (Oxford Press).

## ESSAYS

The fashion set at the beginning of the eighteenth century by *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* was continued throughout the century by a host of similar periodicals. It was in this tradition that Johnson wrote *The Rambler* (1750–52) and *The Idler* (1758–60). These papers, which attained a distinct success, consist for the most part of rather ponderous moral preachments. The following selections are in a somewhat lighter vein.

### THE MODERN NOVEL

*The Rambler, No. 4.* *Saturday, March* 31, 1750

*Simul et jucunda et idonea dicere vitæ.*
HOR. *Art of Poetry*, 334

And join both profit and delight in one.
CREECH

The works of fiction, with which the present generation seems more particularly delighted, are such as exhibit life in its true state, diversified only by accidents that daily happen in the world, and influenced by passions and qualities which are really to be found in conversing with mankind.[1]

This kind of writing may be termed, not improperly, the comedy of romance, and is to be conducted nearly by the rules of comic poetry. Its province is to bring about natural events by easy means, and to keep up curiosity without the help of wonder: it is therefore precluded from the machines and expedients of the heroic romance, and can neither employ giants to snatch away a lady from the nuptial rites, nor knights to bring her back from captivity; it can neither bewilder its personages in deserts, nor lodge them in imaginary castles.

1 Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe* (1748) and Fielding's *Tom Jones* (1749) were doubtless in Johnson's mind.

I remember a remark made by Scaliger upon Pontanus, that all his writings are filled with the same images; and that if you take from him his lilies and his roses, his satyrs and his dryads, he will have nothing left that can be called poetry. In like manner almost all the fictions of the last age will vanish, if you deprive them of a hermit and a wood, a battle and a shipwreck.

Why this wild strain of imagination found reception so long in polite and learned ages, it is not easy to conceive; but we cannot wonder that while readers could be procured, the authors were willing to continue it; for when a man had by practice gained some fluency of language, he had no further care than to retire to his closet, let loose his invention, and heat his mind with incredibilities; a book was thus produced without fear of criticism, without the toil of study, without knowledge of nature, or acquaintance with life.

The task of our present writers is very different; it requires, together with that learning which is to be gained from books, that experience which can never be attained by solitary diligence, but must arise from general converse and accurate observation of the living world. Their performances have, as Horace expresses it, "plus oneris quantum veniæ minus," little indulgence, and therefore more difficulty. They are engaged in portraits of which every one knows the original, and can detect any deviation from exactness of resemblance. Other writings are safe, except from the malice of learning, but these are in danger from every common reader; as the slipper ill executed was censured by a shoemaker, who happened to stop in his way at the Venus of Apelles.

But the fear of not being approved as just

copiers of human manners, is not the most important concern that an author of this sort ought to have before him. These books are written chiefly to the young, the ignorant, and the idle, to whom they serve as lectures of conduct, and introductions into life. They are the entertainment of minds unfurnished with ideas, and therefore easily susceptible of impressions; not fixed by principles, and therefore easily following the current of fancy; not informed by experience, and consequently open to every false suggestion and partial account.

That the highest degree of reverence should be paid to youth, and that nothing indecent should be suffered to approach their eyes or ears, are precepts extorted by sense and virtue from an ancient writer, by no means eminent for chastity of thought. The same kind, though not the same degree, of caution, is required in everything which is laid before them, to secure them from unjust prejudices, perverse opinions, and incongruous combinations of images.

In the romances formerly written, every transaction and sentiment was so remote from all that passes among men, that the reader was in very little danger of making any applications to himself; the virtues and crimes were equally beyond his sphere of activity; and he amused himself with heroes and with traitors, deliverers and persecutors, as with beings of another species, whose actions were regulated upon motives of their own, and who had neither faults nor excellencies in common with himself.

But when an adventurer is levelled with the rest of the world, and acts in such scenes of the universal drama, as may be the lot of any other man, young spectators fix their eyes upon him with closer attention, and hope, by observing his behavior and success, to regulate their own practices, when they shall be engaged in the like part.

For this reason these familiar histories may perhaps be made of greater use than the solemnities of professed morality, and convey the knowledge of vice and virtue with more efficacy than axioms and definitions. But if the power of example is so great as to take possession of the memory by a kind of violence, and produce effects almost without the intervention of the will, care ought to be taken, that, when the choice is unrestrained, the best examples only should be exhibited; and that which is likely to operate so strongly, should not be mischievous or uncertain in its effects.

The chief advantage which these fictions have over real life is, that their authors are at liberty, though not to invent, yet to select objects, and to cull from the mass of mankind, those individuals upon which the attention ought most to be employed; as a diamond, though it cannot be made, may be polished by art, and placed in such situation, as to display that lustre which before was buried among common stones.

It is justly considered as the greatest excellency of art, to imitate nature; but it is necessary to distinguish those parts of nature, which are most proper for imitation: greater care is still required in representing life, which is so often discolored by passion, or deformed by wickedness. If the world be promiscuously described, I cannot see of what use it can be to read the account; or why it may not be as safe to turn the eye immediately upon mankind as upon a mirror which shows all that presents itself without discrimination.

It is therefore not a sufficient vindication of a character, that it is drawn as it appears; for many characters ought never to be drawn: nor of a narrative, that the train of events is agreeable to observation and experience; for that observation which is called knowledge of the world, will be found much more frequently to make men cunning than good. The purpose of these writings is surely not only to show mankind, but to provide that they may be seen hereafter with less hazard; to teach the means of avoiding the snares which are laid by TREACHERY for INNOCENCE, without infusing any wish for that superiority with which the betrayer flatters his vanity; to give the power of counteracting fraud, without the temptation to practise it; to initiate youth by mock encounters in the art of necessary defense, and to increase prudence without impairing virtue.

Many writers, for the sake of following nature, so mingle good and bad qualities in their principal personages, that they are both equally conspicuous; and as we accompany them through their adventures with delight, and are led by degrees to interest ourselves in their favor, we lose the abhorrence of their faults, because they do not hinder our pleasure, or perhaps, regard them with some kindness, for being united with so much merit.

There have been men indeed splendidly wicked, whose endowments threw a brightness on their crimes, and whom scarce any

villany made perfectly detestable, because they never could be wholly divested of their excellencies; but such have been in all ages the great corrupters of the world, and their resemblance ought no more to be preserved, than the art of murdering without pain.

Some have advanced, without due attention to the consequence of this notion, that certain virtues have their correspondent faults, and therefore that to exhibit either apart is to deviate from probability. Thus men are observed by Swift to be "grateful in the same degree as they are resentful." This principle, with others of the same kind, supposes man to act from a brute impulse, and pursue a certain degree of inclination, without any choice of the object; for, otherwise, though it should be allowed that gratitude and resentment arise from the same constitution of the passions, it follows not that they will be equally indulged when reason is consulted; yet, unless that consequence be admitted, this sagacious maxim becomes an empty sound, without any relation to practice or to life.

Nor is it evident, that even the first motions to these effects are always in the same proportion. For pride, which produces quickness of resentment, will obstruct gratitude, by unwillingness to admit that inferiority which obligation implies; and it is very unlikely that he who cannot think he receives a favor, will acknowledge or repay it.

It is of the utmost importance to mankind, that positions of this tendency should be laid open and confuted; for while men consider good and evil as springing from the same root, they will spare the one for the sake of the other, and in judging, if not of others, at least of themselves, will be apt to estimate their virtues by their vices. To this fatal error all those will contribute, who confound the colors of right and wrong, and, instead of helping to settle their boundaries, mix them with so much art, that no common mind is able to disunite them.

In narratives where historical veracity has no place, I cannot discover why there should not be exhibited the most perfect idea of virtue; of virtue not angelical, nor above probability, for what we cannot credit, we shall never imitate, but the highest and purest that humanity can reach, which, exercised in such trials as the various revolutions of things shall bring upon it, may, by conquering some calamities, and enduring others, teach us what we may hope, and what we can perform. Vice, for vice is necessary to be shown, should always disgust; nor should the graces of gaiety, or the dignity of courage, be so united with it, as to reconcile it to the mind. Wherever it appears, it should raise hatred by the malignity of its practices, and contempt by the meanness of its stratagems: for while it is supported by either parts or spirit, it will be seldom heartily abhorred. The Roman tyrant was content to be hated, if he was but feared; and there are thousands of the readers of romances willing to be thought wicked, if they may be allowed to be wits. It is therefore to be steadily inculcated, that virtue is the highest proof of understanding, and the only solid basis of greatness; and that vice is the natural consequence of narrow thoughts; that it begins in mistake, and ends in ignominy.

## THE PRIVATE LIFE OF AN AUTHOR

*The Rambler, No.* 14. *Saturday, May* 5, 1750

*—— Nil fuit unquam*
*Sic impar sibi* —— HOR. *Sat.* 1, 3, 18, 19
Sure such a various creature ne'er was known.
FRANCIS

Among the many inconsistencies which folly produces, or infirmity suffers in the human mind, there has often been observed a manifest and striking contrariety between the life of an author and his writings; and Milton, in a letter to a learned stranger, by whom he had been visited, with great reason congratulates himself upon the consciousness of being found equal to his own character, and having preserved, in a private and familiar interview, that reputation which his works had procured him.

Those whom the appearance of virtue, or the evidence of genius, have tempted to a nearer knowledge of the writer in whose performances they may be found, have indeed had frequent reason to repent their curiosity; the bubble that sparkled before them has become common water at the touch; the phantom of perfection has vanished when they wished to press it to their bosom. They have lost the pleasure of imagining how far humanity may be exalted, and, perhaps, felt themselves less inclined to toil up the steeps of virtue, when they observe those who seem best able to point the way loitering below, as either afraid of the labor, or doubtful of the reward.

It has been long the custom of the Oriental monarchs to hide themselves in gardens and palaces, to avoid the conversation of mankind, and to be known to their subjects only by their edicts. The same policy is no less

necessary to him that writes, than to him that governs; for men would not more patiently submit to be taught, than commanded, by one known to have the same follies and weaknesses with themselves. A sudden intruder into the closet of an author would, perhaps, feel equal indignation with the officer who, having long solicited admission into the presence of Sardanapalus, saw him not consulting upon laws, inquiring into grievances, or modelling armies, but employed in feminine amusements, and directing the ladies in their work.

It is not difficult to conceive, however, that for many reasons a man writes much better than he lives. For without entering into refined speculations, it may be shown much easier to design than to perform. A man proposes his schemes of life in a state of abstraction and disengagement, exempt from the enticements of hope, the solicitations of affection, the importunities of appetite, or the depressions of fear, and is in the same state with him that teaches upon land the art of navigation, to whom the sea is always smooth, and the wind always prosperous.

The mathematicians are well acquainted with the difference between pure science, which has to do only with ideas, and the application of its laws to the use of life, in which they are constrained to submit to the imperfection of matter and the influence of accidents. Thus, in moral discussions, it is to be remembered that many impediments obstruct our practice, which very easily give way to theory. The speculatist is only in danger of erroneous reasoning; but the man involved in life has his own passions, and those of others, to encounter, and is embarrassed with a thousand inconveniencies, which confound him with variety of impulse, and either perplex or obstruct his way. He is forced to act without deliberation, and obliged to choose before he can examine; he is surprised by sudden alterations of the state of things, and changes his measures according to superficial appearances; he is led by others, either because he is indolent, or because he is timorous; he is sometimes afraid to know what is right, and sometimes finds friends or enemies diligent to deceive him.

We are, therefore, not to wonder that most fail, amidst tumult, and snares, and danger, in the observance of those precepts, which they lay down in solitude, safety, and tranquillity, with a mind unbiased, and with liberty unobstructed. It is the condition of our present state to see more than we can attain; the exactest vigilance and caution can never maintain a single day of unmingled innocence, much less can the utmost efforts of incorporated mind reach the summits of Cæsarean power.

It is, however, necessary for the idea of perfection to be proposed, that we may have some object to which our endeavors are to be directed; and he that is most deficient in the duties of life, makes some atonement for his faults, if he warns others against his own failings, and hinders, by the salubrity of his admonitions, the contagion of his example.

Nothing is more unjust, however common, than to charge with hypocrisy him that expresses zeal for those virtues which he neglects to practice; since he may be sincerely convinced of the advantages of conquering his passions, without having yet obtained the victory, as a man may be confident of the advantages of a voyage, or a journey, without having courage or industry to undertake it, and may honestly recommend to others those attempts which he neglects himself.

The interest which the corrupt part of mankind have in hardening themselves against every motive to amendment, has disposed them to give to these contradictions, when they can be produced against the cause of virtue, that weight which they will not allow them in any other case. They see men act in opposition to their interest, without supposing that they do not know it; those who give way to the sudden violence of passion, and forsake the most important pursuits for petty pleasures, are not supposed to have changed their opinions, or to approve their own conduct. In moral or religious questions alone, they determine the sentiments by the actions, and charge every man with endeavoring to impose upon the world, whose writings are not confirmed by his life. They never consider that themselves neglect or practise something every day inconsistently with their own settled judgment, nor discover that the conduct of the advocates for virtue can little increase, or lessen, the obligations of their dictates; argument is to be invalidated only by argument, and is in itself of the same force, whether or not it convinces him by whom it is proposed.

Yet since this prejudice, however unreasonable, is always likely to have some prevalence, it is the duty of every man to take care lest he should hinder the efficacy of his own instructions. When he desires to gain the

belief of others, he should show that he believes himself; and when he teaches the fitness of virtue by his reasonings, he should, by his example, prove its possibility. Thus much at least may be required of him, that he shall not act worse than others because he writes better, nor imagine that, by the merit of his genius, he may claim indulgence beyond mortals of the lower classes, and be excused for want of prudence, or neglect of virtue.

Bacon, in his *History of the Winds*, after having offered something to the imagination as desirable, often proposes lower advantages in its place to the reason as attainable. The same method may be sometimes pursued in moral endeavors which this philosopher has observed in natural inquiries; having first set positive and absolute excellence before us, we may be pardoned though we sink down to humbler virtue, trying, however, to keep our point always in view, and struggling not to lose ground, though we cannot gain it.

It is recorded of Sir Matthew Hale, that he for a long time concealed the consecration of himself to the stricter duties of religion, lest by some flagitious and shameful action he should bring piety into disgrace. For the same reason it may be prudent for a writer, who apprehends that he shall not enforce his own maxims by his domestic character to conceal his name, that he may not injure them.

There are, indeed, a great number whose curiosity to gain a more familiar knowledge of successful writers is not so much prompted by an opinion of their power to improve as to delight, and who expect from them not arguments against vice, or dissertations on temperance or justice, but flights of wit and sallies of pleasantry, or, at least, acute remarks, nice distinctions, justness of sentiment, and elegance of diction.

This expectation is, indeed, specious and probable, and yet, such is the fate of all human hopes, that it is very often frustrated, and those who raise admiration by their books, disgust by their company. A man of letters for the most part spends in the privacies of study that season of life in which the manners are to be softened into ease, and polished into elegance; and, when he has gained knowledge enough to be respected, has neglected the minuter acts by which he might have pleased. When he enters life, if his temper be soft and timorous, he is diffident and bashful, from the knowledge of his defects; or if he was born with spirit and resolution, he is ferocious and arrogant from the consciousness of his merit: he is either dissipated by the awe of company, and unable to recollect his reading and arrange his arguments; or he is hot and dogmatical, quick in opposition and tenacious in defense, disabled by his own violence, and confused by his haste to triumph.

The graces of writing and conversation are of different kinds, and though he who excels in one might have been, with opportunities and application, equally successful in the other, yet as many please by extemporary talk, though utterly unacquainted with the more accurate method and more labored beauties which composition requires; so it is very possible that men wholly accustomed to works of study may be without that readiness of conception and affluence of language always necessary to colloquial entertainment. They may want address to watch the hints which conversation offers for the display of their particular attainments, or they may be so much unfurnished with matter on common subjects that discourse not professedly literary glides over them as heterogeneous bodies, without admitting their conceptions to mix in the circulation.

A transition from an author's book to his conversation is too often like an entrance into a large city after a distant prospect. Remotely, we see nothing but spires of temples and turrets of palaces, and imagine it the residence of splendor, grandeur, and magnificence; but, when we have passed the gates, we find it perplexed with narrow passages, disgraced with despicable cottages, embarrassed with obstructions, and clouded with smoke.

## CRABBED AGE AND YOUTH

*The Rambler, No.* 50. *Saturday, September* 8, 1750

*Credebant quo grande nefas, et morte piandum,*
*Si juvenis vetulo non assurrexerat, et si*
*Barbato cuicunque puer, licet ipse videret*
*Plura domi fraga, et majores glandis acervos.*
JUV. 13, 54–7

And had not men the hoary head revered,
And boys paid reverence when a man appeared,
Both must have died, though richer skins they wore,
And saw more heaps of acorns in their store.
CREECH

I have always thought it the business of those who turn their speculations upon the living world, to commend the virtues, as well as to expose the faults of their contemporaries and to confute a false as well as to support a just accusation; not only because it is peculiarly the business of a monitor to keep his own reputation untainted, lest those who ca

once charge him with partiality, should indulge themselves afterwards in disbelieving him at pleasure; but because he may find real crimes sufficient to give full employment to caution or repentance, without distracting the mind by needless scruples and vain solicitudes.

There are certain fixed and stated reproaches that one part of mankind has in all ages thrown upon another, which are regularly transmitted through continued successions, and which he that has once suffered them is certain to use with the same undistinguishing vehemence, when he has changed his station, and gained the prescriptive right of inflicting on others what he had formerly endured himself.

To these hereditary imputations, of which no man sees the justice, till it becomes his interest to see it, very little regard is to be shown; since it does not appear that they are produced by ratiocination or inquiry, but received implicitly, or caught by a kind of instantaneous contagion, and supported rather by willingness to credit, than ability to prove them.

It has been always the practice of those who are desirous to believe themselves made venerable by length of time, to censure the new comers into life for want of respect to grey hairs and sage experience, for heady confidence in their own understandings, for hasty conclusions upon partial views, for disregard of counsels, which their fathers and grandsires are ready to afford them, and a rebellious impatience of that subordination to which youth is condemned by nature, as necessary to its security from evils into which it would be otherwise precipitated by the rashness of passion, and the blindness of ignorance.

Every old man complains of the growing depravity of the world, of the petulance and insolence of the rising generation. He recounts the decency and regularity of former times, and celebrates the discipline and sobriety of the age in which his youth was passed; a happy age, which is now no more to be expected, since confusion has broken in upon the world, and thrown down all the boundaries of civility and reverence.

It is not sufficiently considered how much he assumes who dares to claim the privilege of complaining; for as every man has, in his own opinion, a full share of the miseries of life, he is inclined to consider all clamorous uneasiness as a proof of impatience rather than of affliction, and to ask, "What merit has this man to show, by which he has acquired a right to repine at the distributions of nature? Or, why does he imagine that exemptions should be granted him from the general condition of man?" We find ourselves excited rather to captiousness than pity, and instead of being in haste to soothe his complaints by sympathy and tenderness, we inquire whether the pain be proportionate to the lamentation; and whether, supposing the affliction real, it is not the effect of vice and folly, rather than calamity.

The querulousness and indignation which is observed so often to disfigure the last scene of life, naturally leads us to inquiries like these. For surely it will be thought at the first view of things, that if age be thus contemned and ridiculed, insulted and neglected, the crime must at least be equal on either part. They who have had opportunities of establishing their authority over minds ductile and unresisting, they who have been the protectors of helplessness, and the instructors of ignorance, and who yet retain in their own hands the power of wealth, and the dignity of command, must defeat their influence by their own misconduct, and make use of all these advantages with very little skill, if they cannot secure to themselves an appearance of respect, and ward off open mockery and declared contempt.

The general story of mankind will evince, that lawful and settled authority is very seldom resisted when it is well employed. Gross corruption, or evident imbecility, is necessary to the suppression of that reverence with which the majority of mankind look upon their governors, and on those whom they see surrounded by splendor, and fortified by power. For though men are drawn by their passions into forgetfulness of invisible rewards and punishments, yet they are easily kept obedient to those who have temporal dominion in their hands, till their veneration is dissipated by such wickedness and folly as can neither be defended nor concealed.

It may, therefore, very reasonably be suspected that the old draw upon themselves the greatest part of those insults which they so much lament, and that age is rarely despised but when it is contemptible. If men imagine that excess of debauchery can be made reverend by time, that knowledge is the consequence of long life, however idly or thoughtlessly employed, that priority of birth will supply the want of steadiness or honesty, can it raise much wonder that their

hopes are disappointed, and that they see their posterity rather willing to trust their own eyes in their progress into life, than enlist themselves under guides who have lost their way?

There are, indeed, many truths which time necessarily and certainly teaches, and which might, by those who have learned them from experience, be communicated to their successors at a cheaper rate: but dictates, though liberally enough bestowed, are generally without effect, the teacher gains few proselytes by instruction which his own behavior contradicts; and young men miss the benefit of counsel, because they are not very ready to believe that those who fall below them in practice, can much excel them in theory. Thus the progress of knowledge is retarded, the world is kept long in the same state, and every new race is to gain the prudence of their predecessors by committing and redressing the same miscarriages.

To secure to the old that influence which they are willing to claim, and which might so much contribute to the improvement of the arts of life, it is absolutely necessary that they give themselves up to the duties of declining years; and contentedly resign to youth its levity, its pleasures, its frolics, and its fopperies. It is a hopeless endeavor to unite the contrarieties of spring and winter; it is unjust to claim the privileges of age, and retain the playthings of childhood. The young always form magnificent ideas of the wisdom and gravity of men whom they consider as placed at a distance from them in the ranks of existence, and naturally look on those whom they find trifling with long beards, with contempt and indignation, like that which women feel at the effeminacy of men. If dotards will contend with boys in those performances in which boys must always excel them; if they will dress crippled limbs in embroidery, endeavor at gaiety with faltering voices, and darken assemblies of pleasure with the ghastliness of disease, they may well expect those who find their diversions obstructed will hoot them away; and that if they descend to competition with youth, they must bear the insolence of successful rivals.

*Lusisti satis, edisti satis atque bibisti:*
*Tempus abire tibi est.*

You've had your share of mirth, of meat and drink;
'Tis time to quit the scene — 'tis time to think.

ELPHINSTON

Another vice of age by which the rising generation may be alienated from it is severity and censoriousness, that gives no allowance to the failings of early life, that expects artfulness from childhood and constancy from youth, that is peremptory in every command and inexorable to every failure. There are many who live merely to hinder happiness, and whose descendants can only tell of long life, that it produces suspicion, malignity, peevishness, and persecution; and yet even these tyrants can talk of the ingratitude of the age, curse their heirs for impatience, and wonder that young men cannot take pleasure in their father's company.

He that would pass the latter part of life with honor and decency, must, when he is young, consider that he shall one day be old; and remember, when he is old, that he has once been young. In youth he must lay up knowledge for his support, when his powers of acting shall forsake him; and in age forbear to animadvert with rigor on faults which experience only can correct.

## THE BUSY LIFE OF A YOUNG LADY

*The Rambler, No.* 191. *Tuesday, January* 14, 1752

*Cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper.*
HOR. *Art of Poetry* 163

The youth ——
Yielding like wax, th' impressive folly bears;
Rough to reproof, and slow to future cares.

FRANCIS

### TO THE RAMBLER

DEAR MR. RAMBLER:

I have been four days confined to my chamber by a cold, which has already kept me from three plays, nine sales, five shows, and six card-tables, and put me seventeen visits behindhand; and the doctor tells my mamma, that if I fret and cry, it will settle in my head, and I shall not be fit to be seen these six weeks. But, dear Mr. Rambler, how can I help it? At this very time Melissa is dancing with the prettiest gentleman; she will breakfast with him to-morrow, and then run to two auctions, and hear compliments, and have presents; then she will be dressed, and visit, and get a ticket to the play; then go to cards and win, and come home with two flambeaux before her chair. Dear Mr. Rambler, who can bear it?

My aunt has just brought me a bundle of your papers for my amusement. She says, you are a philosopher, and will teach me to moderate my desires, and look upon the world with indifference. But, dear sir, I do not wish, nor intend, to moderate my de-

sires, nor can I think it proper to look upon the world with indifference, till the world looks with indifference on me. I have been forced, however, to sit this morning a whole quarter of an hour with your paper before my face; but just as my aunt came in, Phyllida had brought me a letter from Mr. Trip, which I put within the leaves; and read about "absence" and "inconsolableness," and "ardor," and "irresistible passion," and "eternal constancy," while my aunt imagined that I was puzzling myself with your philosophy, and often cried out, when she saw me look confused, "If there is any word that you do not understand, child, I will explain it."

Dear soul! How old people that think themselves wise may be imposed upon! But it is fit that they should take their turn, for I am sure, while they can keep poor girls close in the nursery, they tyrannize over us in a very shameful manner, and fill our imaginations with tales of terror, only to make us live in quiet subjection, and fancy that we can never be safe but by their protection.

I have a mamma and two aunts, who have all been formerly celebrated for wit and beauty, and are still generally admired by those that value themselves upon their understanding, and love to talk of vice and virtue, nature and simplicity, and beauty and propriety; but if there was not some hope of meeting me, scarcely a creature would come near them that wears a fashionable coat. These ladies, Mr. Rambler, have had me under their government fifteen years and a half, and have all that time been endeavoring to deceive me by such representations of life as I now find not to be true; but I know not whether I ought to impute them to ignorance or malice, as it is possible the world may be much changed since they mingled in general conversation.

Being desirous that I should love books, they told me that nothing but knowledge could make me an agreeable companion to men of sense, or qualify me to distinguish the superficial glitter of vanity from the solid merit of understanding; and that a habit of reading would enable me to fill up the vacuities of life without the help of silly or dangerous amusements, and preserve me from the snares of idleness and the inroads of temptation.

But their principal intention was to make me afraid of men; in which they succeeded so well for a time, that I durst not look in their faces, or be left alone with them in a parlor; for they made me fancy that no man ever spoke but to deceive, or looked but to allure; that the girl who suffered him that had once squeezed her hand, to approach her a second time, was on the brink of ruin; and that she who answered a billet, without consulting her relations, gave love such power over her, that she would certainly become either poor or infamous.

From the time that my leading-strings were taken off, I scarce heard any mention of my beauty but from the milliner, the mantua-maker, and my own maid; for my mamma never said more, when she heard me commended, but "The girl is very well," and then endeavored to divert my attention by some inquiry after my needle, or my book.

It is now three months since I have been suffered to pay and receive visits, to dance at public assemblies, to have a place kept for me in the boxes, and to play at Lady Racket's rout; and you may easily imagine what I think of those who have so long cheated me with false expectations, disturbed me with fictitious terrors, and concealed from me all that I have found to make the happiness of woman.

I am so far from perceiving the usefulness or necessity of books, that if I had not dropped all pretensions to learning, I should have lost Mr. Trip, whom I once frighted into another box, by retailing some of Dryden's remarks upon a tragedy; for Mr. Trip declares that he hates nothing like hard words, and, I am sure, there is not a better partner to be found; his very walk is a dance. I have talked once or twice among ladies about principles and ideas, but they put their fans before their faces, and told me I was too wise for them, who for their part never pretended to read anything but the play-bill, and then asked me the price of my best head.

Those vacancies of time which are to be filled up with books I have never yet obtained; for, consider, Mr. Rambler, I go to bed late, and therefore cannot rise early; as soon as I am up, I dress for the gardens; then walk in the park; then always go to some sale or show, or entertainment at the little theatre; then must be dressed for dinner; then must pay my visits; then walk in the park; then hurry to the play; and from thence to the card-table. This is the general course of the day, when there happens nothing extraordinary; but sometimes I ramble into the country, and come back again to a ball; sometimes I am engaged for a whole day and part of the night. If, at any time, I can gain an

hour by not being at home, I have so many things to do, so many orders to give to the milliner, so many alterations to make in my clothes, so many visitants' names to read over, so many invitations to accept or refuse, so many cards to write, and so many fashions to consider, that I am lost in confusion, forced at last to let in company or step into my chair, and leave half my affairs to the direction of my maid.

This is the round of my day; and when shall I either stop my course, or so change it as to want a book? I suppose it cannot be imagined, that any of these diversions will soon be at an end. There will always be gardens, and a park, and auctions, and shows, and playhouses, and cards; visits will always be paid, and clothes always be worn; and how can I have time unemployed upon my hands?

But I am most at a loss to guess for what purpose they related such tragic stories of the cruelty, perfidy, and artifices of men, who, if they ever were so malicious and destructive, have certainly now reformed their manners. I have not, since my entrance into the world, found one who does not profess himself devoted to my service, and ready to live or die as I shall command him. They are so far from intending to hurt me, that their only contention is, who shall be allowed most closely to attend, and most frequently to treat me. When different places of entertainment or schemes of pleasure are mentioned, I can see the eye sparkle and the cheeks glow of him whose proposals obtain my approbation; he then leads me off in triumph, adores my condescension, and congratulates himself that he has lived to the hour of felicity. Are these, Mr. Rambler, creatures to be feared? Is it likely that any injury will be done me by those who can enjoy life only while I favor them with my presence?

As little reason can I yet find to suspect them of stratagems and fraud. When I play at cards, they never take advantage of my mistakes, nor exact from me a rigorous observation of the game. Even Mr. Shuffle, a grave gentleman, who has daughters older than myself, plays with me so negligently, that I am sometimes inclined to believe he loses his money by design, and yet he is so fond of play, that he says he will one day take me to his house in the country, that we may try by ourselves who can conquer. I have not yet promised him; but when the town grows a little empty, I shall think upon it, for I want some trinkets, like Letitia's, to my watch. I do not doubt my luck, but must study some means of amusing[1] my relations.

For all these distinctions I find myself indebted to that beauty which I was never suffered to hear praised, and of which, therefore, I did not before know the full value. The concealment was certainly an intentional fraud, for my aunts have eyes like other people, and I am every day told that nothing but blindness can escape the influence of my charms. Their whole account of that world which they pretend to know so well, has been only one fiction entangled with another; and though the modes of life oblige me to continue some appearances of respect, I cannot think that they, who have been so clearly detected in ignorance or imposture, have any right to the esteem, veneration, or obedience of,

Sir, Yours,

BELLARIA

## THE DECAY OF FRIENDSHIP

*The Idler, No. 23.* *Saturday, September 23, 1758*

Life has no pleasure higher or nobler than that of friendship. It is painful to consider that this sublime enjoyment may be impaired or destroyed by innumerable causes, and that there is no human possession of which the duration is less certain.

Many have talked in very exalted language, of the perpetuity of friendship, of invincible constancy, and unalienable kindness; and some examples have been seen of men who have continued faithful to their earliest choice, and whose affection has predominated over changes of fortune, and contrariety of opinion.

But these instances are memorable, because they are rare. The friendship which is to be practised or expected by common mortals, must take its rise from mutual pleasure, and must end when the power ceases of delighting each other.

Many accidents therefore may happen by which the ardor of kindness will be abated, without criminal baseness or contemptible inconstancy on either part. To give pleasure is not always in our power; and little does he know himself who believes that he can be always able to receive it.

Those who would gladly pass their days together may be separated by the different course of their affairs; and friendship, like love, is destroyed by long absence,

[1] deceiving.

though it may be increased by short intermissions. What we have missed long enough to want it, we value more when it is regained; but that which has been lost till it is forgotten, will be found at last with little gladness, and with still less if a substitute has supplied the place. A man deprived of the companion to whom he used to open his bosom, and with whom he shared the hours of leisure and merriment, feels the day at first hanging heavy on him; his difficulties oppress, and his doubts distract him; he sees time come and go without his wonted gratification, and all is sadness within, and solitude about him. But this uneasiness never lasts long; necessity produces expedients, new amusements are discovered, and new conversation is admitted.

No expectation is more frequently disappointed, than that which naturally arises in the mind from the prospect of meeting an old friend after long separation. We expect the attraction to be revived, and the coalition to be renewed; no man considers how much alteration time has made in himself, and very few inquire what effect it has had upon others. The first hour convinces them that the pleasure which they have formerly enjoyed, is for ever at an end; different scenes have made different impressions; the opinions of both are changed; and that similitude of manners and sentiment is lost which confirmed them both in the approbation of themselves.

Friendship is often destroyed by opposition of interest, not only by the ponderous and visible interest which the desire of wealth and greatness forms and maintains, but by a thousand secret and slight competitions, scarcely known to the mind upon which they operate. There is scarcely any man without some favorite trifle which he values above greater attainments, some desire of petty praise which he cannot patiently suffer to be frustrated. This minute ambition is sometimes crossed before it is known, and sometimes defeated by wanton petulance; but such attacks are seldom made without the loss of friendship; for whoever has once found the vulnerable part will always be feared, and the resentment will burn on in secret, of which shame hinders the discovery.

This, however, is a slow malignity, which a wise man will obviate as inconsistent with quiet, and a good man will repress as contrary to virtue; but human happiness is sometimes violated by some more sudden strokes.

A dispute begun in jest upon a subject which a moment before was on both parts regarded with careless indifference, is continued by the desire of conquest, till vanity kindles into rage, and opposition rankles into enmity. Against this hasty mischief, I know not what security can be obtained; men will be sometimes surprised into quarrels; and though they might both hasten to reconciliation, as soon as their tumult had subsided, yet two minds will seldom be found together, which can at once subdue their discontent, or immediately enjoy the sweets of peace without remembering the wounds of the conflict.

Friendship has other enemies. Suspicion is always hardening the cautious, and disgust repelling the delicate. Very slender differences will sometimes part those whom long reciprocation of civility or beneficence has united. Lonelove and Ranger retired into the country to enjoy the company of each other, and returned in six weeks, cold and petulant; Ranger's pleasure was to walk in the fields, and Lonelove's to sit in a bower; each had complied with the other in his turn, and each was angry that compliance had been exacted.

The most fatal disease of friendship is gradual decay, or dislike hourly increased by causes too slender for complaint, and too numerous for removal. Those who are angry may be reconciled; those who have been injured may receive a recompense: but when the desire of pleasing and willingness to be pleased is silently diminished, the renovation of friendship is hopeless; as, when the vital powers sink into languor, there is no longer any use of the physician.

## JAMES BOSWELL (1740–1795)

If one were to ask any competent literary jury to name the twelve greatest books in the English language, Boswell's *Life of Johnson* would be sure to receive a large number of votes; but if the same jury were asked instead to name the twenty greatest English authors, it is quite possible that Boswell would not appear on any of the lists. So great has been Boswell's success in portraying Johnson that the reader, absorbed by the subject of the biography, neglects the biographer whose excellent art and tireless industry have made it what it is. In more recent years Boswell has begun to receive more adequate attention. C. B. Tinker has published a scholarly edition of his letters (Ox-

ford University Press) and a delightful volume of biographical essays called *Young Boswell* (Atlantic Monthly Press). Boswell's *Account of Corsica* (1768) has recently been republished.

It was in 1763 that James Boswell, descendant of an old Scotch family with estates in Ayrshire, who had studied at Edinburgh and was then about to go to Utrecht in Holland to pursue the study of the law, first met Dr. Johnson. He was a young man of twenty-two; Johnson was thirty years his senior. Boswell had sought the meeting; for it was the passion of his life to associate with the great. His winning manners, his animation and gayety, his unfailing good nature, and his total lack of bashfulness, won him the affectionate acquaintance of the most distinguished men of his day, both in Great Britain and across the Channel. But of all his heroes, Samuel Johnson was the chief, and early in his acquaintance he determined to write Johnson's biography, a determination which received Johnson's approval and help.

In 1785, Boswell published his *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Dr. Johnson*, which was in effect an advance section of the *Life* dealing with a single episode. Six years later, in 1791, appeared the *Life* itself, probably the greatest biography ever written. It is a full length portrait of Johnson — his greatness and his failings, his conversation and his mannerisms, — set against the background of the whole literary life of England in the second half of the eighteenth century.

The standard edition of the *Life* is that of G. B. Hill in six volumes (Oxford University Press); but numerous editions are available. C. G. Osgood has edited a skillful abridgment (Scribner), which reduces the book to about half its full length. By the kind permission of Charles Scribner's Sons, the passages printed below follow Professor Osgood's abridgment; but the omitted passages are indicated by points.

## THE LIFE OF SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D

### FROM THE YEAR 1763

This is to me a memorable year; for in it I had the happiness to obtain the acquaintance of that extraordinary man whose memoirs I am now writing; an acquaintance which I shall ever esteem as one of the most fortunate circumstances in my life. Though then but two-and-twenty, I had for several years read his works with delight and instruction, and had the highest reverence for their author, which had grown up in my fancy into a kind of mysterious veneration, by figuring to myself a state of solemn elevated abstraction, in which I supposed him to live in the immense metropolis of London. Mr. Gentleman, a native of Ireland, who passed some years in Scotland as a player, and as an instructor in the English language, a man whose talents and worth were depressed by misfortunes, had given me a representation of the figure and manner of DICTIONARY JOHNSON! as he was then generally called; and during my first visit to London, which was for three months in 1760, Mr. Derrick the poet, who was Gentleman's friend and countryman, flattered me with hopes that he would introduce me to Johnson, an honor of which I was very ambitious. But he never found an opportunity; which made me doubt that he had promised to do what was not in his power; till Johnson some years afterwards told me, "Derrick, Sir, might very well have introduced you. I had a kindness for Derrick, and am sorry he is dead."

In the summer of 1761 Mr. Thomas Sheridan was at Edinburgh, and delivered lectures upon the English Language and Public Speaking to large and respectable audiences. I was often in his company, and heard him frequently expatiate upon Johnson's extraordinary knowledge, talents, and virtues, repeat his pointed sayings, describe his particularities, and boast of his being his guest sometimes till two or three in the morning. At his house I hoped to have many opportunities of seeing the sage, as Mr. Sheridan obligingly assured me I should not be disappointed.

When I returned to London in the end of 1762, to my surprise and regret I found an irreconcileable difference had taken place between Johnson and Sheridan. A pension of two hundred pounds a year had been given to Sheridan. Johnson, who, as has been already mentioned, thought slightingly of Sheridan's art, upon hearing that he was also pensioned, exclaimed, "What! have they given *him* a pension? Then it is time for me to give up mine." . . .

Johnson complained that a man who disliked him repeated his sarcasm to Mr Sheridan, without telling him what followed which was, that after a pause he added "However, I am glad that Mr. Sheridan has a pension, for he is a very good man." Sheridan could never forgive this hasty contemptuous expression. It rankled in his mind; and though I informed him of all that Johnson said, and that he would be very glad to meet him amicably, he positively declined repeated offers which I made, and once went off abruptly from a house where he and I were engaged to dine, because he was told that Dr. Johnson was to be there. . . .

This rupture with Sheridan deprived Johnson of one of his most agreeable resources for amusement in his lonely evenings; for Sheridan's well-informed, animated, and bustling mind never suffered conversation to stagnate; and Mrs. Sheridan was a most agreeable companion to an intellectual man. She was sensible, ingenious, unassuming, yet communicative. I recollect, with satisfaction, many pleasing hours which I passed with her under the hospitable roof of her husband, who was to me a very kind friend. Her novel, entitled *Memoirs of Miss Sydney Biddulph*, contains an excellent moral while it inculcates a future state of retribution; and what it teaches is impressed upon the mind by a series of as deep distress as can affect humanity, in the amiable and pious heroine who goes to her grave unrelieved, but resigned, and full of hope of "heaven's mercy." Johnson paid her this high compliment upon it: "I know not, Madam, that you have a right, upon moral principles, to make your readers suffer so much."

Mr. Thomas Davies the actor, who then kept a bookseller's shop in Russel-street, Covent-garden, told me that Johnson was very much his friend, and came frequently to his house, where he more than once invited me to meet him; but by some unlucky accident or other he was prevented from coming to us.

Mr. Thomas Davies was a man of good understanding and talents, with the advantage of a liberal education. Though somewhat pompous, he was an entertaining companion; and his literary performances have no inconsiderable share of merit. He was a friendly and very hospitable man. Both he and his wife, (who has been celebrated for her beauty,) though upon the stage for many years, maintained an uniform decency of character; and Johnson esteemed them, and lived in as easy an intimacy with them, as with any family which he used to visit. Mr. Davies recollected several of Johnson's remarkable sayings, and was one of the best of the many imitators of his voice and manner, while relating them. He increased my impatience more and more to see the extraordinary man whose works I highly valued, and whose conversation was reported to be so peculiarly excellent.

At last, on Monday the 16th of May, when I was sitting in Mr. Davies's backparlor, after having drunk tea with him and Mrs. Davies, Johnson unexpectedly came into the shop; and Mr. Davies having perceived him through the glass-door in the room in which we were sitting, advancing towards us, — he announced his aweful approach to me, somewhat in the manner of an actor in the part of Horatio, when he addresses Hamlet on the appearance of his father's ghost, "Look, my Lord, it comes." I found that I had a very perfect idea of Johnson's figure, from the portrait of him painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds soon after he had published his *Dictionary*, in the attitude of sitting in his easy chair in deep meditation, which was the first picture his friend did for him, which Sir Joshua very kindly presented to me, and from which an engraving has been made for this work. Mr. Davies mentioned my name, and respectfully introduced me to him. I was much agitated; and recollecting his prejudice against the Scotch, of which I had heard much, I said to Davies, "Don't tell where I come from." — "From Scotland," cried Davies roguishly. "Mr. Johnson, (said I) I do indeed come from Scotland, but I cannot help it." I am willing to flatter myself that I meant this as light pleasantry to soothe and conciliate him, and not as an humiliating abasement at the expense of my country. But however that might be, this speech was somewhat unlucky; for with that quickness of wit for which he was so remarkable, he seized the expression "come from Scotland," which I used in the sense of being of that country; and, as if I had said that I had come away from it, or left it, retorted, "That, Sir, I find, is what a very great many of your countrymen cannot help." This stroke stunned me a good deal; and when we had sat down, I felt myself not a little embarrassed, and apprehensive of what might come next. He then addressed himself to Davies: "What do you think of Garrick? He has refused me an order for the play for Miss Williams, because he knows the house will be full, and that an order would be worth three shillings." Eager to take any opening to get into conversation with him, I ventured to say, "O, Sir, I cannot think Mr. Garrick would grudge such a trifle to you." "Sir, (said he, with a stern look,) I have known David Garrick longer than you have done: and I know no right you have to talk to me on the subject." Perhaps I deserved this check; for it was rather presumptuous in me, an entire stranger, to express any doubt of the justice of his animadversion upon his old acquaintance and pupil.[1] I now felt myself much mortified,

[1] That this was a momentary sally against Garrick there can be no doubt; for at Johnson's desire he had,

and began to think that the hope which I had long indulged of obtaining his acquaintance was blasted. And, in truth, had not my ardor been uncommonly strong, and my resolution uncommonly persevering, so rough a reception might have deterred me for ever from making any further attempts. Fortunately, however, I remained upon the field not wholly discomfited. . . .

I was highly pleased with the extraordinary vigor of his conversation, and regretted that I was drawn away from it by an engagement at another place. I had, for a part of the evening, been left alone with him, and had ventured to make an observation now and then, which he received very civilly; so that I was satisfied that though there was a roughness in his manner, there was no ill-nature in his disposition. Davies followed me to the door, and when I complained to him a little of the hard blows which the great man had given me, he kindly took upon him to console me by saying, "Don't be uneasy. I can see he likes you very well."

A few days afterwards I called on Davies, and asked him if he thought I might take the liberty of waiting on Mr. Johnson at his Chambers in the Temple. He said I certainly might, and that Mr. Johnson would take it as a compliment. So upon Tuesday the 24th of May, after having been enlivened by the witty sallies of Messieurs Thornton, Wilkes, Churchill and Lloyd, with whom I had passed the morning, I boldly repaired to Johnson. His Chambers were on the first floor of No. 1, Inner-Temple-lane, and I entered them with an impression given me by the Reverend Dr. Blair, of Edinburgh, who had been introduced to him not long before, and described his having "found the Giant in his den;" an expression, which, when I came to be pretty well acquainted with Johnson, I repeated to him, and he was diverted at this picturesque account of himself. Dr. Blair had been presented to him by Dr. James Fordyce. At this time the controversy concerning the pieces published by Mr. James Macpherson, as translations of *Ossian*, was at its height. Johnson had all along denied their authenticity; and, what was still more provoking to their admirers, maintained that they had no merit. The subject having been introduced by Dr. Fordyce, Dr. Blair, relying on the internal evidence of their antiquity, asked Dr. Johnson whether he thought any man of a modern age could have written such poems? Johnson replied, "Yes, Sir, many men, many women, and many children." Johnson, at this time, did not know that Dr. Blair had just published a *Dissertation*, not only defending their authenticity, but seriously ranking them with the poems of *Homer* and *Virgil;* and when he was afterwards informed of this circumstance, he expressed some displeasure at Dr. Fordyce's having suggested the topic, and said, "I am not sorry that they got thus much for their pains. Sir, it was like leading one to talk of a book when the author is concealed behind the door."

He received me very courteously; but, it must be confessed, that his apartment, and furniture, and morning dress, were sufficiently uncouth. His brown suit of clothes looked very rusty; he had on a little old shrivelled unpowdered wig, which was too small for his head; his shirt-neck and knees of his breeches were loose; his black worsted stockings ill drawn up; and he had a pair of unbuckled shoes by way of slippers. But all these slovenly particularities were forgotten the moment that he began to talk. Some gentlemen, whom I do not recollect, were sitting with him; and when they went away, I also rose; but he said to me, "Nay, don't go." "Sir, (said I,) I am afraid that I intrude upon you. It is benevolent to allow me to sit and hear you." He seemed pleased with this compliment, which I sincerely paid him, and answered, "Sir, I am obliged to any man who visits me." I have preserved the following short minute of what passed this day:

"Madness frequently discovers itself merely by unnecessary deviation from the usual modes of the world. My poor friend Smart shewed the disturbance of his mind, by falling upon his knees, and saying his prayers in the street, or in any other unusual place. Now although, rationally speaking, it is greater madness not to pray at all, than to pray as Smart did, I am afraid there are so many who do not pray, that their understanding is not called in question."

Concerning this unfortunate poet, Christopher Smart, who was confined in a madhouse, he had, at another time, the following conversation with Dr. Burney: BURNEY. "How does poor Smart do, Sir; is he likely to recover?" JOHNSON. "It seems as if his

some years before, given a benefit-night at his theatre to this very person, by which she had got two hundred pounds. Johnson, indeed, upon all other occasions, when I was in his company, praised the very liberal charity of Garrick. I once mentioned to him, "It is observed, Sir, that you attack Garrick yourself, but will suffer nobody else to do it." JOHNSON, (smiling) "Why, Sir, that is true." (Boswell.)

mind had ceased to struggle with the disease; for he grows fat upon it." BURNEY. "Perhaps, Sir, that may be from want of exercise." JOHNSON. "No, Sir; he has partly as much exercise as he used to have, for he digs in the garden. Indeed, before his confinement, he used for exercise to walk to the ale-house; but he was *carried* back again. I did not think he ought to be shut up. His infirmities were not noxious to society. He insisted on people praying with him; and I'd as lief pray with Kit Smart as any one else. Another charge was, that he did not love clean linen; and I have no passion for it." — Johnson continued. "Mankind have a great aversion to intellectual labor; but even supposing knowledge to be easily attainable, more people would be content to be ignorant than would take even a little trouble to acquire it." . . .

Talking of Garrick, he said, "He is the first man in the world for sprightly conversation."

When I rose a second time he again pressed me to stay, which I did.

He told me, that he generally went abroad at four in the afternoon, and seldom came home till two in the morning. I took the liberty to ask if he did not think it wrong to live thus, and not make more use of his great talents. He owned it was a bad habit. On reviewing, at the distance of many years, my journal of this period, I wonder how, at my first visit, I ventured to talk to him so freely, and that he bore it with so much indulgence.

Before we parted, he was so good as to promise to favor me with his company one evening at my lodgings; and, as I took my leave, shook me cordially by the hand. It is almost needless to add, that I felt no little elation at having now so happily established an acquaintance of which I had been so long ambitious.

I did not visit him again till Monday, June 13, at which time I recollect no part of his conversation, except that when I told him I had been to see Johnson ride upon three horses, he said, "Such a man, Sir, should be encouraged; for his performances shew the extent of the human powers in one instance, and thus tend to raise our opinion of the faculties of man. He shews what may be attained by persevering application; so that every man may hope, that by giving as much application, although perhaps he may never ride three horses at a time, or dance upon a wire, yet he may be equally expert in whatever profession he has chosen to pursue."

He again shook me by the hand at parting, and asked me why I did not come oftener to him. Trusting that I was now in his good graces, I answered, that he had not given me much encouragement, and reminded him of the check I had received from him at our first interview. "Poh, poh! (said he, with a complacent smile,) never mind these things. Come to me as often as you can. I shall be glad to see you."

I had learnt that his place of frequent resort was the Mitre tavern in Fleet-street, where he loved to sit up late, and I begged I might be allowed to pass an evening with him there soon, which he promised I should. A few days afterwards I met him near Temple-bar, about one o'clock in the morning, and asked if he would then go to the Mitre. "Sir, (said he) it is too late; they won't let us in. But I'll go with you another night with all my heart."

A revolution of some importance in my plan of life had just taken place; for instead of procuring a commission in the foot-guards, which was my own inclination, I had, in compliance with my father's wishes, agreed to study the law; and was soon to set out for Utrecht, to hear the lectures of an excellent Civilian in that University, and then to proceed on my travels. Though very desirous of obtaining Dr. Johnson's advice and instructions on the mode of pursuing my studies, I was at this time so occupied, shall I call it? or so dissipated, by the amusements of London, that our next meeting was not till Saturday, June 25, when happening to dine at Clifton's eating-house, in Butcher-row I was surprised to perceive Johnson come in and take his seat at another table. The mode of dining, or rather being fed, at such houses in London, is well known to many to be particularly unsocial, as there is no Ordinary, or united company, but each person has his own mess, and is under no obligation to hold any intercourse with any one. A liberal and full-minded man, however, who loves to talk, will break through this churlish and unsocial restraint. Johnson and an Irish gentleman got into a dispute concerning the cause of some part of mankind being black. "Why, Sir, (said Johnson,) it has been accounted for in three ways: either by supposing that they are the posterity of Ham, who was cursed; or that GOD at first created two kinds of men, one black and another white; or that by the heat of the sun the skin is scorched, and so acquires a sooty hue. This matter has been much canvassed

among naturalists, but has never been brought to any certain issue." What the Irishman said is totally obliterated from my mind; but I remember that he became very warm and intemperate in his expressions; upon which Johnson rose, and quietly walked away. When he had retired, his antagonist took his revenge, as he thought, by saying, "He has a most ungainly figure, and an affectation of pomposity, unworthy of a man of genius."

Johnson had not observed that I was in the room. I followed him, however, and he agreed to meet me in the evening at the Mitre. I called on him, and we went thither at nine. We had a good supper, and port wine, of which he then sometimes drank a bottle. The orthodox high-church sound of the MITRE, — the figure and manner of the celebrated SAMUEL JOHNSON, — the extraordinary power and precision of his conversation, and the pride arising from finding myself admitted as his companion, produced a variety of sensations, and a pleasing elevation of mind beyond what I had ever before experienced. I find in my journal the following minute of our conversation, which, though it will give but a very faint notion of what passed, is in some degree a valuable record; and it will be curious in this view, as shewing how habitual to his mind were some opinions which appear in his works.

"Colley Cibber, Sir, was by no means a blockhead; but by arrogating to himself too much, he was in danger of losing that degree of estimation to which he was entitled. His friends gave out that he *intended* his birthday *Odes* should be bad: but that was not the case, Sir; for he kept them many months by him, and a few years before he died he shewed me one of them, with great solicitude to render it as perfect as might be, and I made some corrections, to which he was not very willing to submit. I remember the following couplet in allusion to the King and himself:

> 'Perched on the eagle's soaring wing,
> The lowly linnet loves to sing.'

Sir, he had heard something of the fabulous tale of the wren sitting upon the eagle's wing, and he had applied it to a linnet. Cibber's familiar style, however, was better than that which Whitehead has assumed. *Grand* nonsense is insupportable. Whitehead is but a little man to inscribe verses to players. . . .

"Sir, I do not think Gray a first-rate poet. He has not a bold imagination, nor much command of words. The obscurity in which he has involved himself will not persuade us that he is sublime. His *Elegy in a Churchyard* has a happy selection of images, but I don't like what are called his great things. His *Ode* [1] which begins

> 'Ruin seize thee, ruthless King,
> Confusion on thy banners wait!'

has been celebrated for its abruptness, and plunging into the subject all at once. But such arts as these have no merit, unless when they are original. We admire them only once; and this abruptness has nothing new in it. We have had it often before. Nay, we have it in the old song of Johnny Armstrong:

> 'Is there ever a man in all Scotland
> From the highest estate to the lowest degree,'
> &c.

And then, Sir,

> 'Yes there is a man in Westmoreland,
> And Johnny Armstrong they do him call.'

There, now, you plunge at once into the subject. You have no previous narration to lead you to it. The two next lines in that *Ode* are, I think, very good:

> 'Though fanned by conquest's crimson wing,
> They mock the air with idle state.'"

. . . . . .

Finding him in a placid humor, and wishing to avail myself of the opportunity which I fortunately had of consulting a sage, to hear whose wisdom, I conceived in the ardor of youthful imagination, that men filled with a noble enthusiasm for intellectual improvement would gladly have resorted from distant lands; — I opened my mind to him ingenuously, and gave him a little sketch of my life, to which he was pleased to listen with great attention.

I acknowledged, that though educated very strictly in the principles of religion, I had for some time been misled into a certain degree of infidelity; but that I was come now to a better way of thinking, and was fully satisfied of the truth of the Christian revelation, though I was not clear as to every point considered to be orthodox. Being at all times a curious examiner of the human mind, and pleased with an undisguised display of what had passed in it, he called to me with warmth, "Give me your hand; I have taken a liking to you." He then began to descant upon the force of testimony, and

[1] *The Bard.*

ne little we could know of final causes; so nat the objections of, why was it so? or why as it not so? ought not to disturb us: add- ng, that he himself had at one period been uilty of a temporary neglect of religion, but hat it was not the result of argument, but here absence of thought.

After having given credit to reports of his igotry, I was agreeably surprised when he xpressed the following very liberal senti- ent, which has the additional value of bviating an objection to our holy religion, ounded upon the discordant tenets of Christians themselves: "For my part, Sir, think all Christians, whether Papists or Protestants, agree in the essential articles, nd that their differences are trivial, and ather political than religious."

We talked of belief in ghosts. He said, 'Sir, I make a distinction between what a an may experience by the mere strength f his imagination, and what imagination annot possibly produce. Thus, suppose I hould think that I saw a form, and heard voice cry "Johnson, you are a very wicked ellow, and unless you repent you will cer- ainly be punished;" my own unworthiness s so deeply impressed upon my mind, that I night *imagine* I thus saw and heard, and herefore I should not believe that an ex- ernal communication had been made to me. But if a form should appear, and a voice hould tell me that a particular man had died t a particular place, and a particular hour, fact which I had no apprehension of, nor ny means of knowing, and this fact, with ll its circumstances, should afterwards be nquestionably proved, I should, in that ase, be persuaded that I had supernatural ntelligence imparted to me."

Here it is proper, once for all, to give a rue and fair statement of Johnson's way of hinking upon the question, whether de- arted spirits are ever permitted to appear in his world, or in any way to operate upon human life. He has been ignorantly mis- represented as weakly credulous upon that subject; and, therefore, though I feel an inclination to disdain and treat with silent contempt so foolish a notion concerning my illustrious friend, yet as I find it has gained ground, it is necessary to refute it. The real fact then is, that Johnson had a very philosophical mind, and such a rational respect for testimony, as to make him submit his understanding to what was authentically proved, though he could not comprehend why it was so. Being thus disposed, he was willing to inquire into the truth of any relation of supernatural agency, a general belief of which has prevailed in all nations and ages. But so far was he from being the dupe of implicit faith, that he examined the matter with a jealous attention, and no man was more ready to refute its falsehood when he had discovered it. Churchill, in his poem entitled *The Ghost*, availed himself of the absurd credulity imputed to Johnson, and drew a caricature of him under the name of "Pomposo," representing him as one of the believers of the story of a Ghost in Cock- lane, which, in the year 1762, had gained very general credit in London. Many of my readers, I am convinced, are to this hour under an impression that Johnson was thus foolishly deceived. It will therefore surprise them a good deal when they are informed upon undoubted authority, that Johnson was one of those by whom the imposture was detected. The story had become so popular, that he thought it should be investigated; and in this research he was assisted by the Reverend Dr. Douglas, now Bishop of Salis- bury, the great detector of impostures; who informs me, that after the gentlemen who went and examined into the evidence were satisfied of its falsity, Johnson wrote in their presence an account of it, which was pub- lished in the newspapers and *Gentleman's Magazine*, and undeceived the world.

Our conversation proceeded. "Sir, (said he) I am a friend to subordination, as most conducive to the happiness of society. There is a reciprocal pleasure in governing and being governed."

"Dr. Goldsmith is one of the first men we now have as an author, and he is a very worthy man too. He has been loose in his principles, but he is coming right." . . .

I complained to him that I had not yet acquired much knowledge, and asked his advice as to my studies. He said, "Don't talk of study now. I will give you a plan; but it will require some time to consider of it." "It is very good in you (I replied,) to allow me to be with you thus. Had it been foretold to me some years ago that I should pass an evening with the author of *The Rambler*, how should I have exulted!" What I then expressed, was sincerely from the heart. He was satisfied that it was, and cordially answered, "Sir, I am glad we have met. I hope we shall pass many evenings and mornings too, together." We finished a couple of bottles of port, and sat till between one and two in the morning. . . .

As Dr. Oliver Goldsmith will frequently appear in this narrative, I shall endeavor to make my readers in some degree acquainted with his singular character. He was a native of Ireland, and a contemporary with Mr. Burke at Trinity College, Dublin, but did not then give much promise of future celebrity. He, however, observed to Mr. Malone, that "though he made no great figure in mathematics, which was a study in much repute there, he could turn an Ode of Horace into English better than any of them." He afterwards studied physic at Edinburgh, and upon the Continent; and I have been informed, was enabled to pursue his travels on foot, partly by demanding at Universities to enter the lists as a disputant, by which, according to the custom of many of them, he was entitled to the premium of a crown, when luckily for him his challenge was not accepted; so that, as I once observed to Dr. Johnson, he *disputed* his passage through Europe. He then came to England, and was employed successively in the capacities of an usher to an academy, a corrector of the press, a reviewer, and a writer for a news-paper. He had sagacity enough to cultivate assiduously the acquaintance of Johnson, and his faculties were gradually enlarged by the contemplation of such a model. To me and many others it appeared that he studiously copied the manner of Johnson, though, indeed, upon a smaller scale.

At this time I think he had published nothing with his name, though it was pretty generally known that *one Dr. Goldsmith* was the author of *An Enquiry into the present State of polite Learning in Europe*, and of *The Citizen of the World*, a series of letters supposed to be written from London by a Chinese. No man had the art of displaying with more advantage as a writer, whatever literary acquisitions he made. "*Nihil quod tetigit non ornavit.*" [1] His mind resembled a fertile, but thin soil. There was a quick, but not a strong vegetation, of whatever chanced to be thrown upon it. No deep root could be struck. The oak of the forest did not grow there; but the elegant shrubbery and the fragrant parterre appeared in gay succession. It has been generally circulated and believed that he was a mere fool in conversation; but, in truth, this has been greatly exaggerated. He had, no doubt, a more than common share of that hurry of ideas which we often find in his countrymen, and which sometimes produces a laughable confusion in expressing them. He was very much what the French call *un étourdi*, and from vanity and an eager desire of being conspicuous wherever he was, he frequently talked carelessly without knowledge of the subject, or even without thought. His person was short, his countenance coarse and vulgar, his deportment that of a scholar awkwardly affecting the easy gentleman. Those who were in any way distinguished, excited envy in him to so ridiculous an excess, that the instances of it are hardly credible. When accompanying two beautiful young ladies with their mother on a tour in France, he was seriously angry that more attention was paid to them than to him; and once at the exhibition of the *Fantoccini* in London, when those who sat next him observed with what dexterity a puppet was made to toss a pike, he could not bear that it should have such praise, and exclaimed with some warmth, "Pshaw! I can do it better myself."

He boasted to me at this time of the power of his pen in commanding money, which I believe was true in a certain degree, though in the instance he gave he was by no means correct. He told me that he had sold a novel for four hundred pounds. This was his *Vicar of Wakefield*. But Johnson informed me, that he had made the bargain for Goldsmith, and the price was sixty pounds. "And, Sir, (said he,) a sufficient price too when it was sold; for then the fame of Goldsmith had not been elevated, as it afterwards was, by his *Traveller;* and the bookseller had such faint hopes of profit by his bargain, that he kept the manuscript by him a long time and did not publish it till after *The Traveller* had appeared. Then, to be sure, it was accidentally worth more money."

Mrs. Piozzi and Sir John Hawkins have strangely misstated the history of Goldsmith's situation and Johnson's friendly interference, when this novel was sold. I shall give it authentically from Johnson's own exact narration: — "I received one morning a message from poor Goldsmith that he was in great distress, and as it was not in his power to come to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was drest, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired he would

[1] "He touched nothing without adorning it."

e calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He hen told me that he had a novel ready for he press, which he produced to me. I ooked into it, and saw its merit; told the andlady I should soon return, and having one to a bookseller, sold it for sixty pounds. brought Goldsmith the money, and he lischarged his rent, not without rating his andlady in a high tone for having used him o ill."

My next meeting with Johnson was on riday the 1st of July, when he and I and Dr. Goldsmith supped together at the Mitre. was before this time pretty well acquainted with Goldsmith, who was one of the brightest ornaments of the Johnsonian school. Goldsmith's respectful attachment to Johnson was then at its height; for his own literary reputation had not yet distinguished him so much as to excite a vain desire of competition with his great Master. He had increased my admiration of the goodness of Johnson's heart, by incidental remarks in the course of conversation, such as, when I mentioned Mr. Levet, whom he entertained under his roof, "He is poor and honest, which is recommendation enough to Johnson;" and when I wondered that he was very kind to a man of whom I had heard a very bad character, "He is now become miserable, and that insures the protection of Johnson." . . .

He talked very contemptuously of Churchill's poetry, observing, that "it had a temporary currency, only from its audacity of abuse, and being filled with living names, and that it would sink into oblivion." I ventured to hint that he was not quite a fair judge, as Churchill had attacked him violently. JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, I am a very fair judge. He did not attack me violently till he found I did not like his poetry; and his attack on me shall not prevent me from continuing to say what I think of him, from an apprehension that it may be ascribed to resentment. No, Sir, I called the fellow a blockhead at first, and I will call him a blockhead still. However, I will acknowledge that I have a better opinion of him now, than I once had; for he has shewn more fertility than I expected. To be sure, he is a tree that cannot produce good fruit: he only bears crabs. But, Sir, a tree that produces a great many crabs is better than a tree which produces only a few." . . .

Let me here apologize for the imperfect manner in which I am obliged to exhibit Johnson's conversation at this period. In the early part of my acquaintance with him, I was so wrapt in admiration of his extraordinary colloquial talents, and so little accustomed to his peculiar mode of expression, that I found it extremely difficult to recollect and record his conversation with its genuine vigor and vivacity. In progress of time, when my mind was, as it were, *strongly impregnated with the Johnsonian æther*, I could, with much more facility and exactness, carry in my memory and commit to paper the exuberant variety of his wisdom and wit.

At this time *Miss* Williams, as she was then called, though she did not reside with him in the Temple under his roof, but had lodgings in Bolt-court, Fleet-street, had so much of his attention, that he every night drank tea with her before he went home, however late it might be, and she always sat up for him. This, it may be fairly conjectured, was not alone a proof of his regard for *her*, but of his own unwillingness to go into solitude, before that unseasonable hour at which he had habituated himself to expect the oblivion of repose. Dr. Goldsmith, being a privileged man, went with him this night, strutting away, and calling to me with an air of superiority, like that of an esoteric over an exoteric disciple of a sage of antiquity, "I go to Miss Williams." I confess, I then envied him this mighty privilege, of which he seemed so proud; but it was not long before I obtained the same mark of distinction.

On Tuesday the 5th of July, I again visited Johnson. . . .

Talking of London, he observed, "Sir, if you wish to have a just notion of the magnitude of this city, you must not be satisfied with seeing its great streets and squares, but must survey the innumerable little lanes and courts. It is not in the showy evolutions of buildings, but in the multiplicity of human habitations which are crowded together, that the wonderful immensity of London consists." . . .

On Wednesday, July 6, he was engaged to sup with me at my lodgings in Downing-street, Westminster. But on the preceding night my landlord having behaved very rudely to me and some company who were with me, I had resolved not to remain another night in his house. I was exceedingly uneasy at the awkward appearance I supposed I should make to Johnson and the other gentlemen whom I had invited, not being able to receive them at home, and being obliged to order supper at the Mitre.

I went to Johnson in the morning, and talked of it as a serious distress. He laughed, and said, "Consider, Sir, how insignificant this will appear a twelvemonth hence." — Were this consideration to be applied to most of the little vexatious incidents of life, by which our quiet is too often disturbed, it would prevent many painful sensations. I have tried it frequently, with good effect. "There is nothing (continued he) in this mighty misfortune; nay, we shall be better at the Mitre." . . .

I had as my guests this evening at the Mitre tavern, Dr. Johnson, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Thomas Davies, Mr. Eccles, an Irish gentleman, for whose agreeable company I was obliged to Mr. Davies, and the Reverend Mr. John Ogilvie, who was desirous of being in company with my illustrious friend, while I, in my turn, was proud to have the honor of shewing one of my countrymen upon what easy terms Johnson permitted me to live with him.

Goldsmith, as usual, endeavored, with too much eagerness, to *shine*, and disputed very warmly with Johnson against the well-known maxim of the British constitution, "the King can do no wrong;" affirming, that "what was morally false could not be politically true; and as the King might, in the exercise of his regal power, command and cause the doing of what was wrong, it certainly might be said, in sense and in reason, that he could do wrong." JOHNSON. "Sir, you are to consider, that in our constitution, according to its true principles, the King is the head; he is supreme; he is above every thing, and there is no power by which he can be tried. Therefore, it is, Sir, that we hold the King can do no wrong; that whatever may happen to be wrong in government may not be above our reach, by being ascribed to Majesty. Redress is always to be had against oppression, by punishing the immediate agents. The King, though he should command, cannot force a Judge to condemn a man unjustly; therefore it is the Judge whom we prosecute and punish. Political institutions are formed upon the consideration of what will most frequently tend to the good of the whole, although now and then exceptions may occur. Thus it is better in general that a nation should have a supreme legislative power, although it may at times be abused. And then, Sir, there is this consideration, that *if the abuse be enormous, Nature will rise up, and claiming her original rights, overturn a corrupt political system.*" I mark this animated sentence with peculiar pleasure, as a noble instance of that true dignified spirit of freedom which ever glowed in his heart, though he was charged with slavish tenets by superficial observers; because he was at all times indignant against that false patriotism, that pretended love of freedom, that unruly restlessness, which is inconsistent with the stable authority of any good government. . . .

"Bayle's *Dictionary* is a very useful work for those to consult who love the biographical part of literature, which is what I love most."

Talking of the eminent writers in Queen Anne's reign, he observed, "I think Dr. Arbuthnot the first man among them. He was the most universal genius, being an excellent physician, a man of deep learning and a man of much humor. Mr. Addison was, to be sure, a great man; his learning was not profound; but his morality, his humor and his elegance of writing, set him very high."

Mr. Ogilvie was unlucky enough to choose for the topic of his conversation the praises of his native country. He began with saying that there was very rich land round Edinburgh. Goldsmith, who had studied physic there, contradicted this, very untruly, with a sneering laugh. Disconcerted a little by this, Mr. Ogilvie then took new ground where, I suppose, he thought himself perfectly safe; for he observed, that Scotland had a great many noble wild prospects. JOHNSON. "I believe, Sir, you have a great many. Norway, too, has noble wild prospects; and Lapland is remarkable for prodigious noble wild prospects. But, Sir, let me tell you, the noblest prospect which a Scotchman ever sees, is the high road that leads him to England!" This unexpected and pointed sally produced a roar of applause. After all, however, those, who admire the rude grandeur of Nature, cannot deny it to Caledonia.

On Saturday, July 9, I found Johnson surrounded with a numerous levee, but have not preserved any part of his conversation. On the 14th we had another evening by ourselves at the Mitre. It happening to be a very rainy night, I made some common-place observations on the relaxation of nerves and depression of spirits which such weather occasioned; adding, however, that it was good for the vegetable creation. Johnson, who, as we have already seen, denied that the temperature of the air had any influence on the human frame, answered, with a smile of

ridicule. "Why yes, Sir, it is good for vegetables, and for the animals who eat those vegetables, and for the animals who eat those animals." This observation of his aptly enough introduced a good supper; and I soon forgot, in Johnson's company, the influence of a moist atmosphere.

Feeling myself now quite at ease as his companion, though I had all possible reverence for him, I expressed a regret that I could not be so easy with my father, though he was not much older than Johnson, and certainly however respectable had not more learning and greater abilities to depress me. I asked him the reason of this. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, I am a man of the world. I live in the world, and I take, in some degree, the color of the world as it moves along. Your father is a Judge in a remote part of the island, and all his notions are taken from the old world. Besides, Sir, there must always be a struggle between a father and son, while one aims at power and the other at independence." . . .

He enlarged very convincingly upon the excellence of rhyme over blank verse in English poetry. I mentioned to him that Dr. Adam Smith, in his lectures upon composition, when I studied under him in the College of Glasgow, had maintained the same opinion strenuously, and I repeated some of his arguments. JOHNSON. "Sir, I was once in company with Smith, and we did not take to each other; but had I known that he loved rhyme as much as you tell me he does, I should have HUGGED him." . . .

"Idleness is a disease which must be combated; but I would not advise a rigid adherence to a particular plan of study. I myself have never persisted in any plan for two days together. A man ought to read just as inclination leads him; for what he reads as a task will do him little good. A young man should read five hours in a day, and so may acquire a great deal of knowledge." . . .

To such a degree of unrestrained frankness had he now accustomed me, that in the course of this evening I talked of the numerous reflections which had been thrown out against him on account of his having accepted a pension from his present Majesty. "Why, Sir, (said he, with a hearty laugh,) it is a mighty foolish noise that they make.[1] I have accepted of a pension as a reward which has been thought due to my literary merit; and now that I have this pension, I am the same man in every respect that I have ever been; I retain the same principles. It is true, that I cannot now curse (smiling) the House of Hanover; nor would it be decent for me to drink King James's health in the wine that King George gives me money to pay for. But, Sir, I think that the pleasure of cursing the House of Hanover, and drinking King James's health, are amply overbalanced by three hundred pounds a year."

There was here, most certainly, an affectation of more Jacobitism than he really had. . . . Yet there is no doubt that at earlier periods he was wont often to exercise both his pleasantry and ingenuity in talking Jacobitism. My much respected friend, Dr. Douglas, now Bishop of Salisbury, has favored me with the following admirable instance from his Lordship's own recollection. One day, when dining at old Mr. Langton's where Miss Roberts, his niece, was one of the company, Johnson, with his usual complacent attention to the fair sex, took her by the hand and said, "My dear, I hope you are a Jacobite." Old Mr. Langton, who, though a high and steady Tory, was attached to the present Royal Family, seemed offended, and asked Johnson, with great warmth, what he could mean by putting such a question to his niece? "Why, Sir, (said Johnson) I meant no offence to your niece, I meant her a great compliment. A Jacobite, Sir, believes in the divine right of Kings. He that believes in the divine right of Kings believes in a Divinity. A Jacobite believes in the divine right of Bishops. He that believes in the divine right of Bishops believes in the divine authority of the Christian religion. Therefore, Sir, a Jacobite is neither an Atheist nor a Deist. That cannot be said of a Whig; for *Whiggism is a negation of all principle.*" [1]

He advised me, when abroad, to be as much as I could with the Professors in the Universities, and with the Clergy; for from their conversation I might expect the best accounts of every thing in whatever country I should be, with the additional advantage of keeping my learning alive.

It will be observed, that when giving me advice as to my travels, Dr. Johnson did not dwell upon cities, and palaces, and pictures,

1 When I mentioned the same idle clamor to him several years afterwards, he said, with a smile, "I wish my pension were twice as large, that they might make twice as much noise." (Boswell.)

1 He used to tell, with great humor, from my relation to him, the following little story of my early years, which was literally true: "Boswell, in the year 1745, was a fine boy, wore a white cockade, and prayed for King James, till one of his uncles (General Cochran) gave him a shilling on condition that he should pray for King George, which he accordingly did. So you see (says Boswell) that *Whigs of all ages are made the same way.*" (Boswell.)

and shows, and Arcadian scenes. He was of Lord Essex's opinion, who advises his kinsman Roger Earl of Rutland, "rather to go an hundred miles to speak with one wise man, than five miles to see a fair town."

I described to him an impudent fellow from Scotland, who affected to be a savage, and railed at all established systems. JOHNSON. "There is nothing surprising in this, Sir. He wants to make himself conspicuous. He would tumble in a hogstye, as long as you looked at him and called to him to come out. But let him alone, never mind him, and he'll soon give it over."

I added, that the same person maintained that there was no distinction between virtue and vice. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, if the fellow does not think as he speaks, he is lying; and I see not what honor he can propose to himself from having the character of a liar. But if he does really think that there is no distinction between virtue and vice, why, Sir, when he leaves our houses let us count our spoons." . . .

He recommended to me to keep a journal of my life, full and unreserved. He said it would be a very good exercise, and would yield me great satisfaction when the particulars were faded from my remembrance. I was uncommonly fortunate in having had a previous coincidence of opinion with him upon this subject, for I had kept such a journal for some time; and it was no small pleasure to me to have this to tell him, and to receive his approbation. He counselled me to keep it private, and said I might surely have a friend who would burn it in case of my death. From this habit I have been enabled to give the world so many anecdotes, which would otherwise have been lost to posterity. I mentioned that I was afraid I put into my journal too many little incidents. JOHNSON. "There is nothing, Sir, too little for so little a creature as man. It is by studying little things that we attain the great art of having as little misery and as much happiness as possible."

Next morning Mr. Dempster happened to call on me, and was so much struck even with the imperfect account which I gave him of Dr. Johnson's conversation, that to his honor be it recorded, when I complained that drinking port and sitting up late with him affected my nerves for some time after, he said, "One had better be palsied at eighteen than not keep company with such a man."

On Tuesday, July 18, I found tall Sir Thomas Robinson sitting with Johnson. Sir Thomas said, that the king of Prussia valued himself upon three things; — upon being a hero, a musician, and an author. JOHNSON. "Pretty well, Sir, for one man. As to his being an author, I have not looked at his poetry; but his prose is poor stuff. He writes just as you might suppose Voltaire's footboy to do, who has been his amanuensis. He has such parts as the valet might have, and about as much of the coloring of the style as might be got by transcribing his works." When I was at Ferney, I repeated this to Voltaire, in order to reconcile him somewhat to Johnson, whom he, in affecting the English mode of expression, had previously characterized as "a superstitious dog"; but after hearing such a criticism on Frederick the Great, with whom he was then on bad terms, he exclaimed, "An honest fellow!" . . .

Mr. Levet this day shewed me Dr. Johnson's library, which was contained in two garrets over his Chambers, where Lintot, son of the celebrated bookseller of that name, had formerly his warehouse. I found a number of good books, but very dusty and in great confusion. The floor was strewed with manuscript leaves, in Johnson's own handwriting, which I beheld with a degree of veneration, supposing they perhaps might contain portions of *The Rambler* or of *Rasselas*. I observed an apparatus for chymical experiments, of which Johnson was all his life very fond. The place seemed to be very favorable for retirement and meditation. Johnson told me, that he went up thither without mentioning it to his servant, when he wanted to study, secure from interruption; for he would not allow his servant to say he was not at home when he really was. "A servant's strict regard for truth, (said he) must be weakened by such a practice. A philosopher may know that it is merely a form of denial; but few servants are such nice distinguishers. If I accustom a servant to tell a lie for *me*, have I not reason to apprehend that he will tell many lies for *himself*." . . .

Mr. Temple, now vicar of St. Gluvias, Cornwall, who had been my intimate friend for many years, had at this time chambers in Farrar's-buildings, at the bottom of Inner Temple-lane, which he kindly lent me upon my quitting my lodgings, he being to return to Trinity Hall, Cambridge. I found them particularly convenient for me, as they were so near Dr. Johnson's.

On Wednesday, July 20, Dr. Johnson, Mr.

Dempster, and my uncle Dr. Boswell, who happened to be now in London, supped with me at these Chambers. JOHNSON. "Pity is not natural to man. Children are always cruel. Savages are always cruel. Pity is acquired and improved by the cultivation of reason. We may have uneasy sensations from seeing a creature in distress, without pity; for we have not pity unless we wish to relieve them. When I am on my way to dine with a friend, and finding it late, have bid the coachman make haste, if I happen to attend when he whips his horses, I may feel unpleasantly that the animals are put to pain, but I do not wish him to desist. No, Sir, I wish him to drive on." . . .

Rousseau's treatise on the inequality of mankind was at this time a fashionable topic. It gave rise to an observation by Mr. Dempster, that the advantages of fortune and rank were nothing to a wise man, who ought to value only merit. JOHNSON. "If man were a savage, living in the woods by himself, this might be true; but in civilized society we all depend upon each other, and our happiness is very much owing to the good opinion of mankind. Now, Sir, in civilized society, external advantages make us more respected. A man with a good coat upon his back meets with a better reception than he who has a bad one. Sir, you may analyze this, and say what is there in it? But that will avail you nothing, for it is a part of a general system. Pound St. Paul's Church into atoms, and consider any single atom; it is, to be sure, good for nothing: but, put all these atoms together, and you have St. Paul's Church. So it is with human felicity, which is made up of many ingredients, each of which may be shewn to be very insignificant. In civilized society, personal merit will not serve you so much as money will. Sir, you may make the experiment. Go into the street, and give one man a lecture on morality, and another a shilling, and see which will respect you most. If you wish only to support nature, Sir William Petty fixes your allowance at three pounds a year; but as times are much altered, let us call it six pounds. This sum will fill your belly, shelter you from the weather, and even get you a strong lasting coat, supposing it to be made of good bull's hide. Now, Sir, all beyond this is artificial, and is desired in order to obtain a greater degree of respect from our fellow-creatures. And, Sir, if six hundred pounds a year procure a man more consequence, and, of course, more happiness than six pounds a year, the same proportion will hold as to six thousand, and so on as far as opulence can be carried. Perhaps he who has a large fortune may not be so happy as he who has a small one; but that must proceed from other causes than from his having the large fortune: for, *cæteris paribus*,[1] he who is rich in a civilized society, must be happier than he who is poor; as riches, if properly used, (and it is a man's own fault if they are not,) must be productive of the highest advantages. Money, to be sure, of itself is of no use; for its only use is to part with it. Rousseau, and all those who deal in paradoxes, are led away by a childish desire of novelty. When I was a boy, I used always to choose the wrong side of a debate, because most ingenious things, that is to say, most new things, could be said upon it. Sir, there is nothing for which you may not muster up more plausible arguments, than those which are urged against wealth and other external advantages. Why, now, there is stealing; why should it be thought a crime? When we consider by what unjust methods property has been often acquired, and that what was unjustly got it must be unjust to keep, where is the harm in one man's taking the property of another from him? Besides, Sir, when we consider the bad use that many people make of their property, and how much better use the thief may make of it, it may be defended as a very allowable practice. Yet, Sir, the experience of mankind has discovered stealing to be so very bad a thing, that they make no scruple to hang a man for it. When I was running about this town a very poor fellow, I was a great arguer for the advantages of poverty; but I was, at the same time, very sorry to be poor. Sir, all the arguments which are brought to represent poverty as no evil, shew it to be evidently a great evil. You never find people laboring to convince you that you may live very happily upon a plentiful fortune. — So you hear people talking how miserable a King must be; and yet they all wish to be in his place."

It was suggested that Kings must be unhappy, because they are deprived of the greatest of all satisfactions, easy and unreserved society. JOHNSON. "That is an ill-founded notion. Being a King does not exclude a man from such society. Great Kings have always been social. The King of Prussia,[2] the only great King at present, is very social. Charles the Second, the last

1 other things being equal.
2 Frederick the Great.

King of England who was a man of parts, was social; and our Henrys and Edwards were all social."

Mr. Dempster having endeavored to maintain that intrinsic merit *ought* to make the only distinction amongst mankind. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, mankind have found that this cannot be. How shall we determine the proportion of intrinsic merit? Were that to be the only distinction amongst mankind, we should soon quarrel about the degrees of it. Were all distinctions abolished, the strongest would not long acquiesce, but would endeavor to obtain a superiority by their bodily strength. But, Sir, as subordination is very necessary for society, and contentions for superiority very dangerous, mankind, that is to say, all civilized nations, have settled it upon a plain invariable principle. A man is born to hereditary rank; or his being appointed to certain offices, gives him a certain rank. Subordination tends greatly to human happiness. Were we all upon an equality, we should have no other enjoyment than mere animal pleasure." . . .

He took care to guard himself against any possible suspicion that his settled principles of reverence for rank and respect for wealth were at all owing to mean or interested motives; for he asserted his own independence as a literary man. "No man (said he) who ever lived by literature, has lived more independently than I have done." He said he had taken longer time than he needed to have done in composing his *Dictionary*. He received our compliments upon that great work with complacency, and told us that the *Academia della Crusca* [1] could scarcely believe that it was done by one man. . . .

At night Mr. Johnson and I supped in a private room at the Turk's Head coffee-house, in the Strand. "I encourage this house (said he;) for the mistress of it is a good civil woman, and has not much business."

"Sir, I love the acquaintance of young people; because, in the first place, I don't like to think myself growing old. In the next place, young acquaintances must last longest, if they do last; and then, Sir, young men have more virtue than old men: they have more generous sentiments in every respect. I love the young dogs of this age: they have more wit and humor and knowledge of life than we had; but then the dogs are not so good scholars. Sir, in my early years I read very hard. It is a sad reflection, but a true one, that I knew almost as much at eighteen as I do now. My judgement, to be sure, was not so good; but I had all the facts. I remember very well, when I was at Oxford, an old gentleman said to me, 'Young man, ply your book diligently now, and acquire a stock of knowledge; for when years come upon you, you will find that poring upon books will be but an irksome task.'" . . .

He again insisted on the duty of maintaining subordination of rank. "Sir, I would no more deprive a nobleman of his respect, than of his money. I consider myself as acting a part in the great system of society, and I do to others as I would have them to do to me. I would behave to a nobleman as I should expect he would behave to me, were I a nobleman and he Sam. Johnson. Sir, there is one Mrs. Macaulay [1] in this town, a great republican. One day when I was at her house, I put on a very grave countenance, and said to her, 'Madam, I am now become a convert to your way of thinking. I am convinced that all mankind are upon an equal footing; and to give you an unquestionable proof, Madam, that I am in earnest, here is a very sensible, civil, well-behaved fellow-citizen, your footman; I desire that he may be allowed to sit down and dine with us.' I thus, Sir, shewed her the absurdity of the levelling doctrine. She has never liked me since. Sir, your levellers wish to level *down* as far as themselves; but they cannot bear levelling *up* to themselves. They would all have some people under them; why not then have some people above them?" I mentioned a certain author who disgusted me by his forwardness, and by shewing no deference to noblemen into whose company he was admitted. JOHNSON. "Suppose a shoemaker should claim an equality with him, as he does with a Lord; how he would stare. 'Why Sir, do you stare? (says the shoemaker,) I do great service to society. 'Tis true I am paid for doing it; but so are you, Sir: and I am sorry to say it, paid better than I am for doing something not so necessary. For mankind could do better without your books than without my shoes.' Thus, Sir, there would be a perpetual struggle for precedence were there no fixed invariable rules for the distinction of rank, which creates no jealousy, as it is allowed to be accidental." . . .

He said he would go to the Hebrides with

1 This Academy had compiled a dictionary of the Italian language.

1 This *one* Mrs. Macaulay was the same personage who afterwards made herself so much known as "the celebrated female historian." (Boswell.)

me, when I returned from my travels, unless some very good companion should offer when I was absent, which he did not think probable; adding, "There are few people to whom I take so much to as you." And when I talked of my leaving England, he said with a very affectionate air, "My dear Boswell, I should be very unhappy at parting, did I think we were not to meet again." I cannot too often remind my readers, that although such instances of his kindness are doubtless very flattering to me, yet I hope my recording them will be ascribed to a better motive than to vanity; for they afford unquestionable evidence of his tenderness and complacency, which some, while they were forced to acknowledge his great powers, have been so strenuous to deny.

He maintained that a boy at school was the happiest of human beings. I supported a different opinion, from which I have never yet varied, that a man is happier; and I enlarged upon the anxiety and sufferings which are endured at school. JOHNSON. "Ah! Sir, a boy's being flogged is not so severe as a man's having the hiss of the world against him." . . .

On Tuesday, July 26, I found Mr. Johnson alone. It was a very wet day, and I again complained of the disagreeable effects of such weather. JOHNSON. "Sir, this is all imagination, which physicians encourage; for man lives in air, as a fish lives in water; so that if the atmosphere press heavy from above, there is an equal resistance from below. To be sure, bad weather is hard upon people who are obliged to be abroad; and men cannot labor so well in the open air in bad weather, as in good: but, Sir, a smith or a tailor, whose work is within doors, will surely do as much in rainy weather, as in fair. Some very delicate frames, indeed, may be affected by wet weather; but not common constitutions."

We talked of the education of children; and I asked him what he thought was best to teach them first. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is no matter what you teach them first, any more than what leg you shall put into your breeches first. Sir, you may stand disputing which is best to put in first, but in the mean time your breech is bare. Sir, while you are considering which of two things you should teach your child first, another boy has learnt them both."

On Thursday, July 28, we again supped in private at the Turk's Head coffee-house. JOHNSON. "Swift has a higher reputation than he deserves. His excellence is strong sense; for his humor, though very well, is not remarkably good. I doubt whether *The Tale of a Tub* be his; for he never owned it, and it is much above his usual manner."

"Thomson, I think, had as much of the poet about him as most writers. Every thing appeared to him through the medium of his favorite pursuit. He could not have viewed those two candles burning but with a poetical eye." . . .

"As to the Christian religion, Sir, besides the strong evidence which we have for it, there is a balance in its favor from the number of great men who have been convinced of its truth, after a serious consideration of the question. Grotius was an acute man, a lawyer, a man accustomed to examine evidence, and he was convinced. Grotius was not a recluse, but a man of the world, who certainly had no bias to the side of religion. Sir Isaac Newton set out an infidel, and came to be a very firm believer."

He this evening recommended to me to perambulate Spain. I said it would amuse him to get a letter from me dated at Salamancha. JOHNSON. "I love the University of Salamancha; for when the Spaniards were in doubt as to the lawfulness of their conquering America, the University of Salamancha gave it as their opinion that it was not lawful." He spoke this with great emotion, and with that generous warmth which dictated the lines in his *London*, against Spanish encroachment.

I expressed my opinion of my friend Derrick as but a poor writer. JOHNSON. "To be sure, Sir, he is; but you are to consider that his being a literary man has got for him all that he has. It has made him King of Bath. Sir, he has nothing to say for himself but that he is a writer. Had he not been a writer, he must have been sweeping the crossings in the streets, and asking halfpence from every body that past."

In justice, however, to the memory of Mr. Derrick, who was my first tutor in the ways of London, and shewed me the town in all its variety of departments, both literary and sportive, the particulars of which Dr. Johnson advised me to put in writing, it is proper to mention what Johnson, at a subsequent period, said of him both as a writer and an editor: "Sir, I have often said, that if Derrick's letters had been written by one of a more established name, they would have been thought very pretty letters." And, "I sent Derrick to Dryden's relations to gather

materials for his life; and I believe he got all that I myself should have got." . . .

Johnson said once to me, "Sir, I honor Derrick for his presence of mind. One night, when Floyd, another poor author, was wandering about the streets in the night, he found Derrick fast asleep upon a bulk; upon being suddenly waked, Derrick started up, 'My dear Floyd, I am sorry to see you in this destitute state; will you go home with me to *my lodgings?*"'

I again begged his advice as to my method of study at Utrecht. "Come, (said he) let us make a day of it. Let us go down to Greenwich and dine, and talk of it there." The following Saturday was fixed for this excursion.

As we walked along the Strand to-night, arm in arm, a woman of the town accosted us, in the usual enticing manner. "No, no, my girl, (said Johnson) it won't do." He, however, did not treat her with harshness, and we talked of the wretched life of such women; and agreed, that much more misery than happiness, upon the whole, is produced by illicit commerce between the sexes.

On Saturday, July 30, Dr. Johnson and I took a sculler at the Temple-stairs, and set out for Greenwich. I asked him if he really thought a knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages an essential requisite to a good education. JOHNSON. "Most certainly, Sir; for those who know them have a very great advantage over those who do not. Nay, Sir, it is wonderful what a difference learning makes upon people even in the common intercourse of life, which does not appear to be much connected with it." "And yet, (said I) people go through the world very well, and carry on the business of life to good advantage, without learning." JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, that may be true in cases where learning cannot possibly be of any use; for instance, this boy rows us as well without learning, as if he could sing the song of Orpheus to the Argonauts, who were the first sailors." He then called to the boy, "What would you give, my lad, to know about the Argonauts?" "Sir, (said the boy,) I would give what I have." Johnson was much pleased with his answer, and we gave him a double fare. Dr. Johnson then turning to me, "Sir (said he) a desire of knowledge is the natural feeling of mankind; and every human being, whose mind is not debauched, will be willing to give all that he has to get knowledge."

We landed at the Old Swan, and walked to Billingsgate, where we took oars, and moved smoothly along the silver Thames. It was a very fine day. We were entertained with the immense number and variety of ships that were lying at anchor, and with the beautiful country on each side of the river.

I talked of preaching, and of the great success which those called Methodists have. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is owing to their expressing themselves in a plain and familiar manner, which is the only way to do good to the common people, and which clergymen of genius and learning ought to do from a principle of duty, when it is suited to their congregations; a practice, for which they will be praised by men of sense. To insist against drunkenness as a crime, because it debases reason, the noblest faculty of man, would be of no service to the common people: but to tell them that they may die in a fit of drunkenness, and shew them how dreadful that would be, cannot fail to make a deep impression. Sir, when your Scotch clergy give up their homely manner, religion will soon decay in that country." Let this observation, as Johnson meant it, be ever remembered.

I was much pleased to find myself with Johnson at Greenwich, which he celebrates in his *London* as a favorite scene. I had the poem in my pocket, and read the lines aloud with enthusiasm:

"On Thames's banks in silent thought we stood:
Where Greenwich smiles upon the silver flood:
Pleased with the seat which gave ELIZA birth,
We kneel, and kiss the consecrated earth."

Afterwards he entered upon the business of the day, which was to give me his advice as to a course of study. . . .

We walked in the evening in Greenwich Park. He asked me, I suppose, by way of trying my disposition, "Is not this very fine?" Having no exquisite relish of the beauties of Nature, and being more delighted with "the busy hum of men," I answered, "Yes, Sir; but not equal to Fleet-street." JOHNSON. "You are right, Sir."

I am aware that many of my readers may censure my want of taste. Let me, however, shelter myself under the authority of a very fashionable Baronet in the brilliant world, who, on his attention being called to the fragrance of a May evening in the country, observed, "This may be very well; but, for my part, I prefer the smell of a flambeau at the playhouse."

We stayed so long at Greenwich, that our sail up the river, in our return to London,

was by no means so pleasant as in the morning; for the night air was so cold that it made me shiver. I was the more sensible of it from having sat up all the night before, recollecting and writing in my journal what I thought worthy of preservation; an exertion, which, during the first part of my acquaintance with Johnson, I frequently made. I remember having sat up four nights in one week, without being much incommoded in the day time.

Johnson, whose robust frame was not in the least affected by the cold, scolded me, as if my shivering had been a paltry effeminacy, saying, "Why do you shiver?" Sir William Scott, of the Commons, told me, that when he complained of a head-ache in the post-chaise, as they were travelling together to Scotland, Johnson treated him in the same manner: "At your age, Sir, I had no head-ache." . . .

We concluded the day at the Turk's Head coffee-house very socially. He was pleased to listen to a particular account which I gave him of my family, and of its hereditary estate, as to the extent and population of which he asked questions, and made calculations; recommending, at the same time, a liberal kindness to the tenantry, as people over whom the proprietor was placed by Providence. He took delight in hearing my description of the romantic seat of my ancestors. "I must be there, Sir, (said he) and we will live in the old castle; and if there is not a room in it remaining, we will build one. I was highly flattered, but could scarcely indulge a hope that Auchinleck would indeed be honored by his presence, and celebrated by a description, as it afterwards was, in his *Journey to the Western Islands*.

After we had again talked of my setting out for Holland, he said, "I must see thee out of England; I will accompany you to Harwich." I could not find words to express what I felt upon this unexpected and very great mark of his affectionate regard.

Next day, Sunday, July 31, I told him I had been that morning at a meeting of the people called Quakers, where I had heard a woman preach. JOHNSON. "Sir, a woman's preaching is like a dog's walking on his hinder legs. It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all."

On Tuesday, August 2 (the day of my departure from London having been fixed for the 5th,) Dr. Johnson did me the honor to pass a part of the morning with me at my Chambers. He said, that "he always felt an inclination to do nothing." I observed, that it was strange to think that the most indolent man in Britain had written the most laborious work, *The English Dictionary*. . . .

I had now made good my title to be a privileged man, and was carried by him in the evening to drink tea with Miss Williams, whom, though under the misfortune of having lost her sight, I found to be agreeable in conversation; for she had a variety of literature, and expressed herself well; but her peculiar value was the intimacy in which she had long lived with Johnson, by which she was well acquainted with his habits, and knew how to lead him on to talk.

After tea he carried me to what he called his walk, which was a long narrow paved court in the neighborhood, overshadowed by some trees. There we sauntered a considerable time; and I complained to him that my love of London and of his company was such, that I shrunk almost from the thought of going away, even to travel, which is generally so much desired by young men. He roused me by manly and spirited conversation. He advised me, when settled in any place abroad, to study with an eagerness after knowledge, and to apply to Greek an hour every day; and when I was moving about, to read diligently the great book of mankind.

On Wednesday, August 3, we had our last social evening at the Turk's Head coffee-house, before my setting out for foreign parts. I had the misfortune, before we parted, to irritate him unintentionally. I mentioned to him how common it was in the world to tell absurd stories of him, and to ascribe to him very strange sayings. JOHNSON. "What do they make me say, Sir?" BOSWELL. "Why, Sir, as an instance very strange indeed, (laughing heartily as I spoke,) David Hume told me, you said that you would stand before a battery of cannon, to restore the Convocation to its full powers." Little did I apprehend that he had actually said this: but I was soon convinced of my error; for, with a determined look, he thundered out "And would I not, Sir? Shall the Presbyterian *Kirk* of Scotland have its General Assembly, and the Church of England be denied its Convocation?" He was walking up and down the room while I told him the anecdote; but when he uttered this explosion of high-church zeal, he had come close to my chair, and his eyes flashed with indignation. I bowed to the storm, and diverted the force of it, by leading him to expatiate on the influence which religion derived from maintaining the

church with great external respectability. . . .

On Friday, August 5, we set out early in the morning in the Harwich stage coach. A fat elderly gentlewoman, and a young Dutchman, seemed the most inclined among us to conversation. At the inn where we dined, the gentlewoman said that she had done her best to educate her children; and particularly that she had never suffered them to be a moment idle. JOHNSON. "I wish, madam, you would educate me too; for I have been an idle fellow all my life." "I am sure, Sir, (said she) you have not been idle." JOHNSON. "Nay, Madam, it is very true; and that gentleman there (pointing to me,) has been idle. He was idle at Edinburgh. His father sent him to Glasgow, where he continued to be idle. He then came to London, where he has been very idle; and now he is going to Utrecht, where he will be as idle as ever." I asked him privately how he could expose me so. JOHNSON. "Poh, poh! (said he) they knew nothing about you, and will think of it no more." In the afternoon the gentlewoman talked violently against the Roman Catholics, and of the horrors of the Inquisition. To the utter astonishment of all the passengers but myself, who knew that he could talk upon any side of a question, he defended the Inquisition, and maintained, that "false doctrine should be checked on its first appearance; that the civil power should unite with the church in punishing those who dared to attack the established religion, and that such only were punished by the Inquisition." He had in his pocket *Pomponius Mela de situ Orbis*, in which he read occasionally, and seemed very intent upon ancient geography. Though by no means niggardly, his attention to what was generally right was so minute, that having observed at one of the stages that I ostentatiously gave a shilling to the coachman, when the custom was for each passenger to give only six-pence, he took me aside and scolded me, saying that what I had done would make the coachman dissatisfied with all the rest of the passengers, who gave him no more than his due. This was just reprimand; for in whatever way a man may indulge his generosity or his vanity in spending his money, for the sake of others he ought not to raise the price of any article for which there is a constant demand. . . .

At supper this night he talked of good eating with uncommon satisfaction. "Some people (said he,) have a foolish way of not minding, or pretending not to mind, what they eat. For my part, I mind my belly very studiously, and very carefully; for I look upon it, that he who does not mind his belly will hardly mind anything else." He now appeared to me *Jean Bull philosophe*,[1] and he was, for the moment, not only serious but vehement. Yet I have heard him, upon other occasions, talk with great contempt of people who were anxious to gratify their palates; and the 206th number of his *Rambler* is a masterly essay against gulosity. His practice, indeed, I must acknowledge, may be considered as casting the balance of his different opinions upon this subject; for I never knew any man who relished good eating more than he did. When at table, he was totally absorbed in the business of the moment; his looks seemed rivetted to his plate; nor would he, unless when in very high company, say one word, or even pay the least attention to what was said by others, till he had satisfied his appetite, which was so fierce, and indulged with such intenseness, that while in the act of eating, the veins of his forehead swelled, and generally a strong perspiration was visible. To those whose sensations were delicate, this could not but be disgusting; and it was doubtless not very suitable to the character of a philosopher, who should be distinguished by self-command. But it must be owned, that Johnson, though he could be rigidly *abstemious*, was not a *temperate* man either in eating or drinking. He could refrain, but he could not use moderately. He told me, that he had fasted two days without inconvenience, and that he had never been hungry but once. They who beheld with wonder how much he eat upon all occasions when his dinner was to his taste, could not easily conceive what he must have meant by hunger; and not only was he remarkable for the extraordinary quantity which he eat, but he was, or affected to be, a man of very nice discernment in the science of cookery. He used to descant critically on the dishes which had been at table where he had dined or supped, and to recollect very minutely what he had liked. I remember when he was in Scotland, his praising "*Gordon's palates*," (a dish of palates at the Honorable Alexander Gordon's) with a warmth of expression which might have done honor to more important subjects. "As for Maclaurin's imitation of a *made dish*, it was a wretched attempt." He about the same time was so much displeased with the performances of a nobleman's French cook, that he exclaimed with vehemence, "I'd throw

1 John Bull as philosopher.

uch a rascal into the river;" and he then proceeded to alarm a lady at whose house he was to sup, by the following manifesto of his skill: "I, Madam, who live at a variety of good tables, am a much better judge of cookery, than any person who has a very tolerable cook, but lives much at home; for his palate is gradually adapted to the taste of his cook; whereas, Madam, in trying by a wider range, I can more exquisitely judge." When invited to dine, even with an intimate friend, he was not pleased if something better than a plain dinner was not prepared for him. I have heard him say on such an occasion, "This was a good dinner enough, to be sure; but it was not a dinner to *ask* a man to." On the other hand, he was wont to express, with great glee, his satisfaction when he had been entertained quite to his mind. One day when we had dined with his neighbor and landlord in Bolt-court, Mr. Allen, the printer, whose old housekeeper had studied his taste in every thing, he pronounced this eulogy: "Sir, we could not have had a better dinner had there been a *Synod of Cooks*."

While we were left by ourselves, after the Dutchman had gone to bed, Dr. Johnson talked of that studied behavior which many have recommended and practised. He disapproved of it; and said, "I never considered whether I should be a grave man, or a merry man, but just let inclination, for the time, have its course." . . .

I teased him with fanciful apprehensions of unhappiness. A moth having fluttered round the candle, and burnt itself, he laid hold of this little incident to admonish me; saying, with a sly look, and in a solemn but quiet tone, "That creature was its own tormentor, and I believe its name was BOSWELL."

Next day we got to Harwich to dinner; and my passage in the packet-boat to Helvoetsluys being secured, and my baggage put on board, we dined at our inn by ourselves. I happened to say it would be terrible if he should not find a speedy opportunity of returning to London, and be confined to so dull a place. JOHNSON. "Don't Sir, accustom yourself to use big words for little matters. It would *not* be *terrible*, though I *were* to be detained some time here." . . .

We went and looked at the church, and having gone into it and walked up to the altar, Johnson, whose piety was constant and fervent, sent me to my knees, saying, "Now that you are going to leave your native country, recommend yourself to the protection of your CREATOR and REDEEMER."

After we came out of the church, we stood talking for some time together of Bishop Berkeley's ingenious sophistry to prove the non-existence of matter, and that every thing in the universe is merely ideal. I observed, that though we are satisfied his doctrine is not true, it is impossible to refute it. I never shall forget the alacrity with which Johnson answered, striking his foot with mighty force against a large stone, till he rebounded from it, "I refute it *thus*." . . .

My revered friend walked down with me to the beach, where we embraced and parted with tenderness, and engaged to correspond by letters. I said, "I hope, Sir, you will not forget me in my absence." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, it is more likely you should forget me, than that I should forget you." As the vessel put out to sea, I kept my eyes upon him for a considerable time, while he remained rolling his majestic frame in his usual manner: and at last I perceived him walk back into the town, and he disappeared.

### FROM THE YEAR 1776

I am now to record a very curious incident in Dr. Johnson's Life, which fell under my own observation; of which *pars magna fui*,[1] and which I am persuaded will, with the liberal-minded, be much to his credit.

My desire of being acquainted with celebrated men of every description, had made me, much about the same time, obtain an introduction to Dr. Samuel Johnson and to John Wilkes, Esq.[2] Two men more different could perhaps not be selected out of all mankind. They had even attacked one another with some asperity in their writings; yet I lived in habits of friendship with both. I could fully relish the excellence of each; for I have ever delighted in that intellectual chemistry, which can separate good qualities from evil in the same person.

Sir John Pringle, "mine own friend and my Father's friend," between whom and Dr. Johnson I in vain wished to establish an acquaintance, as I respected and lived in intimacy with both of them, observed to me once, very ingeniously, "It is not in friendship as in mathematics where two things each equal to a third, are equal between themselves. You agree with Johnson as a middle quality, and you agree with me as a middle quality; but Johnson and I should not agree." Sir John was not sufficiently flexible; so I desisted; knowing, indeed, that the repulsion

1 I was myself no small part.
2 A radical politician and political agitator.

was equally strong on the part of Johnson; who, I know not from what cause, unless his being a Scotchman, had formed a very erroneous opinion of Sir John. But I conceived an irresistible wish, if possible, to bring Dr. Johnson and Mr. Wilkes together. How to manage it, was a nice and difficult matter.

My worthy booksellers and friends, Messieurs Dilly in the Poultry, at whose hospitable and well-covered table I have seen a greater number of literary men, than at any other, except that of Sir Joshua Reynolds, had invited me to meet Mr. Wilkes and some more gentlemen on Wednesday, May 15. "Pray (said I,) let us have Dr. Johnson." — "What with Mr. Wilkes? not for the world, (said Mr. Edward Dilly:) Dr. Johnson would never forgive me." — "Come, (said I,) if you'll let me negotiate for you, I will be answerable that all shall go well." DILLY. "Nay, if you will take it upon you, I am sure I shall be very happy to see them both here."

Notwithstanding the high veneration which I entertained for Dr. Johnson, I was sensible that he was sometimes a little actuated by the spirit of contradiction, and by means of that I hoped I should gain my point. I was persuaded that if I had come upon him with a direct proposal, "Sir, will you dine in company with Jack Wilkes?" he would have flown into a passion, and would probably have answered, "Dine with Jack Wilkes, Sir! I'd as soon dine with Jack Ketch."[1] I therefore, while we were sitting quietly by ourselves at his house in an evening, took occasion to open my plan thus: — "Mr. Dilly, Sir, sends his respectful compliments to you, and would be happy if you would do him the honor to dine with him on Wednesday next along with me, as I must soon go to Scotland." JOHNSON. "Sir, I am obliged to Mr. Dilly. I will wait upon him —" BOSWELL. "Provided, Sir, I suppose, that the company which he is to have, is agreeable to you." JOHNSON. "What do you mean, Sir? What do you take me for? Do you think I am so ignorant of the world as to imagine that I am to prescribe to a gentleman what company he is to have at his table?" BOSWELL. "I beg your pardon, Sir, for wishing to prevent you from meeting people whom you might not like. Perhaps he may have some of what he calls his patriotic friends with him." JOHNSON. "Well, Sir, and what then? What care *I* for his *patriotic friends?* Poh!" BOSWELL. "I should not be surprised to find Jack Wilkes there." JOHNSON. "And if Jack Wilkes *should* be there, what is that to *me*, Sir? My dear friend, let us have no more of this. I am sorry to be angry with you; but really it is treating me strangely to talk to me as if I could not meet any company whatever, occasionally." BOSWELL. "Pray forgive me, Sir: I meant well. But you shall meet whoever comes, for me." Thus I secured him, and told Dilly that he would find him very well pleased to be one of his guests on the day appointed.

Upon the much-expected Wednesday, I called on him about half an hour before dinner, as I often did when we were to dine out together, to see that he was ready in time, and to accompany him. I found him buffeting his books, as upon a former occasion, covered with dust, and making no preparation for going abroad. "How is this, Sir? (said I.) Don't you recollect that you are to dine at Mr. Dilly's?" JOHNSON. "Sir, I did not think of going to Dilly's: it went out of my head. I have ordered dinner at home with Mrs. Williams." BOSWELL. "But, my dear Sir, you know you were engaged to Mr. Dilly, and I told him so. He will expect you, and will be much disappointed if you don't come." JOHNSON. "You must talk to Mrs. Williams about this."

Here was a sad dilemma. I feared that what I was so confident I had secured would yet be frustrated. He had accustomed himself to shew Mrs. Williams such a degree of humane attention, as frequently imposed some restraint upon him; and I knew that if she should be obstinate, he would not stir. I hastened down stairs to the blind lady's room, and told her I was in great uneasiness, for Dr. Johnson had engaged to me to dine this day at Mr. Dilly's, but that he had told me he had forgotten his engagement, and had ordered dinner at home. "Yes, Sir, (said she, pretty peevishly,) Dr. Johnson is to dine at home." — "Madam, (said I,) his respect for you is such, that I know he will not leave you unless you absolutely desire it. But as you have so much of his company, I hope you will be good enough to forego it for a day; as Mr. Dilly is a very worthy man, has frequently had agreeable parties at his house for Dr. Johnson, and will be vexed if the Doctor neglects him to-day. And then, Madam, be pleased to consider my situation; I carried the message, and I assured Mr. Dilly that Dr. Johnson was to come, and no doubt he has made a dinner, and invited a

[1] A famous public executioner of the seventeenth century, whose name was later applied to any hangman.

company, and boasted of the honor he expected to have. I shall be quite disgraced if the Doctor is not there." She gradually softened to my solicitations, which were certainly as earnest as most entreaties to ladies upon any occasion, and was graciously pleased to empower me to tell Dr. Johnson, "That all things considered, she thought he should certainly go." I flew back to him, still in dust, and careless of what should be the event, "indifferent in his choice to go or stay;" but as soon as I had announced to him Mrs. Williams' consent, he roared, "Frank,[1] a clean shirt," and was very soon drest. When I had him fairly seated in a hackney-coach with me, I exulted as much as a fortune-hunter who has got an heiress into a post-chaise with him to set out for Gretna-Green.

When we entered Mr. Dilly's drawing room, he found himself in the midst of a company he did not know. I kept myself snug and silent, watching how he would conduct himself. I observed him whispering to Mr. Dilly, "Who is that gentleman, Sir?" — "Mr. Arthur Lee." — JOHNSON. "Too, too, too," (under his breath,) which was one of his habitual mutterings. Mr. Arthur Lee could not but be very obnoxious to Johnson, for he was not only a *patriot* but an *American*. He was afterwards minister from the United States at the court of Madrid. "And who is the gentleman in lace?" — "Mr. Wilkes, Sir." This information confounded him still more; he had some difficulty to restrain himself, and taking up a book, sat down upon a window-seat and read, or at least kept his eye upon it intently for some time, till he composed himself. His feelings, I dare say, were awkward enough. But he no doubt recollected his having rated me for supposing that he could be at all disconcerted by any company, and he, therefore, resolutely set himself to behave quite as an easy man of the world, who could adapt himself at once to the disposition and manners of those whom he might chance to meet.

The cheering sound of "Dinner is upon the table," dissolved his reverie, and we *all* sat down without any symptom of ill humor. There were present, beside Mr. Wilkes, and Mr. Arthur Lee, who was an old companion of mine when he studied physic at Edinburgh, Mr. (now Sir John) Miller, Dr. Lettsom, and Mr. Slater the druggist. Mr. Wilkes placed himself next to Dr. Johnson, and behaved to him with so much attention and politeness, that he gained upon him insensibly. No man eat more heartily than Johnson, or loved better what was nice and delicate. Mr. Wilkes was very assiduous in helping him to some fine veal. "Pray give me leave, Sir: — It is better here — A little of the brown — Some fat, Sir — A little of the stuffing — Some gravy — Let me have the pleasure of giving you some butter — Allow me to recommend a squeeze of this orange; — or the lemon, perhaps, may have more zest." — "Sir, Sir, I am obliged to you, Sir," cried Johnson, bowing, and turning his head to him with a look for some time of "surly virtue," but, in a short while, of complacency.

Foote,[1] being mentioned, Johnson said, "He is not a good mimic." One of the company added, "A merry Andrew, a buffoon." JOHNSON. "But he has wit too, and is not deficient in ideas, or in fertility and variety of imagery, and not empty of reading; he has knowledge enough to fill up his part. One species of wit he has in an eminent degree, that of escape. You drive him into a corner with both hands; but he's gone, Sir, when you think you have got him — like an animal that jumps over your head. Then he has a great range for wit; he never lets truth stand between him and a jest, and he is sometimes mighty coarse. Garrick is under many restraints from which Foote is free." WILKES. "Garrick's wit is more like Lord Chesterfield's." JOHNSON. "The first time I was in company with Foote was at Fitzherbert's. Having no good opinion of the fellow, I was resolved not to be pleased; and it is very difficult to please a man against his will. I went on eating my dinner pretty sullenly, affecting not to mind him. But the dog was so very comical, that I was obliged to lay down my knife and fork, throw myself back upon my chair, and fairly laugh it out. No, Sir, he was irresistible. He upon one occasion experienced, in an extraordinary degree, the efficacy of his powers of entertaining. Amongst the many and various modes which he tried of getting money, he became a partner with a small-beer brewer, and he was to have a share of the profits for procuring customers amongst his numerous acquaintance. Fitzherbert was one who took his small-beer; but it was so bad that the servants resolved not to drink it. They were at some loss how to notify their resolution, being afraid of offending their master, who they knew liked Foote much as a companion. At last they fixed upon a little

1 Francis Barber, Johnson's negro servant.

1 Samuel Foote, dramatist and actor.

black boy, who was rather a favorite, to be their deputy, and deliver their remonstrance; and having invested him with the whole authority of the kitchen, he was to inform Mr. Fitzherbert, in all their names, upon a certain day, that they would drink Foote's small-beer no longer. On that day Foote happened to dine at Fitzherbert's, and this boy served at table; he was so delighted with Foote's stories, and merriment, and grimace, that when he went down stairs, he told them, 'This is the finest man I have ever seen. I will not deliver your message. I will drink his small-beer.'

Somebody observed that Garrick could not have done this. WILKES. "Garrick would have made the small-beer still smaller. He is now leaving the stage; but he will play *Scrub* all his life." I knew that Johnson would let nobody attack Garrick but himself, as Garrick once said to me, and I had heard him praise his liberality; so to bring out his commendation of his celebrated pupil, I said, loudly, "I have heard Garrick is liberal." JOHNSON. "Yes, Sir, I know that Garrick has given away more money than any man in England that I am acquainted with, and that not from ostentatious views. Garrick was very poor when he began life; so when he came to have money, he probably was very unskilful in giving away, and saved when he should not. But Garrick began to be liberal as soon as he could; and I am of opinion, the reputation of avarice which he has had, has been very lucky for him, and prevented his having many enemies. You despise a man for avarice, but do not hate him. Garrick might have been much better attacked for living with more splendor than is suitable to a player: if they had had the wit to have assaulted him in that quarter, they might have galled him more. But they have kept clamoring about his avarice, which has rescued him from much obloquy and envy."

Talking of the great difficulty of obtaining authentic information for biography, Johnson told us, "When I was a young fellow I wanted to write the *Life of Dryden*, and in order to get materials, I applied to the only two persons then alive who had seen him; these were old Swinney, and old Cibber. Swinney's information was no more than this, "That at Will's coffee-house Dryden had a particular chair for himself, which was set by the fire in winter, and was then called his winter-chair; and that it was carried out for him to the balcony in summer, and was then called his summer-chair.' Cibber could tell no more but 'That he remembered him a decent old man, arbiter of critical disputes at Will's.' You are to consider that Cibber was then at a great distance from Dryden, had perhaps one leg only in the room, and durst not draw in the other." BOSWELL. "Yet Cibber was a man of observation?" JOHNSON. "I think not." BOSWELL. "You will allow his *Apology* to be well done." JOHNSON. "Very well done, to be sure, Sir. That book is a striking proof of the justice of Pope's remark:

'Each might his several province well command
Would all but stoop to what they understand.'"

BOSWELL. "And his plays are good." JOHNSON. "Yes; but that was his trade; *l'esprit du corps:* he had been all his life among players and play-writers. I wondered that he had so little to say in conversation, for he had kept the best company, and learnt all that can be got by the ear. He abused Pindar to me, and then shewed me an Ode of his own, with an absurd couplet, making a linnet soar on an eagle's wing. I told him that when the ancients made a simile, they always made it like something real."

Mr. Wilkes remarked, that "among all the bold flights of Shakespeare's imagination, the boldest was making Birnam-wood march to Dunsinane; creating a wood where there never was a shrub; a wood in Scotland! ha! ha! ha!" And he also observed, that "the clannish slavery of the Highlands of Scotland was the single exception to Milton's remark of 'The Mountain Nymph, sweet Liberty,' being worshipped in all hilly countries." — "When I was at Inverary (said he,) on a visit to my old friend, Archibald, Duke of Argyle, his dependents congratulated me on being such a favorite of his Grace. I said, 'It is then, gentlemen, truly lucky for me; for if I had displeased the Duke, and he had wished it, there is not a Campbell among you but would have been ready to bring John Wilkes's head to him in a charger. It would have been only

'Off with his head! So much for Aylesbury.'

I was then member for Aylesbury." . . .

Mr. Arthur Lee mentioned some Scotch who had taken possession of a barren part of America, and wondered why they should choose it. JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, all barrenness is comparative. The *Scotch* would not know it to be barren." BOSWELL. "Come, come, he is flattering the English. You have now been in Scotland, Sir, and say if you did

not see meat and drink enough there." JOHNSON. "Why yes, Sir; meat and drink enough to give the inhabitants sufficient strength to run away from home." All these quick and lively sallies were said sportively, quite in jest, and with a smile, which showed that he meant only wit. Upon this topic he and Mr. Wilkes could perfectly assimilate; here was a bond of union between them, and I was conscious that as both of them had visited Caledonia, both were fully satisfied of the strange narrow ignorance of those who imagine that it is a land of famine. But they amused themselves with persevering in the old jokes. When I claimed a superiority for Scotland over England in one respect, that no man can be arrested there for a debt merely because another swears it against him; but there must first be the judgement of a court of law ascertaining its justice; and that a seizure of the person, before judgement is obtained, can take place only, if his creditor should swear that he is about to fly from the country, or, as it is technically expressed, is *in meditatione fugæ:* WILKES. "That, I should think, may be safely sworn of all the Scotch nation." JOHNSON. (to Mr. Wilkes,) "You must know, Sir, I lately took my friend Boswell and shewed him genuine civilized life in an English provincial town. I turned him loose at Lichfield, my native city, that he might see for once real civility: for you know he lives among savages in Scotland, and among rakes in London." WILKES. "Except when he is with grave, sober, decent people like you and me." JOHNSON. (smiling,) "And we ashamed of him."

They were quite frank and easy. Johnson told the story of his asking Mrs. Macaulay to allow her footman to sit down with them, to prove the ridiculousness of the argument for the equality of mankind; and he said to me afterwards, with a nod of satisfaction, "You saw Mr. Wilkes acquiesced." Wilkes talked with all imaginable freedom of the ludicrous title given to the Attorney-General, *Diabolus Regis;*[1] adding, "I have reason to know something about that officer; for I was prosecuted for a libel." Johnson, who many people would have supposed must have been furiously angry at hearing this talked of so lightly, said not a word. He was now, *indeed,* "a good-humored fellow."

After dinner we had an accession of Mrs. Knowles, the Quaker lady, well known for her various talents, and of Mr. Alderman Lee. Amidst some patriotic groans, somebody (I think the Alderman) said, "Poor old England is lost." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is not so much to be lamented that Old England is lost, as that the Scotch have found it." WILKES. "Had Lord Bute governed Scotland only, I should not have taken the trouble to write his eulogy, and dedicate *Mortimer* to him."[1]

Mr. Wilkes held a candle to shew a fine print of a beautiful female figure which hung in the room, and pointed out the elegant contour of the bosom with the finger of an arch connoisseur. He afterwards, in a conversation with me, waggishly insisted, that all the time Johnson shewed visible signs of a fervent admiration of the corresponding charms of the fair Quaker.

This record, though by no means so perfect as I could wish, will serve to give a notion of a very curious interview, which was not only pleasing at the time, but had the agreeable and benignant effect of reconciling any animosity, and sweetening any acidity, which in the various bustle of political contest, had been produced in the minds of two men, who though widely different, had so many things in common — classical learning, modern literature, wit, and humor, and ready repartee — that it would have been much to be regretted if they had been for ever at a distance from each other.

Mr. Burke gave me much credit for this successful *negotiation;* and pleasantly said, that "there was nothing to equal it in the whole history of the *Corps Diplomatique.*"

I attended Dr. Johnson home, and had the satisfaction to hear him tell Mrs. Williams how much he had been pleased with Mr. Wilkes's company, and what an agreeable day he had passed.

[1] the king's devil.

[1] The eulogy and dedication were ironical attacks.

# OLIVER GOLDSMITH (1728–1774)

Goldsmith is one of the most versatile of English authors. He died at the age of forty-six, and his serious work as a man of letters did not begin till he was over thirty; but during these fifteen years he produced masterpieces in four different types of writing. *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773) is one of the most delightful comedies in the language; *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766), though inferior to the work of Fielding and of Smollett, is probably the best known novel of the eighteenth century; *The Citizen of the World* (1760–61) is one of the most brilliant collections of witty, satirical essays; *The Traveller* (1764) and *The Deserted Village* (1770) are masterpieces of reflective and descriptive poetry.

Goldsmith found his true vocation as an author only after false starts at all the other professions. Born in Ireland, the son of a country clergyman of the English Church, he spent his boyhood in the village of Lissoy (later idealized as the "Auburn" of *The Deserted Village*), and was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he was in frequent hot water with the college authorities. He was first intended for the Church, decided next to study law, and finally at the age of twenty-four actually studied medicine, first at Edinburgh, later at Leyden. After a penniless tour of the Continent which lasted a full year, a journey made for the most part on foot, he came to London in 1756, where he made for the next half-dozen years a precarious living by hack-writing, by teaching in a boys' school, and by a most desultory practice of his profession as a doctor. In 1761, he met Dr. Johnson, whose warm friendship seems to have given to his vagabond genius the discipline and intellectual fibre necessary to sustained literary effort.

As a poet, Goldsmith held to the tradition of Dryden and Pope. With Johnson, he was a bitter enemy of blank verse and of the Pindaric ode as practiced by Gray. But his use of the heroic couplet is different from that of Pope. There is less of antithesis and balance, and the sense flows more freely from one couplet to the next. *The Deserted Village* is a didactic poem. Pope would have called it a "Moral Essay on Wealth and Population"; but Goldsmith has made the descriptive dominate over the argumentative. He has given to it a tone of kindly tenderness and reminiscent sadness which is in sharp contrast with the epigrammatic brilliance of Pope.

Goldsmith's works have been frequently republished. A good biography is that of Austin Dobson in the Great Writers Series.

## THE DESERTED VILLAGE

### To Sir Joshua Reynolds

Dear Sir, — I can have no expectations in an address of this kind, either to add to your reputation, or to establish my own. You can gain nothing from my admiration, as I am ignorant of that art in which you are said to excel; and I may lose much by the severity of your judgment, as few have a juster taste in poetry than you. Setting interest therefore aside, to which I never paid much attention, I must be indulged at present in following my affections. The only dedication I ever made was to my brother, because I loved him better than most other men. He is since dead. Permit me to inscribe this poem to you.

How far you may be pleased with the versification and mere mechanical parts of this attempt, I do not pretend to inquire: but I know you will object (and indeed several of our best and wisest friends concur in the opinion) that the depopulation it deplores is nowhere to be seen, and the disorders it laments are only to be found in the poet's own imagination. To this I can scarce make any other answer, than that I sincerely believe what I have written; that I have taken all possible pains in my country excursions, for these four or five years past, to be certain of what I allege; and that all my views and inquiries have led me to believe those miseries real which I here attempt to display. But this is not the place to enter into an inquiry, whether the country be depopulating or not; the discussion would take up much room, and I should prove myself, at best, an indifferent politician, to tire the reader with a long preface, when I want his unfatigued attention to a long poem.

In regretting the depopulation of the country, I inveigh against the increase of our luxuries; and here also I expect the shout of modern politicians against me. For twenty or thirty years past it has been the fashion to consider luxury as one of the greatest national advantages; and all the wisdom of antiquity, in that particular, as erroneous. Still, however, I must remain a professed ancient on that head, and continue to think those luxuries prejudicial to states by which so many vices are introduced, and so many kingdoms have been undone. Indeed so much has been poured out of late on the other side of the question, that, merely for the sake of novelty and variety, one would sometimes wish to be in the right.

I am, dear sir, your sincere friend, and ardent admirer,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheered the laboring swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed:
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please:
How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!
How often have I paused on every charm,
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topt the neighboring hill,
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made!
How often have I blest the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labor free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree;
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old surveyed;
And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength went round.
And still, as each repeated pleasure tired,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired;
The dancing pair that simply sought renown,
By holding out to tire each other down;
The swain, mistrustless of his smutted face,
While secret laughter tittered round the place;
The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love,
The matron's glance that would those looks reprove.
These were thy charms, sweet village! sports like these,
With sweet succession taught even toil to please;
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed,
These were thy charms — but all these charms are fled.
Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green:
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain;
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But choked with sedges works its weedy way;
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest;
Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries.
Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall;
And, trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away thy children leave the land.
Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay;
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made:
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.
A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintained its man;
For him light labor spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life required, but gave no more:
His best companions, innocence and health,
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.
But times are altered; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain;
Along the lawn, where scattered hamlets rose,
Unwieldy wealth, and cumbrous pomp repose;
And every want to opulence allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.
Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
Those calm desires that asked but little room,
Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene,
Lived in each look, and brightened all the green;
These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
And rural mirth and manners are no more.
Sweet AUBURN! parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds,

Amidst thy tangling walks and ruined grounds,
And, many a year elapsed, return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.
In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs — and God has given my share —
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose:
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill,
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw;
And as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return — and die at home at last.
O blest retirement, friend to life's decline,
Retreats from care, that never must be mine,
How happy he who crowns, in shades like these,
A youth of labor with an age of ease;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep;
No surly porter stands, in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate;
But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending Virtue's friend;
Sinks to the grave with unperceived decay,
While Resignation gently slopes the way;
And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His Heaven commences ere the world be past.
Sweet was the sound, when oft at evening's close
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose;
There, as I past with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came softened from below;
The swain responsive as the milkmaid sung,
The sober herd that lowed to meet their young;
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school,
The watch-dog's voice that bayed the whispering wind,
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind;
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And filled each pause the nightingale had made.
But now the sounds of population fail,
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
No busy steps the grass-grown footway tread,
But all the bloomy flush of life is fled;
All but yon widowed solitary thing,
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron, forced, in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
To pick her wintry faggot from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn;
She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain.
Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild,
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his place;
Unpractised he to fawn, or seek for power,
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train,
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain;
The long remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talked the night away;
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch, and shewed how fields were won.

Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.
Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings leaned to Virtue's side;
But in his duty prompt, at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all:
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries,
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.
Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,
The reverend champion stood. At his control
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whispered praise.
At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran:
E'en children followed, with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth exprest,
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distrest;
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.
Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way
With blossomed furze, unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
The village master taught his little school:
A man severe he was, and stern to view,
I knew him well, and every truant knew;
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laughed with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned;
Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault;
The village all declared how much he knew,
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And even the story ran that he could gauge:
In arguing too, the parson owned his skill,
For even though vanquished, he could argue still;
While words of learned length and thundering sound
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew
That one small head could carry all he knew.
But past is all his fame. The very spot,
Where many a time he triumphed, is forgot.
Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,
Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspired,
Where gray-beard mirth and smiling toil retired,
Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlor splendors of that festive place;
The whitewashed wall, the nicely sanded floor,
The varnished clock that clicked behind the door:
The chest contrived a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
The pictures placed for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose;
The hearth, except when winter chilled the day,
With aspen boughs, and flowers, and fennel gay;
While broken teacups, wisely kept for show,
Ranged o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.
Vain transitory splendors! could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall?

Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart;
Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be prest,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.
Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art;
Spontaneous joys, where Nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway;
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined.
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth arrayed,
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain;
And, even while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrusting asks, if this be joy?
Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen, who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
'Tis yours to judge how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
And shouting Folly hails them from her shore;
Hoards e'en beyond the miser's wish abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around.
Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name,
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
Takes up a space that many poor supplied;
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds;
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
Has robbed the neighboring fields of half their growth;
His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
Indignant spurns the cottage from the green;
Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies;
While thus the land, adorned for pleasure all,
In barren splendor feebly waits the fall.
As some fair female, unadorned and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
Slights every borrowed charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes;
But when those charms are past, for charms are frail,
When time advances, and when lovers fail,
She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
In all the glaring impotence of dress:
Thus fares the land, by luxury betrayed,
In nature's simplest charms at first arrayed:
But verging to decline, its splendors rise,
Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise;
While, scourged by famine, from the smiling land,
The mournful peasant leads his humble band;
And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
The country blooms — a garden and a grave.
Where then, ah! where shall poverty reside,
To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride?
If to some common's fenceless limits strayed,
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
And even the bare-worn common is denied.
If to the city sped — What waits him there?
To see profusion that he must not share;
To see ten thousand baneful arts combined
To pamper luxury, and thin mankind:
To see those joys the sons of pleasure know,
Extorted from his fellow-creatures' woe.
Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade,
There the pale artist[1] plies the sickly trade;
Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomp display,
There the black gibbet glooms beside the way;
The dome where Pleasure holds her midnight reign,
Here, richly decked, admits the gorgeous train;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy!

1 artis-

Sure these denote one universal joy!
Are these thy serious thoughts? — Ah, turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless shivering female lies:
She once, perhaps, in village plenty blest,
Has wept at tales of innocence distrest;
Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn;
Now lost to all; her friends, her virtue fled,
Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,
And, pinched with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
With heavy heart, deplores that luckless hour,
When idly first, ambitious of the town,
She left her wheel and robes of country brown.
Do thine, sweet AUBURN, thine, the loveliest train,
Do thy fair tribes participate her pain?
Even now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
At proud men's doors they ask a little bread!
Ah, no. To distant climes, a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,
Where wild Altama [1] murmurs to their woe.
Far different there from all that charmed before,
The various terrors of that horrid shore;
Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
And fiercely shed intolerable day;
Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
Those poisonous fields with rank luxuriance crowned,
Where the dark scorpion gathers death around:
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake;
Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
And savage men more murderous still than they:
While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies.
Far different these from every former scene,
The cooling brook, the grassy vested green,
The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only sheltered thefts of harmless love.

Good Heaven! what sorrows gloomed that parting day,
That called them from their native walks away;
When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,
Hung round the bowers, and fondly looked their last,
And took a long farewell, and wished in vain
For seats like these beyond the western main;
And, shuddering still to face the distant deep,
Returned and wept, and still returned to weep.
The good old sire the first prepared to go,
To new-found worlds, and wept for others' woe;
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wished for worlds beyond the grave.
His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for a father's arms.
With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
And blest the cot where every pleasure rose;
And kissed her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
And clasped them close, in sorrow doubly dear;
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.
O Luxury! thou curst by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchanged are things like these for thee!
How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigor not their own:
At every draught more large and large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank unwieldy woe;
Till sapped their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.
Even now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done;
Even now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,
I see the rural Virtues leave the land.
Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail,
That idly waiting flaps with every gale,
Downward they move, a melancholy band,
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
Contented toil, and hospitable care,
And kind connubial tenderness are there;
And piety with wishes placed above,

[1] A river in Georgia.

And steady loyalty, and faithful love.
And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
Unfit in these degenerate times of shame,
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame;
Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride;
Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
Thou guide, by which the nobler arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well;
Farewell! and O! where'er thy voice be tried,
On Torno's cliffs,[1] or Pambamarca's[2] side,
Whether where equinoctial fervors glow,
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
Redress the rigors of the inclement clime;
Aid slighted truth with thy persuasive strain;
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain;
Teach him, that states of native strength possest,
Though very poor, may still be very blest;
That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
As ocean sweeps the labored mole away;
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.[3]

1770.

## AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF A MAD DOG

Good people all, of every sort,
Give ear unto my song;
And if you find it wondrous short, —
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man,
Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran, —
Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,
To comfort friends and foes;
The naked every day he clad, —
When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found,
As many dogs there be,
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends;
But when a pique began,
The dog, to gain his private ends,
Went mad, and bit the man.

Around from all the neighboring streets
The wondering neighbors ran,
And swore the dog had lost his wits,
To bite so good a man.

The wound it seemed both sore and sad
To every Christian eye;
And, while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
That showed the rogues they lied;
The man recovered of the bite,
The dog it was that died.

1766.

## STANZAS ON WOMAN

*From* THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD

When lovely Woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom — is, to die.

1766.

## THE CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

*The Citizen of the World* (1760–61) is a series of essays which first appeared in *The Public Ledger* with the title of "Chinese Letters." The letters are supposed to be written to friends in the Orient by a Chinese philosopher resident in London, who is interested and puzzled by the strange ways of European civilization. This device of looking at Europe through Oriental eyes was popularized for the eighteenth century by the *Lettres Persanes* of Montesquieu. In the tone of his satire, Goldsmith continues the tradition of Addison and Steele, whom he surpasses in genial kindliness.

### LETTER XXI

*At the Play-house*

The English are as fond of seeing plays acted as the Chinese; but there is a vast difference in the manner of conducting them. We play our pieces in the open air, the English theirs under cover; we act by daylight, they by the blaze of torches. One of our plays continues eight or ten days successively;

1 In Sweden. 2 A mountain in Ecuador.
3 The last four lines of the poem were written by Dr. Johnson.

n English piece seldom takes up above four ours in the representation.

My companion in black, with whom I am ow beginning to contract an intimacy, introduced me a few nights ago to the play-house, where we placed ourselves conveniently at he foot of the stage. As the curtain was not rawn before my arrival, I had an opportuity of observing the behavior of the spectators, and indulging those reflections which ovelty generally inspires.

The rich in general were placed in the west seats, and the poor rose above them in egrees proportioned to their poverty. The rder of precedence seemed here inverted; hose who were undermost all the day, now njoyed a temporary eminence, and became asters of the ceremonies. It was they who alled for the music, indulging every noisy reedom, and testifying all the insolence of eggary in exaltation.

They who held the middle region seemed ot so riotous as those above them, nor yet so ame as those below: to judge by their looks, any of them seemed strangers there as well s myself; they were chiefly employed, during his period of expectation, in eating oranges, eading the story of the play, or making assignations.

Those who sat in the lowest rows, which re called the pit, seemed to consider themelves as judges of the merits of the poet and he performers; they were assembled partly o be amused, and partly to show their taste; ppearing to labor under that restraint which n affectation of superior discernment generlly produces. My companion, however, informed me, that not one in a hundred of them new even the first principles of criticism: hat they assumed the right of being censors ecause there was none to contradict their retensions; and that every man who now alled himself a connoisseur, became such to ll intents and purposes.

Those who sat in the boxes appeared in the most unhappy situation of all. The rest of he audience came merely for their own musement; these rather to furnish out a part f the entertainment themselves. I could not void considering them as acting parts in umb show — not a courtesy or a nod, that as not the result of art; not a look nor a mile that was not designed for murder. Gentlemen and ladies ogled each other hrough spectacles; for my companion observed, that blindness was of late become ashionable; all affected indifference and ase, while their hearts at the same time burned for conquest. Upon the whole, the lights, the music, the ladies in their gayest dresses, the men with cheerfulness and expectation in their looks, all conspired to make a most agreeable picture, and to fill a heart that sympathizes at human happiness with inexpressible serenity.

The expected time for the play to begin at last arrived; the curtain was drawn, and the actors came on. A woman, who personated a queen, came in courtseying to the audience, who clapped their hands upon her appearance. Clapping of hands is, it seems, the manner of applauding in England; the manner is absurd, but every country, you know, has its peculiar absurdities. I was equally surprised, however, at the submission of the actress, who should have considered herself as a queen, as at the little discernment of the audience who gave her such marks of applause before she attempted to deserve them. Preliminaries between her and the audience being thus adjusted, the dialogue was supported between her and a most hopeful youth, who acted the part of her confidant. They both appeared in extreme distress, for it seems the queen had lost a child some fifteen years before, and still keeps its dear resemblance next to her heart, while her kind companion bore a part in her sorrows.

Her lamentations grew loud; comfort is offered, but she detests the very sound: she bids them preach comfort to the winds. Upon this her husband comes in, who, seeing the queen so much afflicted, can himself hardly refrain from tears, or avoid partaking in the soft distress. After thus grieving through three scenes, the curtain dropped for the first act.

"Truly," said I to my companion; "these kings and queens are very much disturbed at no very great misfortune: certain I am, were people of humbler stations to act in this manner, they would be thought divested of common sense." I had scarce finished this observation, when the curtain rose, and the king came on in a violent passion. His wife had, it seems, refused his proffered tenderness, had spurned his royal embrace; and he seemed resolved not to survive her fierce disdain. After he had thus fretted, and the queen had fretted through the second act, the curtain was let down once more.

"Now," says my companion, "you perceive the king to be a man of spirit; he feels at every pore: one of your phlegmatic sons of clay would have given the queen her own way, and let her come to herself by degrees;

but the king is for immediate tenderness, or instant death: death and tenderness are leading passions of every modern buskined hero; this moment they embrace, and the next stab, mixing daggers and kisses in every period."

I was going to second his remarks, when my attention was engrossed by a new object: a man came in balancing a straw upon his nose, and the audience were clapping their hands in all the raptures of applause. "To what purpose," cried I, "does this unmeaning figure make his appearance? is he a part of the plot?" "Unmeaning, do you call him?" replied my friend in black; "this is one of the most important characters of the whole play; nothing pleases the people more than seeing a straw balanced: there is a great deal of meaning in the straw; there is something suited to every apprehension in the sight; and a fellow possessed of talents like these is sure of making his fortune."

The third act now began with an actor who came to inform us that he was the villain of the play, and intended to show strange things before all was over. He was joined by another, who seemed as much disposed for mischief as he; their intrigues continued through this whole division. "If that be a villain," said I, "he must be a very stupid one to tell his secrets without being asked; such soliloquies of late are never admitted in China."

The noise of clapping interrupted me once more; a child of six years old was learning to dance on the stage, which gave the ladies and mandarins infinite satisfaction. "I am sorry," said I, "to see the pretty creature so early learning so bad a trade; dancing being, I presume, as contemptible here as in China." "Quite the reverse," interrupted my companion, "dancing is a very reputable and genteel employment here; men have a greater chance for encouragement from the merit of their heels than their heads. One who jumps up and flourishes his toes three times before he comes to the ground, may have three hundred a-year; he who flourishes them four times, gets four hundred; but he who arrives at five is inestimable, and may demand what salary he thinks proper. The female dancers, too, are valued for this sort of jumping and crossing; and it is a cant word among them, that she deserves most who shows highest. But the fourth act is begun; let us be attentive."

In the fourth act the queen finds her long-lost child, now grown up into a youth of smart parts and great qualifications; wherefore she wisely considers that the crown will fit his head better than that of her husband whom she knows to be a driveller. The king discovers her design, and here comes on the deep distress: he loves the queen, and he loves the kingdom; he resolves, therefore, in order to possess both, that her son must die. The queen exclaims at his barbarity, is frantic with rage, and at length, overcome with sorrow, falls into a fit; upon which the curtain drops, and the act is concluded.

"Observe the art of the poet," cries my companion. "When the queen can say no more, she falls into a fit. While thus her eyes are shut, while she is supported in the arms of her Abigail, what horrors do we not fancy! We feel it in every nerve: take my word for it, that fits are the true aposiopesis of modern tragedy."

The fifth act began, and a busy piece it was. Scenes shifting, trumpets sounding, mobs hallooing, carpets spreading, guards bustling from one door to another: gods, demons, daggers, racks, and ratsbane. But whether the king was killed, or the queen was drowned, or the son poisoned, I have absolutely forgotten.

When the play was over, I could not avoid observing, that the persons of the drama appeared in as much distress in the first act as the last: "How is it possible," said I, "to sympathize with them through five long acts? Pity is but a short-lived passion; I hate to hear an actor mouthing trifles; neither startings, strainings, nor attitudes affect me, unless there be cause: after I have been once or twice deceived by those unmeaning alarms, my heart sleeps in peace, probably unaffected by the principal distress. There should be one great passion aimed at by the actor as well as the poet; all the rest should be subordinate, and only contribute to make that the greater; if the actor, therefore, exclaim upon every occasion in the tones of despair he attempts to move us too soon; he anticipates the blow, he ceases to affect, though he gains our applause."

I scarcely perceived that the audience were almost all departed; wherefore mixing with the crowd, my companion and I got into the street; where, essaying an hundred obstacles from coach-wheels and palanquin poles, like birds in their flight through the branches of a forest, after various turnings we both at length got home in safety. Adieu.

## LETTER LI

*The Bookseller*

As I was yesterday seated at breakfast, over a pensive dish of tea, my meditations were interrupted by my old friend and companion, who introduced a stranger, dressed pretty much like himself. The gentleman made several apologies for his visit, begged of me to impute his intrusion to the sincerity of his respect, and the warmth of his curiosity.

As I am very suspicious of my company when I find them very civil without any apparent reason, I answered the stranger's caresses at first with reserve; which my friend perceiving, instantly let me into my visitant's trade and character, asking Mr. Fudge, whether he had lately published any thing new? I now conjectured that my guest was no other than a bookseller, and his answer confirmed my suspicions.

"Excuse me, Sir," says he, "it is not the season; books have their time as well as cucumbers. I would no more bring out a new work in summer, than I would sell pork in the dog-days. Nothing in my way goes off in summer, except very light goods indeed. A review, a magazine, or a sessions' paper, may amuse a summer reader; but all our stock of value we reserve for a spring and winter trade." "I must confess, Sir," says I, "a curiosity to know what you call a valuable stock, which can only bear a winter perusal." "Sir," replied the bookseller, "it is not my way to cry up my own goods; but, without exaggeration, I will venture to show with any of the trade: my books at least have the peculiar advantage of being always new; and it is my way to clear off my old to the trunkmakers every season. I have ten new title-pages now about me, which only want books to be added to make them the finest things in nature. Others may pretend to direct the vulgar: I always let the vulgar direct me; wherever popular clamor arises, I always echo the million. For instance, should the people in general say, that such a man is a rogue, I instantly give orders to set him down in print a villain; thus every man buys the book, not to learn new sentiments, but to have the pleasure of seeing his own reflected."

"But, Sir," interrupted I, "you speak as if you yourself wrote the books you published; may I be so bold as to ask a sight of some of those intended publications which are shortly to surprise the world?" "As to that, Sir," replied the talkative bookseller, "I only draw out the plans myself; and though I am very cautious of communicating them to any, yet, as in the end I have a favor to ask, you shall see a few of them. Here, Sir, here they are; diamonds of the first water, I assure you. *Imprimis*, a translation of several medical precepts for the use of such physicians as do not understand Latin. *Item*, the young clergyman's art of placing patches regularly, with a dissertation on the different manners of smiling without distorting the face. *Item*, the whole art of love made perfectly easy, by a broker of 'Change Alley. *Item*, the proper manner of cutting black-lead pencils, and making crayons; by the Right Hon. the Earl of ***. *Item*, the muster-master-general, or the review of reviews —" "Sir," cried I, interrupting him, "my curiosity, with regard to title-pages, is satisfied; I should be glad to see some longer manuscript, a history or an epic poem." "Bless me," cries the man of industry, "now you speak of an epic poem, you shall see an excellent farce. Here it is; dip into it where you will, it will be found replete with true modern humor. Strokes, Sir; it is filled with strokes of wit and satire in every line." "Do you call these dashes of the pen strokes," replied I, "for I must confess I can see no other?" "And pray, Sir," returned he, "what do you call them? Do you see any thing good now-a-days, that is not filled with strokes — and dashes? — Sir, a well-placed dash makes half the wit of our writers of modern humor. I bought a piece last season that had no other merit upon earth than nine hundred and ninety-five breaks, seventy-two ha ha's, three good things, and a garter. And yet it played off, and bounced, and cracked, and made more sport than a fire work." "I fancy, then, Sir, you were a considerable gainer?" "It must be owned the piece did pay; but, upon the whole, I cannot much boast of last winter's success: I gained by two murders; but then I lost by an ill-timed charity sermon. I was a considerable sufferer by my Direct Road to an Estate, but the Infernal Guide brought me up again. Ah, Sir, that was a piece touched off by the hand of a master; filled with good things from one end to the other. The author had nothing but the jest in view; no dull moral lurking beneath, nor ill-natured satire to sour the reader's good-humor; he wisely considered, that moral and humor at the same time were quite overdoing the business." "To what purpose was the book then published?" cried I. "Sir, the book was published in order to be sold; and no book sold better, except the criticisms upon it,

which came out soon after: of all kinds of writings, that goes off best at present; and I generally fasten a criticism upon every selling book that is published.

"I once had an author who never left the least opening for the critics! close was the word, always very right, and very dull, ever on the safe side of an argument; yet with all his qualifications, incapable of coming into favor. I soon perceived that his bent was for criticism; and, as he was good for nothing else, supplied him with pens and paper, and planted him at the beginning of every month as a censor on the works of others. In short, I found him a treasure; no merit could escape him: but what is most remarkable of all, he ever wrote best and bitterest when drunk." "But are there not some works," interrupted I, "that, from the very manner of their composition, must be exempt from criticism; particularly such as profess to disregard its laws?" "There is no work whatsoever but he can criticise," replied the bookseller; "even though you wrote in Chinese, he would have a pluck at you. Suppose you should take it into your head to publish a book, let it be a volume of Chinese letters, for instance; write how you will, he shall show the world you could have written better. Should you, with the most local exactness, stick to the manners and customs of the country from whence you come; should you confine yourself to the narrow limits of Eastern knowledge, and be perfectly simple, and perfectly natural, he has then the strongest reason to exclaim. He may with a sneer send you back to China for readers. He may observe, that after the first or second letter, the iteration of the same simplicity is insupportably tedious: but the worst of all is, the public in such a case will anticipate his censures, and leave you, with all your uninstructive simplicity, to be mauled at discretion."

"Yes," cried I, "but in order to avoid his indignation, and what I should fear more, that of the public, I would, in such a case, write with all the knowledge I was master of. As I am not possessed of much learning, at least I would not suppress what little I had; nor would I appear more stupid than nature has made me." "Here, then," cries the bookseller, "we should have you entirely in our power: unnatural, uneastern; quite out of character; erroneously sensible, — would be the whole cry: Sir, we should then hunt you down like a rat." "Head of my father!" said I, "sure there are but two ways; the door must either be shut, or it must be open. It must either be natural or unnatural." "Be what you will, we shall criticise you," returned the bookseller, "and prove you a dunce in spite of your teeth. But, Sir, it is time that I should come to business. I have just now in the press a history of China; and if you will but put your name to it as the author, I shall repay the obligations with gratitude." "What, Sir," replied I, "put my name to a work which I have not written! Never, while I retain a proper respect for the public and myself." The bluntness of my reply quite abated the ardor of the bookseller's conversation; and after about half an hour's disagreeable reserve, he, with some ceremony, took his leave, and withdrew. Adieu.

## LETTER LIV

### *The Character of Beau Tibbs*

Though naturally pensive, yet I am fond of gay company, and take every opportunity of thus dismissing the mind from duty. From this motive, I am often found in the centre of a crowd; and wherever pleasure is to be sold, am always a purchaser. In those places, without being remarked by any, I join in whatever goes forward; work my passions into a similitude of frivolous earnestness, shout as they shout, and condemn as they happen to disapprove. A mind thus sunk for a while below its natural standard, is qualified for stronger flights, as those first retire who would spring forward with greater vigor.

Attracted by the serenity of the evening, my friend and I lately went to gaze upon the company in one of the public walks near the city. Here we sauntered together for some time, either praising the beauty of such as were handsome, or the dresses of such as had nothing else to recommend them. We had gone thus deliberately forward for some time, when, stopping on a sudden, my friend caught me by the elbow, and led me out of the public walk. I could perceive by the quickness of his pace, and by his frequently looking behind, that he was attempting to avoid somebody who followed: we now turned to the right, then to the left, as we went forward he still went faster, but in vain; the person whom he attempted to escape hunted us through every doubling, and gained upon us each moment: so that at last we fairly stood still, resolving to face what we could not avoid.

Our pursuer soon came up, and joined us

with all the familiarity of an old acquaintance. "My dear Drybone," cries he, shaking my friend's hand, "where have you been hiding this half a century? Positively I had fancied you were gone to cultivate matrimony and your estate in the country." During the reply, I had an opportunity of surveying the appearance of our new companion: his hat was pinched up with peculiar smartness; his looks were pale, thin, and sharp; round his neck he wore a broad black riband, and in his bosom a buckle studded with glass; his coat was trimmed with tarnished twist; he wore by his side a sword with a black hilt; and his stockings of silk, though newly washed, were grown yellow by long service. I was so much engaged with the peculiarity of his dress, that I attended only to the latter part of my friend's reply, in which he complimented Mr. Tibbs on the taste of his clothes, and the bloom in his countenance: "Pshaw, pshaw, Will," cried the figure, "no more of that, if you love me: you know I hate flattery, on my soul I do; and yet, to be sure, an intimacy with the great will improve one's appearance, and a course of venison will fatten; and yet, faith, I despise the great as much as you do: but there are a great many damned honest fellows among them; and we must not quarrel with one half, because the other wants breeding. If they were all such as my Lord Mudler, one of the most good-natured creatures that ever squeezed a lemon, I should myself be among the number of their admirers. I was yesterday to dine at the Duchess of Piccadilly's. My lord was there. Ned, says he to me, Ned, says he, I'll hold gold to silver, I can tell where you were poaching last night. Poaching, my lord, says I; faith you have missed already; for I staid at home, and let the girls poach for me. That's my way; I take a fine woman as some animals do their prey — stand still, and swoop, they fall into my mouth."

"Ah, Tibbs, thou art a happy fellow," cried my companion, with looks of infinite pity; "I hope your fortune is as much improved as your understanding in such company?" "Improved," replied the other; "you shall know, — but let it go no farther, — a great secret — five hundred a-year to begin with. — My lord's word of honor for it — his lordship took me down in his own chariot yesterday, and we had a *tête-à-tête* dinner in the country, where we talked of nothing else." "I fancy you forget, Sir," cried I, "you told us but this moment of your dining yesterday in town." "Did I say so?" replied he coolly; "to be sure if I said so, it was so — dined in town: egad, now I do remember, I did dine in town, but I dined in the country too; for you must know, my boys, I eat two dinners. By the bye, I am grown as nice as the devil in my eating. I'll tell you a pleasant affair about that: We were a select party of us to dine at Lady Grogram's, an affected piece, but let it go no farther; a secret: well, there happened to be no assafœtida in the sauce to a turkey, upon which, says I, I'll hold a thousand guineas, and say, done first, that — but dear Drybone, you are an honest creature, lend me half-a-crown for a minute or two, or so, just till — but hearkee, ask me for it the next time we meet, or it may be twenty to one but I forget to pay you."

When he left us, our conversation naturally turned upon so extraordinary a character. "His very dress," cries my friend, "is not less extraordinary than his conduct. If you meet him this day, you find him in rags; if the next, in embroidery. With those persons of distinction of whom he talks so familiarly, he has scarcely a coffee-house acquaintance. However, both for the interests of society, and perhaps for his own, Heaven has made him poor, and while all the world perceive his wants, he fancies them concealed from every eye. An agreeable companion, because he understands flattery; and all must be pleased with the first part of his conversation, though all are sure of its ending with a demand on their purse. While his youth countenances the levity of his conduct, he may thus earn a precarious subsistence: but when age comes on, the gravity of which is incompatible with buffoonery, then will he find himself forsaken by all; condemned in the decline of life to hang upon some rich family whom he once despised, there to undergo all the ingenuity of studied contempt, to be employed only as a spy upon the servants, or a bugbear to fright the children into obedience." Adieu.

## LETTER LV

### *Beau Tibbs at Home*

I am apt to fancy I have contracted a new acquaintance whom it will be no easy matter to shake off. My little beau yesterday overtook me again in one of the public walks, and slapping me on the shoulder, saluted me with an air of the most perfect familiarity. His dress was the same as usual, except that he had more powder in his hair, wore a dirtier

shirt, a pair of temple spectacles, and his hat under his arm.

As I knew him to be a harmless amusing little thing, I could not return his smiles with any degree of severity; so we walked forward on terms of the utmost intimacy, and in a few minutes discussed all the usual topics preliminary to particular conversation.

The oddities that marked his character, however, soon began to appear; he bowed to several well-dressed persons, who by their manner of returning the compliment, appeared perfect strangers. At intervals he drew out a pocket-book, seeming to take memorandums before all the company, with much importance and assiduity. In this manner he led me through the length of the whole walk, fretting at his absurdities, and fancying myself laughed at not less than him by every spectator.

When we were got to the end of our procession, "Blast me," cries he, with an air of vivacity, "I never saw the park so thin in my life before? there's no company at all to-day; not a single face to be seen." "No company!" interrupted I peevishly; "no company where there is such a crowd? why, man, there's too much. What are the thousands that have been laughing at us but company?" "Lord, my dear," returned he, with the utmost good humor, "you seem immensely chagrined: but blast me, when the world laughs at me, I laugh at the world, and so we are even. My Lord Trip, Bill Squash the Creolian, and I, sometimes make a party at being ridiculous; and so we say and do a thousand things for the joke's sake. But I see you are grave, and if you are for a fine grave sentimental companion, you shall dine with me and my wife to-day; I must insist on't: I'll introduce you to Mrs. Tibbs, a lady of as elegant qualifications as any in nature; she was bred, but that's between ourselves, under the inspection of the Countess of Allnight. A charming body of voice; but no more of that, she will give us a song. You shall see my little girl too, Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Tibbs, a sweet pretty creature! I design her for my Lord Drumstick's eldest son; but that's in friendship, let it go no farther; she's but six years old, and yet she walks a minuet, and plays on the guitar immensely already. I intend she shall be as perfect as possible in every accomplishment. In the first place, I'll make her a scholar: I'll teach her Greek myself, and learn that language purposely to instruct her; but let that be a secret."

Thus saying, without waiting for a reply, he took me by the arm, and hauled me along. We passed through many dark alleys and winding ways; for, from some motives to me unknown, he seemed to have a particular aversion to every frequented street; at last, however, we got to the door of a dismal-looking house in the outlets of the town, where he informed me he chose to reside for the benefit of the air.

We entered the lower door, which ever seemed to lie most hospitably open; and I began to ascend an old and creaking staircase, when, as he mounted to show me the way, he demanded, whether I delighted in prospects; to which answering in the affirmative, "Then," says he, "I shall show you one of the most charming in the world, out of my window: we shall see the ships sailing, and the whole country for twenty miles round, tip-top, quite high. My Lord Swamp would give ten thousand guineas for such a one; but as I sometimes pleasantly tell him, I always love to keep my prospects at home, that my friends may visit me the oftener."

By this time we were arrived as high as the stairs would permit us to ascend, till we came to what he was facetiously pleased to call the first floor down the chimney; and knocking at the door, a voice from within demanded, who's there? My conductor answered that it was him. But this not satisfying the querist, the voice again repeated the demand; to which he answered louder than before; and now the door was opened by an old woman with cautious reluctance.

When we were got in, he welcomed me to his house with great ceremony, and turning to the old woman, asked where was her lady? "Good troth," replied she in a peculiar dialect, "she's washing your twa shirts at the next door, because they have taken an oath against lending out the tub any longer." "My two shirts," cried he in a tone that faltered with confusion, "what does the idiot mean?" "I ken what I mean weel enough," replied the other: "she's washing your twa shirts at the next door, because —" "Fire and fury, no more of thy stupid explanations," cried he; "go and inform her we have got company. Were that Scotch hag to be for ever in my family, she would never learn politeness, nor forget that absurd poisonous accent of her's, or testify the smallest specimen of breeding or high life; and yet it is very surprising too, as I had her from a parliament man, a friend of mine from the Highlands, one of the politest men in the world but that's a secret."

We waited some time for Mrs. Tibbs's arrival, during which interval I had a full opportunity of surveying the chamber and all its furniture; which consisted of four chairs with old wrought bottoms, that he assured me were his wife's embroidery; a square table that had been once japanned; a cradle in one corner, a lumbering cabinet in the other; a broken shepherdess, and a mandarin without a head, were stuck over the chimney; and round the walls several paltry unframed pictures, which, he observed, were all his own drawing. "What do you think, Sir, of that head in the corner, done in the manner of Grisoni? there's the true keeping in it; it is my own face, and though there happens to be no likeness, a Countess offered me a hundred for its fellow; I refused her, for, hang it, that would be mechanical you know."

The wife at last made her appearance, at once a slattern and a coquette; much emaciated, but still carrying the remains of beauty. She made twenty apologies for being seen in such odious dishabille, but hoped to be excused, as she had stayed all night at the Gardens[2] with the Countess, who was excessively fond of the horns. "And, indeed, my dear," added she, turning to her husband, "his lordship drank your health in a bumper." — "Poor Jack," cries he, "a dear good-natured creature, I know he loves me. But I hope, my dear, you have given orders for dinner; you need make no great preparations neither, there are but three of us; something elegant, and little will do; a turbot, an ortolan, a —" "Or what do you think, my dear," interrupts the wife, "of a nice pretty bit of ox-cheek, piping hot, and dressed with a little of my own sauce?" — "The very thing," replies he, "it will eat best with some smart bottled beer: but be sure to let us have the sauce his Grace was so fond of. I hate your immense loads of meat, that is country all over; extremely disgusting to those who are in the least acquainted with high life."

By this time my curiosity began to abate, and my appetite to increase: the company of fools may at first make us smile, but at last never fails of rendering us melancholy; I therefore pretended to recollect a prior engagement, and, after having shown my respect to the house, according to the fashion of the English, by giving the old servant a piece of money at the door, I took my leave; Mr. Tibbs assuring me, that dinner, if I stayed, would be ready at least in less than two hours.

[2] Vauxhall.

## LETTER LXXI.

*Beau Tibbs at Vauxhall*

The people of London are as fond of walking as our friends at Pekin of riding, one of the principal entertainments of the citizens here in summer, is to repair about nightfall to a garden not far from town, where they walk about, show their best clothes and best faces, and listen to a concert provided for the occasion.

I accepted an invitation a few evenings ago from my old friend, the man in black, to be one of a party that was to sup there; and at the appointed hour waited upon him at his lodgings. There I found the company assembled, and expecting my arrival. Our party consisted of my friend in superlative finery, his stockings rolled, a black velvet waistcoat, which was formerly new, and his grey wig combed down in imitation of hair. A pawnbroker's widow, of whom, by the bye, my friend was a professed admirer, dressed out in green damask, with three gold rings on every finger. Mr. Tibbs, the second-rate beau I have formerly described, together with his lady in flimsy silk, dirty gauze instead of linen, and a hat as big as an umbrella.

Our first difficulty was in settling how we should set out. Mrs. Tibbs had a natural aversion to the water, and the widow being a little in flesh, as warmly protested against walking; a coach was therefore agreed upon; which being too small to carry five, Mr. Tibbs consented to sit in his wife's lap.

In this manner, therefore, we set forward, being entertained by the way with the bodings of Mr. Tibbs, who assured us he did not expect to see a single creature for the evening above the degree of a cheesemonger: that this was the last night of the Gardens, and that consequently we should be pestered with the nobility and gentry from Thames-street and Crooked-lane, with several other prophetic ejaculations, probably inspired by the uneasiness of his situation.

The illuminations began before we arrived, and I must confess, that upon entering the gardens I found every sense overpaid with more than expected pleasure; the lights every where glimmering through the scarcely moving trees, the full-bodied concert bursting on the stillness of the night, the natural concert of birds, in the more retired part of the grove, vying with that which was formed by art; the company gaily dressed, looking satisfaction, and the tables spread with various delicacies, all conspired to fill my imagination

with the visionary happiness of the Arabian lawgiver, and lifted me into an ecstasy of admiration. "Head of Confucius," cried I to my friend, "this is fine! this unites rural beauty with courtly magnificence! if we except the virgins of immortality, that hang on every tree, and may be plucked at every desire, I do not see how this falls short of Mahomet's paradise!" "As for virgins," cries my friend, "it is true they are a fruit that do not much abound in our gardens here; but if ladies, as plenty as apples in autumn, and as complying as any houri of them all, can content you, I fancy we have no need to go to heaven for paradise."

I was going to second his remarks, when we were called to a consultation by Mr. Tibbs and the rest of the company, to know in what manner we were to lay out the evening to the greatest advantage. Mrs. Tibbs was for keeping the genteel walk of the garden, where, she observed, there was always the very best company; the widow, on the contrary, who came but once a season, was for securing a good standing place to see the water-works, which she assured us would begin in less than an hour at farthest; a dispute therefore began, and as it was managed between two of very opposite characters, it threatened to grow more bitter at every reply. Mrs. Tibbs wondered how people could pretend to know the polite world, who had received all their rudiments of breeding behind a counter; to which the other replied, that though some people sat behind counters, yet they could sit at the head of their own tables too, and carve three good dishes of hot meat whenever they thought proper; which was more than some people could say for themselves, that hardly knew a rabbit and onions from a green goose and gooseberries.

It is hard to say where this might have ended, had not the husband, who probably knew the impetuosity of his wife's disposition, proposed to end the dispute, by adjourning to a box, and try if there was any thing to be had for supper that was supportable. To this we all consented; but here a new distress arose: Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs would sit in none but a genteel box, a box where they might see and be seen, one, as they expressed it, in the very focus of public view; but such a box was not easy to be obtained, for though we were perfectly convinced of our own gentility, and the gentility of our appearance, yet we found it a difficult matter to persuade the keepers of the boxes to be of our opinion; they chose to reserve genteel boxes for what they judged more genteel company.

At last, however, we were fixed, though somewhat obscurely, and supplied with the usual entertainment of the place. The widow found the supper excellent, but Mrs. Tibbs thought every thing detestable. "Come, come, my dear," cries the husband, by way of consolation, "to be sure we can't find such dressing here as we have at Lord Crump's or Lady Crimp's; but for Vauxhall dressing it is pretty good: it is not their victuals indeed I find fault with, but their wine; their wine," cries he, drinking off a glass, "indeed, is most abominable."

By this last contradiction, the widow was fairly conquered in point of politeness. She perceived now that she had no pretensions in the world to taste; her very senses were vulgar, since she had praised detestable custard, and smacked at wretched wine; she was therefore content to yield the victory, and for the rest of the night to listen and improve. It is true, she would now and then forget herself, and confess she was pleased, but they soon brought her back again to miserable refinement. She once praised the painting of the box in which we were sitting, but was soon convinced that such paltry pieces ought rather to excite horror than satisfaction; she ventured again to commend one of the singers, but Mrs. Tibbs soon let her know, in the style of a connoisseur, that the singer in question had neither ear, voice, nor judgment.

Mr. Tibbs, now willing to prove that his wife's pretensions to music were just, entreated her to favor the company with a song; but to this she gave a positive denial — "for you know very well, my dear," says she, "that I am not in voice to-day, and when one's voice is not equal to one's judgment, what signifies singing; besides, as there is no accompaniment it would be but spoiling music." All these excuses, however, were overruled by the rest of the company, who, though one would think they already had music enough, joined in the entreaty. But particularly the widow, now willing to convince the company of her breeding, pressed so warmly, that she seemed determined to take no refusal. At last then the lady complied, and after humming for some minutes, began with such a voice, and such affectation, as I could perceive, gave but little satisfaction to any except her husband. He sat with rapture in his eye, and beat time with his hand on the table.

You must observe, my friend, that it is the

custom of this country, when a lady or gentleman happens to sing, for the company to sit as mute and motionless as statues. Every feature, every limb, must seem to correspond in fixed attention; and while the song continues, they are to remain in a state of universal petrifaction. In this mortifying situation we had continued for some time, listening, and looking with tranquillity, when the master of the box came to inform us, that the water-works were just going to begin. At this information I could instantly perceive the widow bounce from her seat; but correcting herself, she sat down again, repressed by motives of good breeding. Mrs. Tibbs, who had seen the water-works a hundred times, resolving not to be interrupted, continued her song without any share of mercy, nor had the smallest pity on our impatience. The widow's face, I own, gave me high entertainment; in it I could plainly read the struggle she felt between good breeding and curiosity: she talked of the water-works the whole evening before, and seemed to have come merely in order to see them; but then she could not bounce out in the very middle of a song, for that would be forfeiting all pretensions to high life, or high-lived company, ever after. Mrs. Tibbs therefore kept on singing, and we continued to listen, till at last, when the song was just concluded, the waiter came to inform us that the water-works were over.

"The water-works over!" cried the widow; "the water-works over already! that's impossible! they can't be over so soon!" — "It is not my business," replied the fellow, "to contradict your ladyship; I'll run again and see." He went, and soon returned with a confirmation of the dismal tidings. No ceremony could now bind my friend's disappointed mistress, she testified her displeasure in the openest manner; in short, she now began to find fault in turn, and at last insisted upon going home, just at the time that Mr. and Mrs. Tibbs assured the company, that the polite hours were going to begin, and that the ladies would instantaneously be entertained with the horns. Adieu.

## LETTER LXXVII

### *The London Shop-Keeper*

The shops of London are as well furnished as those of Pekin. Those of London have a picture hung at their door; informing the passengers what they have to sell, as those at Pekin have a board to assure the buyer that they have no intention to cheat him.

I was this morning to buy silk for a nightcap; immediately upon entering the mercer's shop, the master and his two men, with wigs plastered with powder, appeared to ask my commands. They were certainly the civilest people alive; if I but looked, they flew to the place where I cast my eye; every motion of mine sent them running round the whole shop for my satisfaction. I informed them that I wanted what was good, and they showed me not less than forty pieces, and each was better than the former, the prettiest pattern in nature, and the fittest in the world for nightcaps. "My very good friend," said I to the mercer, "you must not pretend to instruct me in silks; I know these in particular to be no better than your mere flimsy Bungees." — "That may be," cried the mercer, who I afterwards found had never contradicted a man in his life; "I cannot pretend to say but they may; but I can assure you, my lady Trail has had a sack from this piece this very morning." — "But friend," said I, "though my lady has chosen a sack from it, I see no necessity that I should wear it for a nightcap." — "That may be," returned he again, "yet what becomes a pretty lady, will at any time look well on a handsome gentleman." This short compliment was thrown in so very seasonably upon my ugly face, that even though I disliked the silk, I desired him to cut me off the pattern of a nightcap.

While this business was consigned to his journeymen, the master himself took down some pieces of silk still finer than any I had yet seen, and spreading them before me, "There," cries he, "there's beauty; My Lord Snakeskin has bespoke the fellow to this for the birth-night this very morning; it would look charmingly in waistcoats." — "But I don't want a waistcoat," replied I. — "Not want a waistcoat!" returned the mercer, "then I would advise you to buy one; when waistcoats are wanted, you may depend upon it they will come dear. Always buy before you want, and you are sure to be well used, as they say in Cheapside." There was so much justice in his advice, that I could not refuse taking it; besides, the silk, which was a really good one, increased the temptation; so I gave orders for that too.

As I was waiting to have my bargains measured and cut, which, I know not how, they executed but slowly, during the interval the mercer entertained me with the modern manner of some of the nobility receiving company in their morning gowns; "Perhaps,

Sir," adds he, "you have a mind to see what kind of silk is universally worn." Without waiting for my reply, he spreads a piece before me, which might be reckoned beautiful even in China. "If the nobility," continues he, "were to know I sold this to any under a Right Honorable, I should certainly lose their custom; you see, my Lord, it is at once rich, tasty, and quite the thing." — "I am no Lord," interrupted I. — "I beg pardon," cried he; "but be pleased to remember, when you intend buying a morning gown, that you had an offer from me of something worth money. Conscience, Sir, conscience is my way of dealing; you may buy a morning gown now, or you may stay till they become dearer and less fashionable; but it is not my business to advise." In short, most reverend Fum, he persuaded me to buy a morning gown also, and would probably have persuaded me to have bought half the goods in his shop, if I had stayed long enough, or was furnished with sufficient money.

Upon returning home, I could not help reflecting with some astonishment, how this very man, with such a confined education and capacity, was yet capable of turning me as he thought proper, and moulding me to his inclinations! I knew he was only answering his own purposes, even while he attempted to appear solicitous about mine; yet, by a voluntary infatuation, a sort of passion, compounded of vanity and good-nature, I walked into the snare with my eyes open, and put myself to future pain in order to give him immediate pleasure. The wisdom of the ignorant somewhat resembles the instinct of animals; it is diffused in but a very narrow sphere, but within that circle it acts with vigor, uniformity, and success. Adieu.

## EDMUND BURKE (1729–1797)

Edmund Burke was born in Dublin, Jan. 12, 1729, and was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he graduated bachelor of arts at the age of nineteen. In 1750 he went to London as a law-student at the Middle Temple; and his whole life was henceforth lived in England. For a whole generation he was the dominant figure in English politics, and the associate of the most distinguished men of letters of his day. In 1756 he established himself as an author by his *Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas on the Sublime and the Beautiful*. He was a member of The Club, the literary circle presided over by Dr. Johnson. In 1766 he was elected to Parliament, and at once declared himself a friend of the American colonies. In 1771 he became agent at London for the Assembly of the Colony of New York; and in 1775 he delivered his great speech *On Conciliation with America*. From 1788 to 1794 he conducted on behalf of the House of Commons the protracted trial before the House of Lords of Warren Hastings, impeached at Burke's instance of high crimes and misdemeanors in his administration of affairs in India.

Throughout his public life, Burke was the ardent champion of constitutional liberty, urging the rights of the American colonists, of the Roman Catholics in Ireland, of the oppressed masses of India, bringing to all these causes the clear power of his intellect and the vivid poetry of his imagination. He was one of the early adherents to the movement for the abolition of negro slavery. But in the French Revolution Burke saw not the cause of liberty, but an attack on the settled institutions of society, which in his belief were the only basis and guarantee of human liberty. He loved "liberty only in the guise of order." The tyranny of the Paris mob was to him more hateful than the tyranny which it had overthrown. He became the outspoken champion of the oppressed aristocracy and the shamefully treated royal family of France, and still more of the established order of Christian civilization which the Revolution was seeking to destroy.

English radicals had hailed the Revolution with delight; and on November 4, 1789, an English clergyman had delivered before the Society for Commemorating the Revolution (of 1688) in Great Britain an address extolling the Revolution in France. This was the immediate occasion of Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, in the form of a letter addressed to "a gentleman of Paris," published in 1790. Though written as a letter, its manner is that of splendid and impassioned oratory. There are few pages of English prose written with such magnificent rhetoric and such intensity of emotion as the famous passage from the *Reflections* printed below. Burke declared that when he wrote it the paper was wetted with his tears.

An excellent brief biography of Burke is that of John Morley in the English Men of Letters series. The *Reflections on the Revolution in France* is reprinted in Everyman's Library. A good volume of selections from Burke is that of L. N. Broughton in the Modern Student's Library (Scribner).

# REFLECTIONS ON THE REVOLUTION IN FRANCE

(1790)

## THE EVENTS OF OCTOBER 6, 1789

In France you are now in the crisis of a revolution, and in the transit from one form of government to another — you cannot see that character of men exactly in the same situation in which we see it in this country. With us it is militant; with you it is triumphant; and you know how it can act when its power is commensurate to its will. I would not be supposed to confine those observations to any description of men, or to comprehend all men of any description within them — No! far from it. I am as incapable of that injustice, as I am of keeping terms with those who profess principles of extremities; and who, under the name of religion, teach little else than wild and dangerous politics. The worst of these politics of revolution is this: they temper and harden the breast, in order to prepare it for the desperate strokes which are sometimes used in extreme occasions. But as these occasions may never arrive, the mind receives a gratuitous taint; and the moral sentiments suffer not a little, when no political purpose is served by the deprivation. This sort of people are so taken up with their theories about the rights of man, that they have totally forgotten his nature. Without opening one new avenue to the understanding, they have succeeded in stopping up those that lead to the heart. They have perverted in themselves, and in those that attend to them, all the well-placed sympathies of the human breast.

This famous sermon[1] of the Old Jewry breathes nothing but this spirit through all the political part. Plots, massacres, assassinations, seem to some people a trivial price for obtaining a revolution. A cheap, bloodless reformation, a guiltless liberty, appear flat and vapid in their taste. There must be a great change of scene; there must be a magnificent stage effect; there must be a grand spectacle to rouse the imagination, grown torpid with the lazy enjoyment of sixty years' security, and the still unanimating repose of public prosperity. The preacher found them all in the French Revolution. This inspires a juvenile warmth through his whole frame. His enthusiasm kindles as he advances; and when he arrives at his peroration it is in a full blaze. Then viewing, from the Pisgah[1] of his pulpit, the free, moral, happy, flourishing, and glorious state of France, as in a bird's-eye landscape of a promised land, he breaks out into the following rapture:

"What an eventful period is this! I am *thankful* that I have lived to it; I could almost say, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* — I have lived to see a *diffusion* of knowledge, which has undermined superstition and error. — I have lived to see *the rights of men* better understood than ever; and nations panting for liberty which seemed to have lost the idea of it. — I have lived to see *thirty millions of people*, indignant and resolute, spurning at slavery, and demanding liberty with an irresistible voice. *Their king led in triumph and an arbitrary monarch surrendering himself to his subjects.*"[2] . . .

. . . . . .

I find a preacher of the gospel profaning the beautiful and prophetic ejaculation, commonly called "*nunc dimittis*,"[3] made on the first presentation of our Saviour in the temple, and applying it, with an inhuman and unnatural rapture, to the most horrid, atrocious, and afflicting spectacle that perhaps ever was exhibited to the pity and indignation of mankind. This "*leading in triumph*," a thing in its best form unmanly and irreligious, which fills our preacher with such unhallowed transports, must shock, I believe, the moral taste of every well-born mind. Several English were the stupefied and indignant spectators of that triumph. It was (unless we have been strangely deceived) a spectacle more resembling a procession of American savages, entering into Onondaga, after some of their murders called victories, and leading into hovels hung round with scalps, their captives, overpowered with the scoffs and buffets of women as ferocious as themselves, much more than it resembled the triumphal pomp of a civilized, martial nation; — if a civilized nation, or any men

1 An address by Dr. Richard Price, delivered before the Society for Commemorating the Revolution in Great Britain, at a meeting held in the street called Old Jewry.

1 The mountain from which Moses viewed the promised land of Canaan.

2 Another of these reverend gentlemen, who was witness to some of the spectacles which Paris has lately exhibited, expresses himself thus: — "*A king dragged in submissive triumph by his conquering subjects*, is one of those appearances of grandeur which seldom rise in the prospect of human affairs, and which, during the remainder of my life, I shall think of with wonder and gratification." These gentlemen agree marvellously in their feelings. (Burke's note.)

3 The first words of the Vulgate version of Luke II, 29: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace."

who had a sense of generosity, were capable of a personal triumph over the fallen and afflicted.

This, my dear Sir, was not the triumph of France. I must believe that, as a nation, it overwhelmed you with shame and horror. I must believe that the National Assembly find themselves in a state of the greatest humiliation in not being able to punish the authors of this triumph, or the actors in it; and that they are in a situation in which any inquiry they may make upon the subject must be destitute even of the appearance of liberty or impartiality. The apology of that assembly is found in their situation; but when we approve what they *must* bear, it is in us the degenerate choice of a vitiated mind.

With a compelled appearance of deliberation, they vote under the dominion of a stern necessity. They sit in the heart, as it were, of a foreign republic: they have their residence in a city whose constitution has emanated neither from the charter of their king, nor from their legislative power. They are surrounded by an army not raised either by the authority of their crown, or by their command: and which, if they should order to dissolve itself, would instantly dissolve them. There they sit, after a gang of assassins had driven away some hundreds of the members; whilst those who held the same moderate principles, with more patience or better hope, continued every day exposed to outrageous insults and murderous threats. There a majority, sometimes real, sometimes pretended, captive itself, compels a captive king to issue as royal edicts, at third hand, the polluted nonsense of their most licentious and giddy coffee-houses. It is notorious, that all their measures are decided before they are debated. It is beyond doubt, that under the terror of the bayonet, and the lamp-post, and the torch to their houses, they are obliged to adopt all the crude and desperate measures suggested by clubs composed of a monstrous medley of all conditions, tongues, and nations. Among these are found persons, in comparison of whom Catiline would be thought scrupulous, and Cethegus [1] a man of sobriety and moderation. Nor is it in these clubs alone that the public measures are deformed into monsters. They undergo a previous distortion in academies, intended as so many seminaries for these clubs, which are set up in all the places of public resort. In these meetings of all sorts, every counsel, in proportion as it is daring, and violent, and perfidious, is taken for the mark of superior genius. Humanity and compassion are ridiculed as the fruits of superstition and ignorance. Tenderness to individuals is considered as treason to the public. Liberty is always to be estimated perfect as property is rendered insecure. Amidst assassination, massacre, and confiscation, perpetrated or meditated, they are forming plans for the good order of future society. Embracing in their arms the carcases of base criminals, and promoting their relations on the title of their offenses, they drive hundreds of virtuous persons to the same end, by forcing them to subsist by beggary or by crime.

The assembly, their organ, acts before them the farce of deliberation with as little decency as liberty. They act like the comedians of a fair before a riotous audience; they act amidst the tumultuous cries of a mixed mob of ferocious men, and of women lost to shame, who, according to their insolent fancies, direct, control, applaud, explode [1] them; and sometimes mix and take their seats amongst them; domineering over them with a strange mixture of servile petulance and proud, presumptuous authority. As they have inverted order in all things, the gallery is in the place of the house. This assembly, which overthrows kings and kingdoms, has not even the physiognomy and aspect of a grave legislative body — *nec color imperii, nec frons ulla senatûs*.[2] They have a power given to them, like that of the evil principle, to subvert and destroy; but none to construct, except such machines as may be fitted for further subversion and further destruction.

Who is it that admires, and from the heart is attached to, national representative assemblies, but must turn with horror and disgust from such a profane burlesque, and abominable perversion of that sacred institute? Lovers of monarchy, lovers of republics, must alike abhor it. The members of your assembly must themselves groan under the tyranny of which they have all the shame, none of the direction, and little of the profit. I am sure many of the members who compose even the majority of that body must feel as I do, notwithstanding the applauses of the Revolution Society. Miserable king! miserable assembly! How must that assembly be silently scandalized with those of their members, who could call a day which

1 An associate of Catiline in his conspiracy against the Roman republic.

1 hiss from the stage.

2 "neither the outward show of an empire, nor any feature of a Senate" — a phrase from Lucan's *Pharsalia*, IX, 207.

seemed to blot the sun out of the heavens, "*un beau jour!*"[1] How must they be inwardly indignant at hearing others, who thought fit to declare to them, "that the vessel of the state would fly forward in her course towards regeneration with more speed than ever," from the stiff gale of treason and murder, which preceded our preacher's triumph! What must they have felt, whilst, with outward patience, and inward indignation, they heard of the slaughter of innocent gentlemen in their houses, that "the blood spilled was not the most pure!" What must they have felt, when they were besieged by complaints of disorder which shook their country to its foundations, at being compelled coolly to tell the complainants, that they were under the protection of the law, and that they would address the king (the captive king) to cause the laws to be enforced for their protection; when the enslaved ministers of that captive king had formally notified to them, that there was neither law, nor authority, nor power left to protect! What must they have felt at being obliged, as a felicitation on the present new year, to request their captive king to forget the stormy period of the last, on account of the great good which *he* was likely to produce to his people; to the complete attainment of which good they adjourned the practical demonstrations of their loyalty, assuring him of their obedience, when he should no longer possess any authority to command!

This address was made with much good nature and affection, to be sure. But among the revolutions in France must be reckoned a considerable revolution in their ideas of politeness. In England we are said to learn manners at second-hand from your side of the water, and that we dress our behavior in the frippery of France. If so, we are still in the old cut; and have not so far conformed to the new Parisian mode of good breeding, as to think it quite in the most refined strain of delicate compliment (whether in condolence or congratulation) to say, to the most humiliated creature that crawls upon the earth, that great public benefits are derived from the murder of his servants, the attempted assassination of himself and of his wife, and the mortification, disgrace, and degradation, that he has personally suffered. It is a topic of consolation which our ordinary[2] of Newgate would be too humane to use to a criminal at the foot of the gallows. I should have thought that the hangman of Paris, now that he is liberalized by the vote of the National Assembly, and is allowed his rank and arms in the herald's college of the rights of men, would be too generous, too gallant a man, too full of the sense of his new dignity, to employ that cutting consolation to any of the persons whom the *leze nation*[1] might bring under the administration of his *executive power*.

A man is fallen indeed, when he is thus flattered. The anodyne draught of oblivion, thus drugged, is well calculated to preserve a galling wakefulness, and to feed the living ulcer of a corroding memory. Thus to administer the opiate potion of amnesty, powdered with all the ingredients of scorn and contempt, is to hold to his lips, instead of "the balm of hurt minds," the cup of human misery full to the brim, and to force him to drink it to the dregs.

Yielding to reasons, at least as forcible as those which were so delicately urged in the compliment on the new year, the king of France will probably endeavor to forget these events and that compliment. But history, who keeps a durable record of all our acts, and exercises her awful censure over the proceedings of all sorts of sovereigns, will not forget either those events, or the era of this liberal refinement in the intercourse of mankind. History will record, that on the morning of the 6th of October, 1789, the king and queen of France, after a day of confusion, alarm, dismay, and slaughter, lay down, under the pledged security of public faith, to indulge nature in a few hours of respite, and troubled, melancholy repose. From this sleep the queen was first startled by the voice of the sentinel at her door, who cried out to her to save herself by flight — that this was the last proof of fidelity he could give — that they were upon him, and he was dead. Instantly he was cut down. A band of cruel ruffians and assassins, reeking with his blood, rushed into the chamber of the queen, and pierced with a hundred strokes of bayonets and poniards the bed, from whence this persecuted woman had but just time to fly almost naked, and, through ways unknown to the murderers, had escaped to seek refuge at the feet of a king and husband, not secure of his own life for a moment.

This king, to say no more of him, and this queen, and their infant children, (who once would have been the pride and hope of a great and generous people,) were then forced

1 6th of October, 1789. (Burke's note).
2 clergyman attached to the prison.

1 treason against the nation.

to abandon the sanctuary of the most splendid palace[1] in the world, which they left swimming in blood, polluted by massacre, and strewed with scattered limbs and mutilated carcases. Thence they were conducted into the capital of their kingdom. Two had been selected from the unprovoked, unresisted, promiscuous slaughter, as a sample was made of the gentlemen of birth and family who composed the king's body guard. These two gentlemen, with all the parade of an execution of justice, were cruelly and publicly dragged to the block, and beheaded in the great court of the palace. Their heads were stuck upon spears, and led the procession; whilst the royal captives who followed in the train were slowly moved along amidst the horrid yells, and shrilling screams, and frantic dances, and infamous contumelies, and all the unutterable abominations of the furies of hell, in the abused shape of the vilest of women. After they had been made to taste, drop by drop, more than the bitterness of death, in the slow torture of a journey of twelve miles, protracted to six hours, they were, under a guard, composed of those very soldiers who had thus conducted them through this famous triumph, lodged in one of the old palaces of Paris now converted into a bastile for kings.

Is this a triumph to be consecrated at altars? to be commemorated with grateful thanksgiving? to be offered to the divine humanity with fervent prayer and enthusiastic ejaculation? — These Theban and Thracian orgies, acted in France, and applauded only in the Old Jewry, I assure you, kindle prophetic enthusiasm in the minds but of very few people in this kingdom: although a saint and apostle, who may have revelations of his own, and who has so completely vanquished all the mean superstitions of the heart, may incline to think it pious and decorous to compare it with the entrance into the world of the Prince of Peace, proclaimed in a holy temple by a venerable sage, and not long before not worse announced by the voice of angels to the quiet innocence of shepherds.

At first I was at a loss to account for this fit of unguarded transport. I knew, indeed, that the sufferings of monarchs make a delicious repast to some sort of palates. There were reflections which might serve to keep this appetite within some bounds of temperance. But when I took one circumstance into my consideration, I was obliged to confess, that much allowance ought to be made for the society, and that the temptation was too strong for common discretion; I mean, the circumstance of the Io Pæan of the triumph, the animating cry which called "for *all* the BISHOPS to be hanged on the lamp-posts,"[1] might well have brought forth a burst of enthusiasm on the foreseen consequences of this happy day. I allow to so much enthusiasm some little deviation from prudence. I allow this prophet to break forth into hymns of joy and thanksgiving on an event which appears like the precursor of the Millennium, and the projected fifth monarchy, in the destruction of all church establishments. There was, however, (as in all human affairs there is,) in the midst of this joy, something to exercise the patience of these worthy gentlemen, and to try the long-suffering of their faith. The actual murder of the king and queen, and their child, was wanting to the other auspicious circumstances of this "*beautiful day.*" The actual murder of the bishops, though called for by so many holy ejaculations, was also wanting. A group of regicide and sacrilegious slaughter, was indeed boldly sketched, but it was only sketched. It unhappily was left unfinished, in this great history-piece of the massacre of innocents. What hardy pencil of a great master, from the school of the rights of men, will finish it, is to be seen hereafter. The age has not yet the complete benefit of that diffusion of knowledge that has undermined superstition and error; and the king of France wants another object or two to consign to oblivion, in consideration of all the good which is to arise from his own sufferings, and the patriotic crimes of an enlightened age.

Although this work of our new light and knowledge did not go to the length that in all probability it was intended it should be carried, yet I must think that such treatment of any human creatures must be shocking to any but those who are made for accomplishing revolutions. But I cannot stop here. Influenced by the inborn feelings of my nature, and not being illuminated by a single ray of this new-sprung modern light, I confess to you, Sir, that the exalted rank of the persons suffering, and particularly the sex, the beauty, and the amiable qualities of the descendant of so many kings and emperors, with the tender age of royal infants, insensible only through infancy and innocence of the cruel outrages to which their parents were exposed, instead of being a subject of

1 The Tuileries.

1 Tous les Evêques à la lanterne. (Burke's note.)

exultation, adds not a little to my sensibility on that most melancholy occasion.

I hear that the august person,[1] who was the principal object of our preacher's triumph, though he supported himself, felt much on that shameful occasion. As a man, it became him to feel for his wife and his children, and the faithful guards of his person, that were massacred in cold blood about him; as a prince, it became him to feel for the strange and frightful transformation of his civilized subjects, and to be more grieved for them than solicitous for himself. It derogates little from his fortitude, while it adds infinitely to the honor of his humanity. I am very sorry to say it, very sorry indeed, that such personages are in a situation in which it is not becoming in us to praise the virtues of the great.

I hear, and I rejoice to hear, that the great lady,[2] the other object of the triumph, has borne that day, (one is interested that beings made for suffering should suffer well,) and that she bears all the succeeding days, that she bears the imprisonment of her husband, and her captivity, and the exile of her friends, and the insulting adulation of addresses, and the whole weight of her accumulated wrongs, with a serene patience, in a manner suited to her rank and race, and becoming the offspring of a sovereign[3] distinguished for her piety and her courage; that, like her, she has lofty sentiments; that she feels with the dignity of a Roman matron; that in the last extremity she will save herself from the last disgrace; and that, if she must fall, she will fall by no ignoble hand.[4]

It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the queen of France, then the dauphiness, at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in, — glittering like the morning-star, full of life, and splendor, and joy. Oh! what a revolution! and what a heart must I have to contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall! Little did I dream when she added titles of veneration to those of enthusiastic, distant, respectful love, that she should ever be obliged to carry the sharp antidote against disgrace concealed in that bosom; little did I dream that I should have lived to see such disasters fallen upon her in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honor, and of cavaliers. I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult. But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists, and calculators, has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever. Never, never more shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive, even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defense of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise, is gone! It is gone, that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honor, which felt a stain like a wound, which inspired courage whilst it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil, by losing all its grossness.

This mixed system of opinion and sentiment had its origin in the ancient chivalry; and the principle, though varied in its appearance by the varying state of human affairs, subsisted and influenced through a long succession of generations, even to the time we live in. If it should ever be totally extinguished, the loss I fear will be great. It is this which has given its character to modern Europe. It is this which has distinguished it under all its forms of government, and distinguished it to its advantage, from the states of Asia, and possibly from those states which flourished in the most brilliant periods of the antique world. It was this, which, without confounding ranks, had produced a noble equality, and handed it down through all the gradations of social life. It was this opinion which mitigated kings into companions, and raised private men to be fellows with kings. Without force or opposition, it subdued the fierceness of pride and power; it obliged sovereigns to submit to the soft collar of social esteem, compelled stern authority to submit to elegance, and gave a dominating vanquisher of laws to be subdued by manners.

But now all is to be changed. All the pleasing illusions, which made power gentle and obedience liberal, which harmonized the different shades of life and which, by a bland assimilation, incorporated into politics the sentiments which beautify and soften private society, are to be dissolved by this new conquering empire of light and reason. All the decent drapery of life is to be rudely torn off.

1 Louis XVI. 2 Marie Antoinette.
3 Maria Theresa.
4 Marie Antoinette carried poison on her person.

All the superadded ideas, furnished from the wardrobe of a moral imagination, which the heart owns, and the understanding ratifies, as necessary to cover the defects of our naked, shivering nature, and to raise it to dignity in our own estimation, are to be exploded as a ridiculous, absurd, and antiquated fashion.

On this scheme of things, a king is but a man, a queen is but a woman; a woman is but an animal, and an animal not of the highest order. All homage paid to the sex in general as such, and without distinct views, is to be regarded as romance and folly. Regicide, and parricide, and sacrilege, are but fictions of superstition, corrupting jurisprudence by destroying its simplicity. The murder of a king, or a queen, or a bishop, or a father, are only common homicide; and if the people are by any chance, or in any way, gainers by it, a sort of homicide much the most pardonable, and into which we ought not to make too severe a scrutiny.

On the scheme of this barbarous philosophy, which is the offspring of cold hearts and muddy understandings, and which is as void of solid wisdom as it is destitute of all taste and elegance, laws are to be supported only by their own terrors, and by the concern which each individual may find in them from his own private speculations, or can spare to them from his own private interests. In the groves of *their* academy, at the end of every vista, you see nothing but the gallows. Nothing is left which engages the affections on the part of the commonwealth. On the principles of this mechanic philosophy, our institutions can never be embodied, if I may use the expression, in persons; so as to create in us love, veneration, admiration, or attachment. But that sort of reason which banishes the affections is incapable of filling their place. These public affections, combined with manners, are required sometimes as supplements, sometimes as correctives, always as aids to law. The precept given by a wise man, as well as a great critic, for the construction of poems, is equally true as to states: *Non satis est pulchra esse poemata, dulcia sunto.*[1] There ought to be a system of manners in every nation, which a well-formed mind would be disposed to relish. To make us love our country, our country ought to be lovely.

But power, of some kind or other, will survive the shock in which manners and opinions perish; and it will find other and worse means for its support. The usurpation which, in order to subvert ancient institutions, has destroyed ancient principles, will hold power by arts similar to those by which it has acquired it. When the old feudal and chivalrous spirit of *fealty*, which, by freeing kings from fear, freed both kings and subjects from the precautions of tyranny, shall be extinct in the minds of men, plots and assassinations will be anticipated by preventive murder and preventive confiscation, and that long roll of grim and bloody maxims, which form the political code of all power, not standing on its own honor, and the honor of those who are to obey it. Kings will be tyrants from policy, when subjects are rebels from principle.

When ancient opinions and rules of life are taken away, the loss cannot possibly be estimated. From that moment we have no compass to govern us; nor can we know distinctly to what port we steer. Europe, undoubtedly, taken in a mass, was in a flourishing condition the day on which your revolution was completed. How much of that prosperous state was owing to the spirit of our old manners and opinions is not easy to say; but as such causes cannot be indifferent in their operation, we must presume, that, on the whole, their operation was beneficial.

We are but too apt to consider things in the state in which we find them, without sufficiently adverting to the causes by which they have been produced, and possibly may be upheld. Nothing is more certain, than that our manners, our civilization, and all the good things which are connected with manners and with civilization, have, in this European world of ours, depended for ages upon two principles; and were indeed the result of both combined; I mean the spirit of a gentleman, and the spirit of religion. The nobility and the clergy, the one by profession, the other by patronage, kept learning in existence, even in the midst of arms and confusions, and whilst governments were rather in their causes, than formed. Learning paid back what it received to nobility and to priesthood; and paid it with usury, by enlarging their ideas, and by furnishing their minds. Happy if they had all continued to know their indissoluble union, and their proper place! Happy if learning, not debauched by ambition, had been satisfied to continue the instructor, and not aspired to be the master! Along with its natural protectors and guardians, learning will be cast

1 "It is not enough that poems be beautiful; they must also be pleasing." — Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 99.

into the mire, and trodden down under the hoofs of a swinish multitude.

If, as I suspect, modern letters owe more than they are always willing to own to ancient manners, so do other interests which we value full as much as they are worth. Even commerce, and trade, and manufacture, the gods of our economical politicians, are themselves perhaps but creatures; are themselves but effects, which, as first causes, we choose to worship. They certainly grew under the same shade in which learning flourished. They too may decay with their natural protecting principles. With you, for the present at least, they all threaten to disappear together. Where trade and manufactures are wanting to a people, and the spirit of nobility and religion remains, sentiment supplies, and not always ill supplies, their place; but if commerce and the arts should be lost in an experiment to try how well a state may stand without these old fundamental principles, what sort of a thing must be a nation of gross, stupid, ferocious, and, at the same time, poor and sordid, barbarians, destitute of religion, honor, or manly pride, possessing nothing at present, and hoping for nothing hereafter?

I wish you may not be going fast, and by the shortest cut, to that horrible and disgustful situation. Already there appears a poverty of conception, a coarseness and vulgarity, in all the proceedings of the Assembly and of all their instructors. Their liberty is not liberal. Their science is presumptuous ignorance. Their humanity is savage and brutal.

## THE IMPEACHMENT OF WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.

Warren Hastings (1732–1818) was the first British Governor-General of India (1773–85). In 1786 he was impeached by the House of Commons on charges of maladministration and corruption. Burke, who had been instrumental in securing the impeachment, was made principal manager on behalf of the Commons of the trial of Hastings before the tribunal of the House of Lords. The trial, begun in 1788, dragged on for seven years, and ended in 1795 with the acquittal of the defendant, an acquittal which, with some reservations, the verdict of history has confirmed. The charges of personal corruption were certainly without foundation. The charges of wanton cruelty to the native population of India did not sufficiently take into account the difficulty of the problems which confronted the British rulers. The public outcry against Warren Hastings, and the passionate indignation which informs Burke's denunciation of him, are symptoms of the newly awakened social conscience and the humanitarian zeal against oppression which mark the later decades of the eighteenth century.

### THE CHARGE

*February* 19, 1788

I, therefore, charge Mr. Hastings with having destroyed, for private purposes, the whole system of government by the six provincial councils, which he had no right to destroy.

I charge him with having delegated to others that power which the act of parliament had directed him to preserve unalienably in himself.

I charge him with having formed a committee to be mere instruments and tools, at the enormous expenses of £62,000 per annum.

I charge him with having appointed a person their dewan,[1] to whom these Englishmen were to be subservient tools; whose name, to his own knowledge, was by the general voice of India, by the general recorded voice of the Company,[2] by recorded official transactions, by everything that can make a man known, abhorred and detested, stamped with infamy; and with giving him the whole power which he had thus separated from the council-general and from the provincial councils.

I charge him with taking bribes of Gunga Govin Sing.

I charge him with not having done that bribe service which fidelity even in iniquity requires at the hands of the worst of men.

I charge him with having robbed those people of whom he took the bribes.

I charge him with having fraudulently alienated the fortunes of widows.

I charge him with having, without right, title, or purchase, taken the lands of orphans, and given them to wicked persons under him.

I charge him with having removed the natural guardians of a minor Rajah, and with having given that trust to a stranger, Debi Sing, whose wickedness was known to himself, and all the world; and by whom the Rajah, his family and dependants were cruelly oppressed.

I charge him with having committed to the management of Debi Sing three great provinces; and thereby, with having wasted

1 financial agent. 2 The East-India Company.

the country, ruined the landed interest, cruelly harassed the peasants, burnt their houses, seized their crops, tortured and degraded their persons, and destroyed the honor of the whole female race of that country.

In the name of the Commons of England, I charge all this villany upon Warren Hastings, in this last moment of my application to you.

My lords, what is it that we want here to a great act of national justice? Do we want a cause, my lords? You have the cause of oppressed princes, of undone women of the first rank, of desolated provinces, and of wasted kingdoms.

Do you want a criminal, my lords? When was there so much iniquity ever laid to the charge of any one? — No, my lords, you must not look to punish any other such delinquent from India. — Warren Hastings has not left substance enough in India to nourish such another delinquent.

My lords, is it a prosecutor you want? — You have before you the Commons of Great Britain as prosecutors; and, I believe, my lords, that the sun in his beneficent progress round the world does not behold a more glorious sight than that of men, separated from a remote people by the material bounds and barriers of nature, united by the bond of a social and moral community; — all the Commons of England resenting, as their own, the indignities and cruelties that are offered to all the people of India.

Do we want a tribunal? My lords, no example of antiquity, nothing in the modern world, nothing in the range of human imagination, can supply us with a tribunal like this. My lords, here we see virtually in the mind's eye that sacred majesty of the Crown, under whose authority you sit, and whose power you exercise. We see in that invisible authority, what we all feel in reality and life, the beneficent powers and protecting justice of his Majesty. We have here the heir-apparent to the Crown, such as the fond wishes of the people of England wish an heir-apparent of the Crown to be. We have here all the branches of the royal family in a situation between majesty and subjection, between the sovereign and the subject, — offering a pledge in that situation for the support of the rights of the Crown and the liberties of the people, both which extremities they touch. My lords, we have a great hereditary peerage here; those who have their own honor, the honor of their ancestors, and of their posterity, to guard; and who will justify, as they have always justified, that provision in the constitution by which justice is made an hereditary office. My lords, we have here a new nobility, who have risen and exalted themselves by various merits, by great military services, which have extended the fame of this country from the rising to the setting sun: we have those who by various civil merits and various civil talents have been exalted to a situation which they well deserve, and in which they will justify the favor of their sovereign, and the good opinion of their fellow-subjects, and make them rejoice to see those virtuous characters, that were the other day upon a level with them, now exalted above them in rank, but feeling with them in sympathy what they felt in common with them before. We have persons exalted from the practice of the law, from the place in which they administered high though subordinate justice, to a seat here, to enlighten with their knowledge and to strengthen with their votes those principles which have distinguished the courts in which they have presided.

My lords, you have here also the lights of our religion; you have the bishops of England. My lords, you have that true image of the primitive church in its ancient form, in its ancient ordinances, purified from the superstitions and the vices which a long succession of ages will bring upon the best institutions. You have the representatives of that religion which says that their God is love, that the very vital spirit of their institution is charity; a religion which so much hates oppression, that when the God whom we adore appeared in human form, he did not appear in a form of greatness and majesty, but in sympathy with the lowest of the people, — and thereby made it a firm and ruling principle, that their welfare was the object of all government; since the person who was the Master of Nature, chose to appear himself in a subordinate situation. These are the considerations which influence them, which animate them, and will animate them, against all oppression; knowing, that He who is called first among them, and first among us all, both of the flock that is fed and of those who feed it, made Himself "the servant of all."

My lords, these are the securities which we have in all the constituent parts of the body of this House. We know them, we reckon, we rest upon them, and commit safely the interests of India and of humanity

into your hands. Therefore, it is with confidence that, ordered by the Commons,

I impeach Warren Hastings, Esq., of high crimes and misdemeanors.

I impeach him in the name of the Commons of Great Britain in parliament assembled, whose parliamentary trust he has betrayed.

I impeach him in the name of all the Commons of Great Britain, whose national character he has dishonored.

I impeach him in the name of the people in India, whose laws, rights, and liberties he has subverted, whose properties he has destroyed, whose country he has laid waste and desolate.

I impeach him in the name and by virtue of those eternal laws of justice which he has violated.

I impeach him in the name of human nature itself, which he has cruelly outraged, injured, and oppressed in both sexes, in every age, rank, situation, and condition of life.

## PERORATION

*June 16, 1794*

My lords, I have done; the part of the Commons is concluded. With a trembling solicitude we consign this product of our long, long labors to your charge. Take it! — take it! It is a sacred trust. Never before was a cause of such magnitude submitted to any human tribunal.

My lords, at this awful close, in the name of the Commons, and surrounded by them, I attest the retiring, I attest the advancing generations, between which, as a link in the great chain of eternal order, we stand. — We call this nation, we call the world to witness, that the Commons have shrunk from no labor; that we have been guilty of no prevarication; that we have made no compromise with crime; that we have not feared any odium whatsoever, in the long warfare which we have carried on with the crimes — with the vices — with the exorbitant wealth — with the enormous and overpowering influence of Eastern corruption. This war, my lords, we have waged for twenty-two years, and the conflict has been fought at your lordships' bar for the last seven years. My lords, twenty-two years is a great space in the scale of the life of man; it is no inconsiderable space in the history of a great nation. A business which has so long occupied the councils and the tribunals of Great Britain, cannot possibly be huddled over in the course of vulgar, trite, and transitory events. Nothing but some of those great revolutions that break the traditionary chain of human memory, and alter the very face of nature itself, can possibly obscure it. My lords, we are all elevated to a degree of importance by it; the meanest of us will, by means of it, more or less become the concern of posterity, if we are yet to hope for such a thing in the present state of the world [1] as a recording, retrospective, civilized posterity; but this is in the hands of the great Disposer of events: it is not ours to settle how it shall be. My lords, your House yet stands; it stands as a great edifice; but let me say, that it stands in the midst of ruins; in the midst of the ruins that have been made by the greatest moral earthquake that ever convulsed and shattered this globe of ours. My lords, it has pleased Providence to place us in such a state, that we appear every moment to be upon the verge of some great mutations. There is one thing, and one thing only, which defies all mutation; that which existed before the world, and will survive the fabric of the world itself; I mean justice; that justice, which, emanating from the Divinity, has a place in the breast of every one of us, given us for our guide with regard to ourselves and with regard to others, and which will stand after this globe is burned to ashes, our advocate or our accuser before the great Judge, when He comes to call upon us for the tenor of a well-spent life.

My lords, the Commons will share in every fate with your lordships; there is nothing sinister which can happen to you, in which we shall not be involved; and if it should so happen that we shall be subjected to some of those frightful changes which we have seen — if it should happen that your lordships, stripped of all the decorous distinctions of human society, should, by hands at once base and cruel, be led to those scaffolds and machines of murder, upon which great kings and glorious queens have shed their blood, amidst the prelates, amidst the nobles, amidst the magistrates who supported their thrones, may you in those moments feel that consolation which I am persuaded they felt in the critical moments of their dreadful agony!

My lords, there is a consolation, and a great consolation it is, which often happens to oppressed virtue and fallen dignity; it often happens that the very oppressors and

1 Burke was speaking at the height of the French Revolution.

persecutors themselves are forced to bear testimony in its favor. I do not like to go for instances a great way back into antiquity. I know very well that length of time operates so as to give an air of the fabulous to remote events, which lessens the interest and weakens the application of examples. I wish to come nearer to the present time. Your lordships know and have heard, for which of us has not known and heard, of the parliament of Paris? The parliament of Paris had an origin very, very similar to that of the great court before which I stand; the parliament of Paris continued to have a great resemblance to it in its constitution, even to its fall; the parliament of Paris, my lords, WAS; it is gone! It has passed away; it has vanished like a dream! It fell, pierced by the sword of the Compte de Mirabeau. And yet I will say, that that man, at the time of his inflicting the death wound of that parliament, produced at once the shortest and the grandest funeral oration that ever was or could be made upon the departure of a great court of magistracy. Though he had himself smarted under its lash, as every one knows who knows his history (and he was elevated to dreadful notoriety in history), yet when he pronounced the death sentence upon that parliament, and inflicted the mortal wound, he declared that his motives for doing it were merely political, and that their hands were as pure as those of justice itself, which they administered — a great and glorious exit, my lords, of a great and glorious body! And never was a eulogy pronounced upon a body more deserved. They were persons in nobility of rank, in amplitude of fortune, in weight of authority, in depth of learning, inferior to few of those that hear me. My lords, it was but the other day that they submitted their necks to the axe; but their honor was unwounded. Their enemies, the persons who sentenced them to death, were lawyers, full of subtlety; they were enemies, full of malice; yet lawyers full of subtlety, and enemies full of malice, as they were, they did not dare to reproach them with having supported the wealthy, the great, and powerful, and of having oppressed the weak and feeble, in any of their judgments, or of having perverted justice in any one instance whatever, through favor or through interest, or cabal.

My lords, if you must fall, may you so fall! But if you stand, and stand I trust you will, together with the fortune of this ancient monarchy — together with the ancient laws and liberties of this great and illustrious kingdom, may you stand as unimpeached in honor as in power; may you stand not as a substitute for virtue, but as an ornament of virtue, as a security for virtue; may you stand long, and long stand the terror of tyrants; may you stand the refuge of afflicted nations; may you stand a sacred temple, for the perpetual residence of an inviolable justice.

## WILLIAM COWPER (1731–1800)

William Cowper was born in 1731 in a quiet country village, where his father was rector of the parish. He came of a good family; many of his relatives were people of influence and distinction. His first sorrow came to him at the age of six, when he lost his mother, his childhood memories of whom are touchingly recorded in his poem *On the Receipt of my Mother's Picture.* At the age of ten he was sent to Westminster School, whence he went at eighteen to the Middle Temple in London as a student of the law. He was called to the bar at the age of twenty-three.

While still a law-student, he suffered from his first attack of mental disorder. After some ten years of not very exacting legal practice, years in which he had much leisure for reading and social conversation, his disease returned in a very violent form of religious melancholia with suicidal mania. He believed that he had committed the unpardonable sin, and that he was irrevocably damned. For more than a year he was confined in a private mad-house. Then suddenly came upon him a sense of God's love and forgiveness, and he was discharged as cured. But he had no heart to return to the life of London. He took lodgings at Huntingdon, near Cambridge, in the family of a clergyman named Unwin, whose gracious and lovely wife, Mary, a woman seven years older than Cowper, became the closest and dearest friend of his life, an elder sister, almost a mother, to him until her death four years before his own. Lovers of English poetry owe a lasting debt of gratitude to Mary Unwin. Cowper's own sense of what he owed her is expressed in his lines *To Mary.* After her husband's death, she and Cowper went to live at the little village of Olney in Buckinghamshire, attracted thither by the fame of an evangelical clergyman. Their life was one

of cheerful but intense and deep religious piety, which is reflected in Cowper's hymns and in the pages of *The Task*. Mary Unwin's devotion to Cowper nursed him through repeated relapses into his mental trouble. It was in one of these periods of depression that he wrote *The Castaway*. Cowper died in 1800.

It was for a means of escape from his distress of mind and spirit that Cowper turned to the serious work of a poet. As a younger man, he had occasionally written verse; but the work for which he is remembered was not done till he was fifty years old. In 1782 appeared a volume of Poems, written in heroic couplet, on such themes as "The Progress of Error," "Truth," "Conversation." Then in 1785 came his greatest work, *The Task*. A friend, Lady Austen, asked him to write in blank verse, and playfully assigned him as subject the parlor sofa. But the "task" so assigned rapidly developed beyond its playful beginning. Its six books have no single subject. In them Cowper passes in the manner of conversation from one theme to another, though always with graceful transitions. What we have is a picture of his own daily life, of the life of the surrounding countryside, and of the thoughts which fill his mind. The manner is conversational, colored by tender sentiment, lightened by quiet wit and humor, with an occasional flash of indignation at the spread of evil manners. The poem has in the highest degree the quality of poetic truth. Cowper describes what he has himself seen, and with minute accuracy of detail. Even more than Wordsworth, whom he in many ways resembles, he writes with his eye on the object. His own thoughts and feelings he records with an intimate sincerity of self-revelation wholly unlike the writing of most eighteenth-century poets. Indeed the charm of his poetry is in large measure the charm of his own gracious, kindly soul.

A convenient single-volume edition of Cowper is that edited by H. S. Milford for the Oxford University Press. An interesting biography is that of Goldwin Smith in the English Men of Letters series. A selection from his charming personal letters is published in Everyman's Library (Dutton).

## WALKING WITH GOD

Gen. v, 24

O! for a closer walk with GOD,
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!

Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the LORD?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of JESUS, and his word?

What peaceful hours I once enjoyed!
How sweet their memory still!
But they have left an aching void,
The world can never fill.

Return, O holy Dove, return,
Sweet messenger of rest;
I hate the sins that made thee mourn,
And drove thee from my breast.

The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be;
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only thee.

So shall my walk be close with GOD,
Calm and serene my frame;
So purer light shall mark the road
That leads me to the Lamb.

1771–72

## THE TASK

1785

### BOOK IV

### THE WINTER EVENING

Argument of the Fourth Book: The post comes in — The newspaper is read — The world contemplated at a distance — Address to winter — The rural amusements of a winter evening compared with the fashionable ones — Address to evening — A brown study — Fall of snow in the evening — The waggoner — A poor family-piece — The rural thief — Public houses — The multitude of them censured — The farmer's daughter: what she was — what she is — The simplicity of country manners almost lost — Causes of the change — Desertion of the country by the rich — Neglect of magistrates — The militia principally in fault — The new recruit and his transformation — Reflection on bodies corporate — The love of rural objects natural to all, and never to be totally extinguished.

Hark! 'tis the twanging horn o'er yonder bridge,
That with its wearisome but needful length
Bestrides the wintry flood, in which the moon
Sees her unwrinkled face reflected bright; —
He comes, the herald of a noisy world,
With spattered boots, strapped waist, and frozen locks;
News from all nations lumbering at his back.
True to his charge, the close-packed load behind,
Yet careless what he brings, his one concern
Is to conduct it to the destined inn:
And, having dropped th' expected bag, pass on.
He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,
Cold and yet cheerful: messenger of grief
Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some;

To him indifferent whether grief or joy.
Houses in ashes, and the fall of stocks,
Births, deaths, and marriages, epistles wet
With tears, that trickled down the writer's cheeks
Fast as the periods from his fluent quill,
Or charged with amorous sighs of absent swains,
Or nymphs responsive, equally affect
His horse and him, unconscious of them all.
But oh th' important budget! ushered in
With such heart-shaking music, who can say
What are its tidings? have our troops awaked?
Or do they still, as if with opium drugged,
Snore to the murmurs of th' Atlantic wave?
Is India free? and does she wear her plumed
And jewelled turban with a smile of peace,
Or do we grind her still? The grand debate,
The popular harangue, the tart reply,
The logic, and the wisdom, and the wit,
And the loud laugh — I long to know them all;
I burn to set th' imprisoned wranglers free,
And give them voice and utterance once again.
Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And, while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups,
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.
Not such his evening, who with shining face
Sweats in the crowded theatre, and, squeezed
And bored with elbow-points through both his sides,
Out-scolds the ranting actor on the stage:
Nor his, who patient stands till his feet throb,
And his head thumps, to feed upon the breath
Of patriots, bursting with heroic rage,
Or placemen, all tranquillity and smiles.
This folio of four pages, happy work!
Which not even critics criticise; that holds
Inquisitive attention, while I read,
Fast bound in chains of silence, which the fair,
Though eloquent themselves, yet fear to break;
What is it, but a map of busy life,
Its fluctuations, and its vast concerns?
Here runs the mountainous and craggy ridge
That tempts ambition. On the summit see
The seals of office glitter in his eyes;
He climbs, he pants, he grasps them! At his heels,
Close at his heels, a demagogue ascends,
And with a dexterous jerk soon twists him down,
And wins them, but to lose them in his turn.
Here rills of oily eloquence in soft
Meanders lubricate the course they take;
The modest speaker is ashamed and grieved
T' engross a moment's notice, and yet begs,
Begs a propitious ear for his poor thoughts,
However trivial all that he conceives.
Sweet bashfulness! it claims at least this praise,
The dearth of information and good sense
That it foretells us always comes to pass.
Cataracts of declamation thunder here;
There forests of no meaning spread the page,
In which all comprehension wanders, lost;
While fields of pleasantry amuse us there
With merry descants on a nation's woes.
The rest appears a wilderness of strange
But gay confusion; roses for the cheeks,
And lilies for the brows of faded age,
Teeth for the toothless, ringlets for the bald,
Heaven, earth, and ocean, plundered of their sweets,
Nectareous essences, Olympian dews,
Sermons, and city feasts, and favorite airs,
Æthereal journies, submarine exploits,
And Katterfelto,[1] with his hair on end
At his own wonders, wondering for his bread.
'Tis pleasant through the loop-holes of retreat
To peep at such a world; to see the stir
Of the great Babel, and not feel the crowd;
To hear the roar she sends through all her gates
At a safe distance, where the dying sound
Falls a soft murmur on th' uninjured ear.
Thus sitting, and surveying thus at ease
The globe and its concerns, I seem advanced
To some secure and more than mortal height,
That liberates and exempts me from them all.
It turns submitted to my view, turns round
With all its generations; I behold
The tumult, and am still. The sound of war
Has lost its terrors ere it reaches me;
Grieves, but alarms me not. I mourn the pride
And avarice that make man a wolf to man;
Hear the faint echo of those brazen throats
By which he speaks the language of his heart,
And sigh, but never tremble at the sound.
He travels and expatiates, as the bee
From flower to flower, so he from land to land;

1 A popular sleight-of-hand performer, who advertised with the phrase: "Wonders! Wonders! Wonders!"

The manners, customs, policy of all
Pay contribution to the store he gleans;
He sucks intelligence in every clime,
And spreads the honey of his deep research
At his return — a rich repast for me.
He travels, and I too. I tread his deck,
Ascend his topmast, through his peering eyes
Discover countries, with a kindred heart
Suffer his woes, and share in his escapes;
While fancy, like the finger of a clock,
Runs the great circuit, and is still at home.
Oh Winter, ruler of th' inverted year,
Thy scattered hair with sleet like ashes filled,
Thy breath congealed upon thy lips, thy cheeks
Fringed with a beard made white with other snows
Than those of age, thy forehead wrapt in clouds,
A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,
But urged by storms along its slippery way,
I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st,
And dreaded as thou art! Thou hold'st the sun
A prisoner in the yet undawning east,
Shortening his journey between morn and noon,
And hurrying him, impatient of his stay,
Down to the rosy west; but kindly still
Compensating his loss with added hours
Of social converse and instructive ease,
And gathering, at short notice, in one group
The family dispersed, and fixing thought,
Not less dispersed by day-light and its cares.
I crown thee king of intimate delights,
Fire-side enjoyments, home-born happiness,
And all the comforts that the lowly roof
Of undisturbed retirement, and the hours
Of long uninterrupted evening, know.
No rattling wheels stop short before these gates;
No powdered pert, proficient in the art
Of sounding an alarm, assaults these doors
Till the street rings; no stationary steeds
Cough their own knell, while, heedless of the sound,
The silent circle fan themselves, and quake:
But here the needle plies its busy task,
The pattern grows, the well-depicted flower,
Wrought patiently into the snowy lawn,
Unfolds its bosom; buds, and leaves, and sprigs,
And curling tendrils, gracefully disposed,
Follow the nimble finger of the fair;
A wreath that cannot fade, of flowers that blow
With most success when all besides decay.
The poet's or historian's page, by one
Made vocal for th' amusement of the rest;
The sprightly lyre, whose treasure of sweet sounds
The touch from many a trembling chord shakes out;
And the clear voice symphonious, yet distinct,
And in the charming strife triumphant still;
Beguile the night, and set a keener edge
On female industry: the threaded steel
Flies swiftly, and, unfelt, the task proceeds.
The volume closed, the customary rites
Of the last meal commence. A Roman meal;
Such as the mistress of the world once found
Delicious, when her patriots of high note,
Perhaps by moonlight, at their humble doors,
And under an old oak's domestic shade,
Enjoyed — spare feast! — a radish and an egg!
Discourse ensues, not trivial, yet not dull,
Nor such as with a frown forbids the play
Of fancy, or proscribes the sound of mirth:
Nor do we madly, like an impious world,
Who deem religion frenzy, and the God
That made them an intruder on their joys,
Start at his awful name, or deem his praise
A jarring note. Themes of a graver tone,
Exciting oft our gratitude and love,
While we retrace with memory's pointing wand,
That calls the past to our exact review,
The dangers we have 'scaped, the broken snare,
The disappointed foe, deliverance found
Unlooked for, life preserved and peace restored —
Fruits of omnipotent eternal love.
Oh evenings worthy of the gods! exclaimed
The Sabine bard. Oh evenings, I reply,
More to be prized and coveted than yours,
As more illumined, and with nobler truths,
That I, and mine, and those we love, enjoy.
Is winter hideous in a garb like this?
Needs he the tragic fur, the smoke of lamps,
The pent-up breath of an unsavory throng,
To thaw him into feeling; or the smart
And snappish dialogue, that flippant wits
Call comedy, to prompt him with a smile?
The self-complacent actor, when he views
(Stealing a side-long glance at a full house)
The slope of faces, from the floor to th' roof,
(As if one master-spring controlled them all)
Relaxed into an universal grin,

Sees not a countenance there that speaks of joy
Half so refined or so sincere as our's.
Cards were superfluous here, with all the tricks
That idleness has ever yet contrived
To fill the void of an unfurnished brain,
To palliate dulness, and give time a shove.
Time, as he passes us, has a dove's wing,
Unsoiled, and swift, and of a silken sound;
But the world's time is time in masquerade!
Their's, should I paint him, has his pinions fledged
With motley plumes; and, where the peacock shows
His azure eyes, is tinctured black and red
With spots quadrangular of diamond form,
Ensanguined hearts, clubs typical of strife,
And spades, the emblem of untimely graves.
What should be and what was an hour-glass once,
Becomes a dice-box, and a billiard mast
Well does the work of his destructive scythe.
Thus decked, he charms a world whom fashion blinds
To his true worth, most pleased when idle most;
Whose only happy are their wasted hours.
Even misses, at whose age their mothers wore
The back-string and the bib, assume the dress
Of womanhood, sit pupils in the school
Of card-devoted time, and, night by night,
Placed at some vacant corner of the board,
Learn every trick, and soon play all the game.
But truce with censure. Roving as I rove,
Where shall I find an end, or how proceed?
As he that travels far oft turns aside
To view some rugged rock or mouldering tower,
Which, seen, delights him not; then, coming home,
Describes and prints it, that the world may know
How far he went for what was nothing worth;
So I, with brush in hand and pallet spread,
With colors mixed for a far different use,
Paint cards and dolls, and every idle thing
That fancy finds in her excursive flights.
Come, Evening, once again, season of peace;
Return, sweet Evening, and continue long!
Methinks I see thee in the streaky west,
With matron-step slow-moving, while the night
Treads on thy sweeping train; one hand employed
In letting fall the curtain of repose
On bird and beast, the other charged for man
With sweet oblivion of the cares of day:
Not sumptuously adorned, nor needing aid,
Like homely featured night, of clustering gems;
A star or two, just twinkling on thy brow,
Suffices thee; save that the moon is thine
No less than her's, not worn indeed on high
With ostentatious pageantry, but set
With modest grandeur in thy purple zone,
Resplendent less, but of an ampler round.
Come then, and thou shalt find thy votary calm,
Or make me so. Composure is thy gift:
And, whether I devote thy gentle hours
To books, to music, or the poet's toil;
To weaving nets for bird-alluring fruit;
Or twining silken threads round ivory reels,
When they command whom man was born to please;
I slight thee not, but make thee welcome still.
Just when our drawing-rooms begin to blaze
With lights, by clear reflection multiplied
From many a mirror, in which he of Gath,
Goliath, might have seen his giant bulk
Whole, without stooping, towering crest and all,
My pleasures, too, begin. But me, perhaps,
The glowing hearth may satisfy awhile
With faint illumination, that uplifts
The shadow to the ceiling, there by fits
Dancing uncouthly to the quivering flame.
Not undelightful is an hour to me
So spent in parlor twilight: such a gloom
Suits well the thoughtful or unthinking mind,
The mind contemplative, with some new theme
Pregnant, or indisposed alike to all.
Laugh ye, who boast your more mercurial powers,
That never feel a stupor, know no pause,
Nor need one; I am conscious, and confess,
Fearless, a soul that does not always think.
Me oft has fancy, ludicrous and wild,
Soothed with a waking dream of houses, towers,
Trees, churches, and strange visages, expressed
In the red cinders, while with poring eye
I gazed, myself creating what I saw.
Nor less amused have I quiescent watched
The sooty films that play upon the bars,
Pendulous, and foreboding, in the view
Of superstition, prophesying still,
Though still deceived, some stranger's near approach.
'Tis thus the understanding takes repose
In indolent vacuity of thought,

And sleeps and is refreshed. Meanwhile the face
Conceals the mood lethargic with a mask
Of deep deliberation, as the man
Were tasked to his full strength, absorbed and lost.
Thus oft, reclined at ease, I lose an hour
At evening, till at length the freezing blast,
That sweeps the bolted shutter, summons home
The recollected powers; and, snapping short
The glassy threads, with which the fancy weaves
Her brittle toys, restores me to myself.
How calm is my recess; and how the frost,
Raging abroad, and the rough wind, endear
The silence and the warmth enjoyed within!
I saw the woods and fields, at close of day,
A variegated show; the meadows green,
Though faded; and the lands, where lately waved
The golden harvest, of a mellow brown,
Upturned so lately by the forceful share.
I saw far off the weedy fallows smile
With verdure not unprofitable, grazed
By flocks, fast feeding, and selecting each
His favorite herb; while all the leafless groves,
That skirt th' horizon, wore a sable hue,
Scarce noticed in the kindred dusk of eve.
To-morrow brings a change, a total change!
Which even now, though silently performed,
And slowly, and by most unfelt, the face
Of universal nature undergoes.
Fast falls a fleecy shower: the downy flakes,
Descending, and with never-ceasing lapse,
Softly alighting upon all below,
Assimilate all objects. Earth receives
Gladly the thickening mantle; and the green
And tender blade, that feared the chilling blast,
Escapes unhurt beneath so warm a veil.
In such a world; so thorny, and where none
Finds happiness unblighted; or, if found,
Without some thistly sorrow at its side;
It seems the part of wisdom, and no sin
Against the law of love, to measure lots
With less distinguished than ourselves; that thus
We may with patience bear our moderate ills,
And sympathise with others, suffering more.
Ill fares the traveller now, and he that stalks
In ponderous boots beside his reeking team.
The wain goes heavily, impeded sore
By congregated loads adhering close
To the clogged wheels; and in its sluggish pace,
Noiseless, appears a moving hill of snow.
The toiling steeds expand the nostril wide,
While every breath, by respiration strong
Forced downward, is consolidated soon
Upon their jutting chests. He, formed to bear
The pelting brunt of the tempestuous night,
With half-shut eyes, and puckered cheeks, and teeth
Presented bare against the storm, plods on.
One hand secures his hat, save when with both
He brandishes his pliant length of whip,
Resounding oft, and never heard in vain.
Oh happy; and, in my account, denied
That sensibility of pain with which
Refinement is endued, thrice happy thou!
Thy frame, robust and hardy, feels indeed
The piercing cold, but feels it unimpaired.
The learned finger never need explore
Thy vigorous pulse; and the unhealthful east,
That breathes the spleen, and searches every bone
Of the infirm, is wholesome air to thee.
Thy days roll on, exempt from household care;
The waggon is thy wife; and the poor beasts,
That drag the dull companion to and fro,
Thine helpless charge, dependent on thy care.
Ah, treat them kindly! rude as thou appear'st,
Yet show that thou hast mercy! which the great,
With needless hurry whirled from place to place,
Humane as they would seem, not always show.
Poor, yet industrious, modest, quiet, neat;
Such claim compassion in a night like this,
And have a friend in every feeling heart.
Warmed, while it lasts, by labor, all day long
They brave the season, and yet find at eve,
Ill clad and fed but sparely, time to cool.
The frugal housewife trembles when she lights
Her scanty stock of brush-wood, blazing clear,
But dying soon, like all terrestrial joys.
The few small embers left she nurses well;
And, while her infant race, with outspread hands
And crowded knees, sit cowering o'er the sparks,
Retires, content to quake, so they be warmed.

The man feels least, as more inured than she
To winter, and the current in his veins
More briskly moved by his severer toil;
Yet he, too, finds his own distress in their's.
The taper soon extinguished, which I saw
Dangled along at the cold finger's end
Just when the day declined, and the brown loaf
Lodged on the shelf, half eaten, without sauce
Of savory cheese, or butter, costlier still;
Sleep seems their only refuge: for, alas,
Where penury is felt the thought is chained,
And sweet colloquial pleasures are but few!
With all this thrift they thrive not. All the care
Ingenious parsimony takes but just
Saves the small inventory, bed, and stool,
Skillet, and old carved chest, from public sale.
They live, and live without extorted alms
From grudging hands; but other boast have none
To soothe their honest pride, that scorns to beg,
Nor comfort else, but in their mutual love.
I praise you much, ye meek and patient pair,
For ye are worthy; choosing rather far
A dry but independent crust, hard earned,
And eaten with a sigh, than to endure
The rugged frowns and insolent rebuffs
Of knaves in office, partial in the work
Of distribution; liberal of their aid
To clamorous importunity in rags,
But oft-times deaf to suppliants, who would blush
To wear a tattered garb however coarse,
Whom famine cannot reconcile to filth:
These ask with painful shyness, and, refused
Because deserving, silently retire!
But be ye of good courage! Time itself
Shall much befriend you. Time shall give increase;
And all your numerous progeny, well-trained,
But helpless, in few years shall find their hands,
And labor too. Meanwhile ye shall not want
What, conscious of your virtues, we can spare,
Nor what a wealthier than ourselves may send.
I mean the man, who, when the distant poor
Need help, denies them nothing but his name.
But poverty, with most who whimper forth
Their long complaints, is self-inflicted woe;
Th' effect of laziness or sottish waste.
Now goes the nightly thief prowling abroad
For plunder; much solicitous how best
He may compensate for a day of sloth
By works of darkness and nocturnal wrong.
Woe to the gardener's pale, the farmer's hedge,
Plashed neatly, and secured with driven stakes
Deep in the loamy bank. Uptorn by strength,
Resistless in so bad a cause, but lame
To better deeds, he bundles up the spoil —
An ass's burden — and, when laden most
And heaviest, light of foot, steals fast away.
Nor does the boarded hovel better guard
The well-stacked pile of riven logs and roots
From his pernicious force. Nor will he leave
Unwrenched the door, however well secured,
Where Chanticleer amidst his haram sleeps
In unsuspecting pomp. Twitched from the perch,
He gives the princely bird, with all his wives,
To his voracious bag, struggling in vain,
And loudly wondering at the sudden change. —
Nor this to feed his own! 'Twere some excuse
Did pity of their sufferings warp aside
His principle, and tempt him into sin
For their support, so destitute. — But they
Neglected pine at home; themselves, as more
Exposed than others, with less scruple made
His victims, robbed of their defenceless all.
Cruel is all he does. 'Tis quenchless thirst
Of ruinous ebriety that prompts
His every action, and imbrutes the man.
Oh for a law to noose the villain's neck
Who starves his own; who persecutes the blood
He gave them in his children's veins, and hates
And wrongs the woman he has sworn to love!
Pass where we may, through city or through town,
Village, or hamlet, of this merry land,
Though lean and beggared, every twentieth pace
Conducts th' unguarded nose to such a whiff
Of stale debauch, forth-issuing from the styes
That law has licensed, as makes temperance reel.
There sit, involved and lost in curling clouds
Of Indian fume, and guzzling deep, the boor,
The lackey, and the groom: the craftsman there

Takes a Lethean leave of all his toil;
Smith, cobbler, joiner, he that plies the shears,
And he that kneads the dough; all loud alike,
All learned, and all drunk! The fiddle screams
Plaintive and piteous, as it wept and wailed
Its wasted tones and harmony unheard:
Fierce the dispute, whate'er the theme; while she,
Fell Discord, arbitress of such debate,
Perched on the sign-post, holds with even hand
Her undecisive scales. In this she lays
A weight of ignorance; in that, of pride;
And smiles, delighted with th' eternal poise.
Dire is the frequent curse, and its twin sound
The cheek-distending oath, not to be praised
As ornamental, musical, polite,
Like those which modern senators employ,
Whose oath is rhetoric, and who swear for fame!
Behold the schools in which plebeian minds,
Once simple, are initiated in arts
Which some may practise with politer grace,
But none with readier skill! — 'tis here they learn
The road that leads, from competence and peace,
To indigence and rapine; till at last
Society, grown weary of the load,
Shakes her encumbered lap, and casts them out.
But censure profits little: vain th' attempt
To advertise in verse a public pest,
That, like the filth with which the peasant feeds
His hungry acres, stinks, and is of use.
Th' excise is fattened with the rich result
Of all this riot; and ten thousand casks,
For ever dribbling out their base contents,
Touched by the Midas finger of the state,
Bleed gold for ministers to sport away.
Drink, and be mad, then; 'tis your country bids!
Gloriously drunk, obey th' important call!
Her cause demands th' assistance of your throats; —
Ye all can swallow, and she asks no more.
Would I had fallen upon those happier days
That poets celebrate; those golden times,
And those Arcadian scenes, that Maro sings,
And Sidney, warbler of poetic prose.
Nymphs were Dianas then, and swains had hearts
That felt their virtues: innocence, it seems,
From courts dismissed, found shelter in the groves;
The footsteps of simplicity, impressed
Upon the yielding herbage, (so they sing)
Then were not all effaced: then speech profane,
And manners profligate, were rarely found;
Observed as prodigies, and soon reclaimed.
Vain wish! those days were never: airy dreams
Sat for the picture; and the poet's hand,
Imparting substance to an empty shade,
Imposed a gay delirium for a truth.
Grant it: — I still must envy them an age
That favored such a dream; in days like these
Impossible, when virtue is so scarce,
That to suppose a scene where she presides,
Is tramontane, and stumbles all belief.
No: we are polished now! the rural lass,
Whom once her virgin modesty and grace,
Her artless manners, and her neat attire,
So dignified, that she was hardly less
Than the fair shepherdess of old romance,
Is seen no more. The character is lost!
Her head, adorned with lappets pinned aloft,
And ribbands streaming gay, superbly raised,
And magnified beyond all human size,
Indebted to some smart wig-weaver's hand
For more than half the tresses it sustains;
Her elbows ruffled, and her tottering form
Ill propped upon French heels, she might be deemed
(But that the basket dangling on her arm
Interprets her more truly) of a rank
Too proud for dairy work, or sale of eggs.
Expect her soon with foot-boy at her heels,
No longer blushing for her awkward load,
Her train and her umbrella all her care!
The town has tinged the country; and the stain
Appears a spot upon a vestal's robe,
The worse for what it soils. The fashion runs
Down into scenes still rural; but, alas,
Scenes rarely graced with rural manners now!
Time was when, in the pastoral retreat,
Th' unguarded door was safe; men did not watch
T' invade another's right, or guard their own.
Then sleep was undisturbed by fear, unscared
By drunken howlings; and the chilling tale
Of midnight murder was a wonder heard
With doubtful credit, told to frighten babes.
But farewell now to unsuspicious nights,
And slumbers unalarmed! Now, ere you sleep,

See that your polished arms be primed with care,
And drop the night-bolt; — ruffians are abroad;
And the first larum of the cock's shrill throat
May prove a trumpet, summoning your ear
To horrid sounds of hostile feet within.
Even day-light has its dangers; and the walk
Through pathless wastes and woods, unconscious once
Of other tenants than melodious birds,
Or harmless flocks, is hazardous and bold.
Lamented change! to which full many a cause
Inveterate, hopeless of a cure, conspires.
The course of human things from good to ill,
From ill to worse, is fatal, never fails.
Increase of power begets increase of wealth;
Wealth luxury, and luxury excess;
Excess, the scrofulous and itchy plague
That seizes first the opulent, descends
To the next rank contagious, and in time
Taints downward all the graduated scale
Of order, from the chariot to the plough.
The rich, and they that have an arm to check
The license of the lowest in degree,
Desert their office; and themselves, intent
On pleasure, haunt the capital, and thus
To all the violence of lawless hands
Resign the scenes their presence might protect.
Authority herself not seldom sleeps,
Though resident, and witness of the wrong.
The plump convivial parson often bears
The magisterial sword in vain, and lays
His reverence and his worship both to rest
On the same cushion of habitual sloth.
Perhaps timidity restrains his arm;
When he should strike he trembles, and sets free,
Himself enslaved by terror of the band,
Th' audacious convict, whom he dares not bind.
Perhaps, though by profession ghostly pure,
He too may have his vice, and sometimes prove
Less dainty than becomes his grave outside
In lucrative concerns. Examine well
His milk-white hand; the palm is hardly clean —
But here and there an ugly smutch appears.
Foh! 'twas a bribe that left it: he has touched
Corruption! Whoso seeks an audit here
Propitious, pays his tribute, game or fish,
Wild-fowl or venison; and his errand speeds.
But faster far, and more than all the rest,
A noble cause, which none who bears a spark
Of public virtue ever wished removed,
Works the deplored and mischievous effect.
'Tis universal soldiership has stabbed
The heart of merit in the meaner class.
Arms, through the vanity and brainless rage
Of those that bear them, in whatever cause,
Seem most at variance with all moral good,
And incompatible with serious thought.
The clown, the child of nature, without guile,
Blest with an infant's ignorance of all
But his own simple pleasures; now and then
A wrestling-match, a foot-race, or a fair;
Is ballotted, and trembles at the news:
Sheepish he doffs his hat, and, mumbling, swears
A bible-oath to be whate'er they please,
To do he knows not what! The task performed,
That instant he becomes the sergeant's care,
His pupil, and his torment, and his jest.
His awkward gait, his introverted toes,
Bent knees, round shoulders, and dejected looks,
Procure him many a curse. By slow degrees,
Unapt to learn, and formed of stubborn stuff,
He yet by slow degrees puts off himself,
Grows conscious of a change, and likes it well:
He stands erect; his slouch becomes a walk;
He steps right onward, martial in his air,
His form and movement; is as smart above
As meal and larded locks can make him; wears
His hat, or his plumed helmet, with a grace;
And, his three years of heroship expired,
Returns indignant to the slighted plough.
He hates the field, in which no fife or drum
Attends him; drives his cattle to a march;
And sighs for the smart comrades he has left.
'Twere well if his exterior change were all —
But with his clumsy port the wretch has lost
His ignorance and harmless manners too!
To swear, to game, to drink; to show at home
By lewdness, idleness, and sabbath-breach,
The great proficiency he made abroad;
T' astonish and to grieve his gazing friends,
To break some maiden's and his mother's heart;
To be a pest where he was useful once;
Are his sole aim, and all his glory, now!
Man in society is like a flower
Blown in its native bed: 'tis there alone
His faculties, expanded in full bloom,
Shine out; there only reach their proper use.

But man, associated and leagued with man
By regal warrant, or self-joined by bond
For interest-sake, or swarming into clans
Beneath one head for purposes of war,
Like flowers selected from the rest, and bound
And bundled close to fill some crowded vase,
Fades rapidly, and, by compression marred,
Contracts defilement not to be endured.
Hence chartered boroughs are such public plagues;
And burghers, men immaculate perhaps
In all their private functions, once combined,
Become a loathsome body, only fit
For dissolution, hurtful to the main.
Hence merchants, unimpeachable of sin
Against the charities of domestic life,
Incorporated, seem at once to lose
Their nature; and, disclaiming all regard
For mercy and the common rights of man,
Build factories with blood, conducting trade
At the sword's point, and dyeing the white robe
Of innocent commercial justice red.
Hence, too, the field of glory, as the world
Misdeems it, dazzled by its bright array,
With all its majesty of thundering pomp,
Enchanting music, and immortal wreaths,
Is but a school where thoughtlessness is taught
On principle, where foppery atones
For folly, gallantry for every vice.
But, slighted as it is, and by the great
Abandoned, and, which still I more regret,
Infected with the manners and the modes
It knew not once, the country wins me still.
That flattered me with hopes of earthly bliss,
I never framed a wish, or formed a plan,
But there I laid the scene. There early strayed
My fancy, ere yet liberty of choice
Had found me, or the hope of being free.
My very dreams were rural; rural, too,
The first-born efforts of my youthful muse,
Sportive, and jingling her poetic bells
Ere yet her ear was mistress of their powers.
No bard could please me but whose lyre was tuned
To Nature's praises. Heroes and their feats
Fatigued me, never weary of the pipe
Of Tityrus, assembling, as he sang,
The rustic throng beneath his favorite beech.
Then Milton had indeed a poet's charms:
New to my taste, his Paradise surpassed
The struggling efforts of my boyish tongue
To speak its excellence. I danced for joy.
I marvelled much that, at so ripe an age
As twice seven years, his beauties had then first
Engaged my wonder; and, admiring still,
And still admiring, with regret supposed
The joy half lost because not sooner found.
Thee too, enamored of the life I loved,
Pathetic in its praise, in its pursuit
Determined, and possessing it at last
With transports such as favored lovers feel,
I studied, prized, and wished that I had known,
Ingenious Cowley! and, though now reclaimed
By modern lights from an erroneous taste,
I cannot but lament thy splendid wit
Entangled in the cobwebs of the schools.
I still revere thee, courtly though retired;
Though stretched at ease in Chertsey's silent bowers,
Not unemployed; and finding rich amends
For a lost world in solitude and verse.
'Tis born with all: the love of Nature's works
Is an ingredient in the compound man,
Infused at the creation of the kind.
And, though th' Almighty Maker has throughout
Discriminated each from each, by strokes
And touches of his hand, with so much art
Diversified, that two were never found
Twins at all points — yet this obtains in all,
That all discern a beauty in his works,
And all can taste them: minds that have been formed
And tutored, with a relish more exact,
But none without some relish, none unmoved.
It is a flame that dies not even there,
Where nothing feeds it: neither business, crowds,
Nor habits of luxurious city-life;
Whatever else they smother of true worth
In human bosoms; quench it, or abate.
The villas with which London stands begirt,
Like a swarth Indian with his belt of beads,
Prove it. A breath of unadulterate air,
The glimpse of a green pasture, how they cheer
The citizen, and brace his languid frame!
Even in the stifling bosom of the town,
A garden, in which nothing thrives, has charms
That soothe the rich possessor; much consoled,
That here and there some sprigs of mournful mint,

Of nightshade, or valerian, grace the well
He cultivates. These serve him with a hint
That nature lives; that sight-refreshing green
Is still the livery she delights to wear,
Though sickly samples of th' exuberant whole.
What are the casements lined with creeping herbs,
The prouder sashes fronted with a range
Of orange, myrtle, or the fragrant weed,
The Frenchman's darling[1]? are they not all proofs
That man, immured in cities, still retains
His inborn inextinguishable thirst
Of rural scenes, compensating his loss
By supplemental shifts, the best he may?
The most unfurnished with the means of life,
And they that never pass their brick-wall bounds
To range the fields and treat their lungs with air,
Yet feel the burning instinct: over head
Suspend their crazy boxes, planted thick,
And watered duly. There the pitcher stands
A fragment, and the spoutless tea-pot there;
Sad witnesses how close-pent man regrets
The country, with what ardor he contrives
A peep at nature, when he can no more.
Hail, therefore, patroness of health, and ease,
And contemplation, heart-consoling joys
And harmless pleasures, in the thronged abode
Of multitudes unknown! hail, rural life!
Address himself who will to the pursuit
Of honors, or emolument, or fame;
I shall not add myself to such a chase,
Thwart his attempts, or envy his success.
Some must be great. Great offices will have
Great talents. And God gives to every man
The virtue, temper, understanding, taste,
That lifts him into life; and lets him fall
Just in the niche he was ordained to fill.
To the deliverer of an injured land
He gives a tongue t' enlarge upon, an heart
To feel, and courage to redress her wrongs;
To monarchs dignity; to judges sense;
To artists ingenuity and skill;
To me an unambitious mind, content
In the low vale of life, that early felt
A wish for ease and leisure, and ere long
Found here that leisure and that ease I wished.

1 Mignonette. [Cowper.]

## ON THE LOSS OF THE ROYAL GEORGE

The Royal George, flagship of Admiral Kempenfelt, while refitting at Portsmouth, was heeled over to repair a leak below the waterline. Suddenly the vessel went down with the loss of eight hundred lives, including that of the admiral. The date of the disaster was August, 1782. In the preceding year, Kempenfelt had won a brilliant victory over a greatly superior French fleet under De Guichen.

Toll for the brave —
The brave! that are no more:
All sunk beneath the wave,
Fast by their native shore.
Eight hundred of the brave,
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel
And laid her on her side;
A land-breeze shook the shrouds,
And she was overset;
Down went the Royal George,
With all her crew complete.

Toll for the brave —
Brave Kempenfelt is gone,
His last sea-fight is fought,
His work of glory done.
It was not in the battle,
No tempest gave the shock,
She sprang no fatal leak,
She ran upon no rock;
His sword was in the sheath,
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down
With twice four hundred men.

Weigh the vessel up,
Once dreaded by our foes,
And mingle with your cup
The tears that England owes;
Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again,
Full charged with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main;
But Kempenfelt is gone,
His victories are o'er;
And he and his Eight hundred
Must plough the wave no more.

1782.

## ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE OUT OF NORFOLK

Oh that those lips had language! Life has passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.

Those lips are thine — thy own sweet smiles I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else, how distinct they say,
"Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!"
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
(Blest be the art that can immortalize,
The art that baffles time's tyrannic claim
To quench it) here shines on me still the same.
Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
Oh welcome guest, though unexpected, here!
Who bidd'st me honor with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long,
I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly, as the precept were her own;
And, while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief —
Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
A momentary dream, that thou art she.
My mother! when I learned that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unseen, a kiss;
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss —
Ah that maternal smile! it answers — Yes.
I heard the bell tolled on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such? — It was. — Where thou art gone
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting sound shall pass my lips no more!
Thy maidens grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of a quick return.
What ardently I wished, I long believed,
And, disappointed still, was still deceived;
By disappointment every day beguiled,
Dupe of *to-morrow* even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,
I learned at last submission to my lot;
But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.
Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;
And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapt
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capt,
'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we called the pastoral house our own.
Short-lived possession! but the record fair
That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm that has effaced
A thousand other themes less deeply traced.
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou might'st know me safe and warmly laid;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit, or confectionary plum;
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestowed
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glowed;
All this, and more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and brakes
That humor interposed too often makes;
All this still legible in memory's page,
And still to be so, to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honors to thee as my numbers may;
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorned in heaven, though little noticed here.
Could time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
I pricked them into paper with a pin,
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Would'st softly speak, and stroke my head and smile)
Could those few pleasant hours again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?
I would not trust my heart — the dear delight
Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might. —
But no — what here we call our life is such,
So little to be loved, and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.
Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
(The storms all weathered and the ocean crossed)
Shoots into port at some well-havened isle,
Where spices breathe and brighter seasons smile,

There sits quiescent on the floods that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay;
So thou, with sails how swift! hast reached the shore
"Where tempests never beat nor billows roar,"[1]
And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide
Of life, long since, has anchored at thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distressed —
Me howling winds drive devious, tempest tossed,
Sails ript, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.
But oh the thought, that thou art safe, and he!
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
My boast is not that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise —
The son of parents passed into the skies.
And now, farewell — time, unrevoked, has run
His wonted course, yet what I wished is done.
By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem t' have lived my childhood o'er again;
To have renewed the joys that once were mine,
Without the sin of violating thine:
And, while the wings of fancy still are free,
And I can view this mimic shew of thee,
Time has but half succeeded in his theft —
Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

1790.

## TO MARY

The twentieth year is well-nigh past,
Since first our sky was overcast;
Ah would that this might be the last!
My Mary!

Thy spirits have a fainter flow,
I see thee daily weaker grow —
'Twas my distress that brought thee low,
My Mary!

Thy needles, once a shining store,
For my sake restless heretofore,
Now rust disused, and shine no more,
My Mary!

For though thou gladly wouldst fulfil
The same kind office for me still,
Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
My Mary!

But well thou played'st the housewife's part,
And all thy threads with magic art
Have wound themselves about this heart,
My Mary!

Thy indistinct expressions seem
Like language uttered in a dream;
Yet me they charm, whate'er the theme,
My Mary!

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
Are still more lovely in my sight
Than golden beams of orient light,
My Mary!

For could I view nor them nor thee,
What sight worth seeing could I see?
The sun would rise in vain for me,
My Mary!

Partakers of thy sad decline,
Thy hands their little force resign;
Yet, gently prest, press gently mine,
My Mary!

And then I feel that still I hold
A richer store ten thousandfold
Than misers fancy in their gold,
My Mary!

Such feebleness of limbs thou prov'st,
That now at every step thou mov'st
Upheld by two; yet still thou lov'st,
My Mary!

And still to love, though prest with ill,
In wintry age to feel no chill,
With me is to be lovely still,
My Mary!

But ah! by constant heed I know,
How oft the sadness that I show
Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,
My Mary!

And should my future lot be cast
With much resemblance of the past,
Thy worn-out heart will break at last.
My Mary!

1793.

[1] Garth. [Cowper.]

## THE CASTAWAY

Obscurest night involved the sky,
Th' Atlantic billows roared,
When such a destined wretch as I,
Washed headlong from on board,
Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,
His floating home for ever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast
Than he with whom he went,
Nor ever ship left Albion's coast,
With warmer wishes sent.
He loved them both, but both in vain,
Nor him beheld, nor her again.

Not long beneath the whelming brine,
Expert to swim, he lay;
Nor soon he felt his strength decline,
Or courage die away;
But waged with death a lasting strife,
Supported by despair of life.

He shouted: nor his friends had failed
To check the vessel's course,
But so the furious blast prevailed,
That, pitiless perforce,
They left their outcast mate behind,
And scudded still before the wind.

Some succor yet they could afford;
And, such as storms allow,
The cask, the coop, the floated cord,
Delayed not to bestow.
But he (they knew) nor ship, nor shore,
Whate'er they gave, should visit more.

Nor, cruel as it seemed, could he
Their haste himself condemn,
Aware that flight, in such a sea,
Alone could rescue them;
Yet bitter felt it still to die
Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

He long survives, who lives an hour
In ocean, self-upheld;
And so long he, with unspent power,
His destiny repelled;
And ever, as the minutes flew,
Entreated help, or cried — Adieu!

At length, his transient respite past,
His comrades, who before
Had heard his voice in every blast,
Could catch the sound no more.
For then, by toil subdued, he drank
The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him: but the page
Of narrative sincere,
That tells his name, his worth, his age,
Is wet with Anson's [1] tear.
And tears by bards or heroes shed
Alike immortalize the dead.

I therefore purpose not, or dream,
Descanting on his fate,
To give the melancholy theme
A more enduring date:
But misery still delights to trace
Its semblance in another's case.

No voice divine the storm allayed,
No light propitious shone;
When, snatched from all effectual aid,
We perished, each alone:
But I beneath a rougher sea,
And whelmed in deeper gulfs than he.

1799.

1 Lord Anson, admiral of the fleet, and author of a *Voyage Around the World*, in which the story is told.

## ROBERT BURNS (1759–1796)

Robert Burns was born at Alloway, near Ayr, in south-western Scotland, in 1759. His father, a tenant-farmer who had built with his own hands the clay cottage in which the poet was born, was an intelligent man, sincerely religious and of admirable character, but never successful in his calling. The household in which Burns grew to manhood is pictured with some idealizing in the *Cotter's Saturday Night*. Burns had a few years of schooling, during which he read all the stray books on which he could lay his hands, and acquired a fair reading knowledge of French. But when he was a lad of fifteen, he was already doing the full work of a farm-laborer. One must never forget that Burns was a peasant, though a very extraordinary one. Until he was twenty-eight he had never travelled more than ten miles from his birthplace. His poems and songs were written in the first instance for his friends and neighbors in rural Scotland. Discouraged by the hardship and poverty of his life, he decided to emigrate to Jamaica. To raise money for his voyage, he published in 1786, at the near-by town of Kilmarnock, a collection of his poems. It cleared him twenty pounds, and made a small sensation. This edition exhausted, he decided to print another, this time

at Edinburgh. Late in the year Burns went himself to Edinburgh, where he stayed off and on for a little over a year. The fashionable and literary society of the capital made much of him. The Edinburgh edition of 1787 brought him in five hundred pounds, out of which he made a generous gift to his brother Gilbert, still struggling on at the old farm in Ayrshire. His Edinburgh friends dined him and wined him; but for practical encouragement of his genius they could do nothing better than get him an appointment in the excise service, where he was to measure beer-barrels and prevent smuggling. He took a farm at Ellisland near Dumfries, and combined farming with his duties as exciseman. There, and later at the town of Dumfries, he lived for the ten years that remained to him of life, composing in his leisure time the songs which are the most popular part of his work. For them he refused to receive any remuneration; they were done for old Scotland's sake as a patriotic service of love. These years were not happy. His duties in the excise did not interest him; his outspoken sympathy with the cause of the French Revolution prevented any advancement. The old poverty was closing in about him. He frequently drank to excess. In 1796 he died, a disappointed man, only thirty-seven years old, and Scotland lost her most famous poet.

Burns's songs are many of them love songs, and Burns "dearly loved the lasses, O." A rather bewildering multiplicity of them appear in his verses. In the spring of 1786, Jean Armour, daughter of a master mason at Mauchline, was found to be with child by him; and Burns gave her a written paper acknowledging her as his wife. But Jean's father refused to recognize the marriage. Burns found a new love in Mary Campbell, "Highland Mary," to whom he betrothed himself, and whom he planned to take with him to Jamaica. She died of a fever before the end of the year. In 1788 he was formally married to Jean Armour. But Jean and Mary are but two among many; Burns was always in love.

The fame of Burns spread rapidly. He was hailed as the "peasant-poet," the "child of nature," who owed nothing to the schools — the triumphant justification of the romantic revolt against civilization. But this view of him is at most only part of the truth. The *Cotter's Saturday Night* owes much to the literary tradition of Gray's *Elegy* and Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*. The lines *To a Mouse* echo the school of eighteenth-century "sensibility." More important is the debt which Burns owes to the literature of his native Scotland, from which he derived the suggestions for most of his songs, his homely realism and love of the grotesque, and many of his metrical forms. But what he borrowed he transformed by the power of his own original genius. His is the fire and energy, the passionate intensity, the love of his fellows which can make us feel that "a man's a man for a' that," even when his setting is the disreputable squalor of the *Jolly Beggars*. His is the vividness of realization which makes us half believe the grotesque rollicking tale of *Tam o'Shanter*. When he resings them, the old popular songs become masterpieces of lyric art.

Burns could write, when he chose, in standard English; but when he so wrote he was seldom himself. The reader who would really know him must accept him in the dialect of his own rural district.

The standard edition of Burns is the Centenary Edition of 1896 in four volumes. The text of this edition, and its brilliant introductory essay by W. E. Henley, are reproduced in the Cambridge Poets edition (Houghton Mifflin Company).

## THE TWA DOGS

A TALE

'Twas in that place o' Scotland's isle
That bears the name of auld King Coil,[1]
Upon a bonie day in June,
When wearing thro' the afternoon,
Twa dogs, that were na thrang[2] at hame,
Forgathered ance upon a time.

The first I'll name, they ca'd him Cæsar,
Was keepit for "his Honor's" pleasure:
His hair, his size, his mouth, his lugs,[3]
Shewed he was nane o' Scotland's dogs;
But whalpit some place far abroad,
Whare sailors gang to fish for cod.[4]

His lockèd, lettered, braw brass collar
Shewed him the gentleman an' scholar;
But tho' he was o' high degree,
The fient[1] a pride, nae pride had he;
But wad hae spent an hour caressin,
Ev'n wi' a tinkler-gipsy's messin;[2]
At kirk or market, mill or smiddie,
Nae tawted tyke,[3] tho' e'er sae duddie,[4]
But he wad stan't, as glad to see him,
An' stroan't[5] on stanes an' hillocks wi' him.

The tither was a ploughman's collie,
A rhyming, ranting, raving billie,[6]
Wha for his friend an' comrade had him,
And in his freaks had Luath ca'd him,
After some dog in Highland sang,[7]
Was made lang syne — Lord knows how lang.

He was a gash[8] an' faithfu' tyke,
As ever lap a sheugh or dyke.[9]

1 i.e. Kyle, the middle district of Ayrshire.
2 busy. 3 ears. 4 i.e. Newfoundland.

1 devil. 2 cur. 3 no dog with matted hair.
4 ragged. 5 make water. 6 fellow.
7 i.e. in Macpherson's "Ossian."
8 wise. 9 leaped a ditch or wall.

His honest, sonsie,[1] baws'nt [2] face
Ay gat him friends in ilka place;
His breast was white, his tousie back
Weel clad wi' coat o' glossy black;
His gawsie [3] tail, wi' upward curl,
Hung owre his hurdies [4] wi' a swirl.

Nae doubt but they were fain o' ither,
And unco pack an' thick thegither; [5]
Wi' social nose whyles snuffed an' snowkit; [6]
Whyles mice an' moudieworts [7] they howkit; [8]
Whyles scoured awa' in lang excursion,
An' worryed ither in diversion;
Till tired at last wi' monie a farce,
They sat them down upon their arse,
An' there began a lang digression
About the "lords o' the creation."

CÆSAR

I've often wondered, honest Luath,
What sort o' life poor dogs like you have;
An' when the gentry's life I saw,
What way poor bodies lived ava.[9]

Our laird gets in his rackèd rents,
His coals, his kain,[10] an' a' his stents: [11]
He rises when he likes himsel;
His flunkies answer at the bell;
He ca's his coach; he ca's his horse;
He draws a bonie silken purse,
As lang's my tail, whare, thro' the steeks,[12]
The yellow lettered Geordie keeks.[13]

Frae morn to e'en it's nought but toiling,
At baking, roasting, frying, boiling;
An' tho' the gentry first are stechin,[14]
Yet ev'n the ha' folk [15] fill their pechan [16]
Wi' sauce, ragouts, an sic like trashtrie,
That's little short o' downright wastrie:
Our whipper-in, wee, blastit wonner,[17]
Poor, worthless elf, it eats a dinner,
Better than onie tenant-man
His Honor has in a' the lan';
An' what poor cot-folk pit their painch in,[18]
I own it's past my comprehension.

LUATH

Trowth, Cæsar, whyles they're fash't [19] eneugh:
A cotter howkin in a sheugh,[20]
Wi' dirty stanes biggin [1] a dyke,
Baring a quarry, an' sic like;
Himsel, a wife, he thus sustains,
A smytrie o' wee duddie weans,[2]
An' nought but his han' darg [3] to keep
Them right an' tight in thack an' rape.[4]

An' when they meet wi' sair disasters,
Like loss o' health or want o' masters,
Ye maist wad think, a wee touch langer,
An' they maun starve o' cauld and hunger:
But how it comes, I never kend yet,
They're maistly wonderfu' contented;
An' buirdly chiels, an' clever hizzies,[5]
Are bred in sic a way as this is.

CÆSAR

But then to see how ye're negleckit,
How huffed, an' cuffed, an' disrespeckit!
Lord, man, our gentry care as little
For delvers, ditchers, an' sic cattle;
They gang as saucy by poor folk,
As I wad by a stinking brock.[6]

I've noticed, on our laird's court-day,
(An' monie a time my heart's been wae),
Poor tenant bodies, scant o' cash,
How they maun thole [7] a factor's snash: [8]
He'll stamp an' threaten, curse an' swear
He'll apprehend them, poind their gear; [9]
While they maun stan', wi' aspect humble,
An' hear it a', an' fear an' tremble!

I see how folk live that hae riches;
But surely poor-folk maun be wretches!

LUATH

They're nae sae wretched's ane wad think;
Tho' constantly on poortith's [10] brink,
They're sae accustomed wi' the sight,
The view o't gies them little fright.

Then chance an' fortune are sae guided,
They're ay in less or mair provided;
An' tho' fatigued wi' close employment,
A blink o' rest's a sweet enjoyment.

The dearest comfort o' their lives,
Their grushie [11] weans an' faithfu' wives;
The prattling things are just their pride,
That sweetens a' their fire-side.

An' whyles twalpennie worth o' nappy [12]
Can mak the bodies unco happy:

1 pleasant. 2 white-streaked.
3 big and joyous. 4 buttocks.
5 very confidential together. 6 sniffed.
7 moles. 8 dug out. 9 at all.
10 rents paid in kind. 11 dues. 12 stitches.
13 peeps. 14 stuffing. 15 hall-folk (servants).
16 stomach. 17 wonder (used ironically)
18 put in their paunch. 19 worried.
20 digging in the ditch.

1 building. 2 A litter of small ragged children.
3 hand-labor. 4 thatch and rope (i.e. a roof).
5 stalwart fellows and clever young women.
6 badger. 7 endure. 8 abuse.
9 seize their goods. 10 poverty's. 11 growing. 12 ale

They lay aside their private cares,
To mind the Kirk and State affairs;
They'll talk o' patronage an' priests,
Wi' kindling fury i' their breasts,
Or tell what new taxation's comin,
An' ferlie [1] at the folk in Lon'on.

As bleak-faced Hallowmass [2] returns,
They get the jovial, ranting kirns,[3]
When rural life, of ev'ry station,
Unite in common recreation;
Love blinks, Wit slaps, an' social Mirth
Forgets there's Care upo' the earth.

That merry day the year begins,
They bar the door on frosty win's;
The nappy reeks [4] wi' mantling ream,[5]
An' sheds a heart-inspiring steam;
The luntin [6] pipe, an' sneeshin mill,[7]
Are handed round wi' right guid will;
The cantie [8] auld folks crackin crouse,[9]
The young anes ranting thro' the house —
My heart has been sae fain to see them,
That I for joy hae barkit wi' them.

Still it's owre true that ye hae said
Sic game is now owre aften played;
There's monie a creditable stock
O' decent, honest, fawsont [10] folk,
Are riven out baith root an' branch,
Some rascal's pridefu' greed to quench,
Wha thinks to knit himsel the faster
In favor wi' some gentle master,
Wha, aiblins [11] thrang [12] a parliamentin',
For Britain's guid his saul indentin' —

CÆSAR

Haith, lad, ye little ken about it:
For Britain's guid! guid faith! I doubt it.
Say rather, gaun [13] as Premiers lead him:
An' saying aye or no's they bid him:
At operas an' plays parading,
Mortgaging, gambling, masquerading:
Or maybe, in a frolic daft,
To Hague or Calais taks a waft,
To mak a tour an' tak a whirl,
To learn *bon ton*, an' see the worl'.

There, at Vienna or Versailles,
He rives his father's auld entails;
Or by Madrid he taks the rout,
To thrum guitars an' fecht wi' nowt; [14]
Or down Italian vista startles,
Whore-hunting amang groves o' myrtles;
Then bowses drumlie [1] German-water,
To mak himsel look fair an' fatter,
An' clear the consequential sorrows,
Love-gifts of Carnival signoras.

For Britain's guid! for her destruction!
Wi' dissipation, feud an' faction.

LUATH

Hech, man! dear sirs! is that the gate [2]
They waste sae monie a braw estate!
Are we sae foughten an' harassed
For gear ta gang that gate at last?

O would they stay aback frae courts,
An' please themsels wi' countra sports,
It wad for ev'ry ane be better,
The laird, the tenant, an' the cotter!
For thae frank, rantin, ramblin billies,
Fient haet [3] o' them's ill-hearted fellows:
Except for breakin o' their timmer,[4]
Or speakin lightly o' their limmer,[5]
Or shootin of a hare or moor-cock,
The ne'er-a-bit they're ill to poor folk.

But will ye tell me, master Cæsar:
Sure great folk's life's a life o' pleasure?
Nae cauld nor hunger e'er can steer [6] them,
The vera thought o't need na fear them.

CÆSAR

Lord, man, were ye but whyles whare I am,
The gentles, ye wad ne'er envy 'em!

It's true, they need na starve or sweat,
Thro' winter's cauld, or simmer's heat;
They've nae sair wark to craze their banes,[7]
An' fill auld-age wi' grips an' granes:
But human bodies are sic fools,
For a' their colleges an' schools,
That when nae real ills perplex them,
They mak enow themsels to vex them;
An' ay the less they hae to sturt [8] them,
In like proportion, less will hurt them.

A countra fellow at the pleugh,
His acre's tilled, he's right eneugh;
A countra girl at her wheel,
Her dizzen's done, she's unco weel;
But gentlemen, an' ladies warst,
Wi' ev'n down want o' wark are curst;
They loiter, lounging, lank an' lazy;
Tho' deil-haet ails them, yet uneasy:
Their days insipid, dull an' tasteless;
Their nights unquiet, lang an' restless.

1 marvel. 2 All Saints' Day (November 1).
3 harvest-homes. 4 smokes. 5 foam.
6 smoking. 7 i.e. snuff-box. 8 lively.
9 talking cheerfully. 10 seemly. 11 perhaps.
12 busy. 13 going. 14 fight with cattle (bulls).

1 muddy. 2 way. 3 not one (the devil have it).
4 timber. 5 mistress. 6 stir, molest.
7 crack their bones. 8 worry.

An' ev'n their sports, their balls an' races,
Their galloping through public places,
There's sic parade, sic pomp an' art,
The joy can scarcely reach the heart.

The men cast out in party-matches,
Then sowther [1] a' in deep debauches;
Ae night they're mad wi' drink an' whoring,
Niest day their life is past enduring.

The ladies arm-in-arm in clusters,
As great an' gracious a' as sisters;
But hear their absent thoughts o' ither,
They're a' run deils an' jads thegither.
Whyles, owre the wee bit cup an' platie,
They sip the scandal-potion pretty;
Or lee-lang nights, wi' crabbit leuks
Pore owre the devil's pictured beuks; [2]
Stake on a chance a farmer's stackyard,
An' cheat like onie unhanged blackguard.

There's some exceptions, man an' woman;
But this is Gentry's life in common.

By this, the sun was out o' sight,
An' darker gloamin brought the night;
The bum-clock [3] hummed wi' lazy drone;
The kye stood rowtin i' the loan; [4]
When up they gat, an' shook their lugs,
Rejoiced they were na *men*, but *dogs;*
An' each took aff his several way,
Resolved to meet some ither day.

1786.

## THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT

INSCRIBED TO R. AIKEN, ESQ.

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.
GRAY.

I

My loved, my honored, much respected friend! [5]
No mercenary bard his homage pays;
With honest pride, I scorn each selfish end,
My dearest meed, a friend's esteem and praise:
To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequestered scene;
The native feelings strong, the guileless ways;
What Aiken in a cottage would have been;
Ah! tho' his worth unknown, far happier there I ween!

2

November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh;
The short'ning winter-day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh;
The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose:
The toil-worn Cotter frae his labor goes —
This night his weekly moil is at an end,
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
And weary, o'er the moor, his course does hameward bend.

3

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an aged tree;
Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin, stacher [1] through
To meet their dad, wi' flichterin' [2] noise and glee.
His wee bit ingle, [3] blinkin bonilie,
His clean hearth-stane, his thrifty wifie's smile,
The lisping infant, prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary kiaugh [4] and care beguile,
And makes him quite forget his labor and his toil.

4

Belyve, [5] the elder bairns come drapping in,
At service out, amang the farmers roun';
Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie [6] rin
A cannie errand to a neebor town:
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman grown,
In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her e'e,
Comes hame; perhaps, to shew a braw [7] new gown,
Or deposite her sair-won penny-fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

5

With joy unfeigned, brothers and sisters meet,
And each for other's weelfare kindly spiers: [8]
The social hours, swift-winged, unnoticed fleet;

1 solder. 2 i.e. playing cards.
3 humming beetle. 4 bellowing in the lane.
5 Robert Aiken, one of the poet's Ayrshire friends.

1 stagger. 2 fluttering. 3 fire.
4 anxiety. 5 by-and-by. 6 watchful.
7 fine. 8 asks.

Each tells the uncos[1] that he sees or hears.
The parents partial eye their hopeful years;
Anticipation forward points the view;
The mother, wi' her needle and her sheers,
Gars[2] auld claes look amaist as weel's the new;
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

6

Their master's and their mistress's command
The younkers a' are warnèd to obey;
And mind their labors wi' an eydent[3] hand,
And ne'er, tho' out o' sight, to jauk[4] or play:
"And O! be sure to fear the Lord alway,
And mind your duty, duly, morn and night;
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
Implore His counsel and assisting might:
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright."

7

But hark! a rap comes gently to the door;
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neebor lad came o'er the moor,
To do some errands, and convoy her hame.
The wily mother sees the conscious flame
Sparkle in Jenny's e'e, and flush her cheek;
With heart-struck anxious care, enquires his name,
While Jenny hafflins[5] is afraid to speak;
Weel-pleased the mother hears, it's nae wild, worthless rake.

8

With kindly welcome, Jenny brings him ben;[6]
A strappin' youth, he takes the mother's eye;
Blythe Jenny sees the visit's no ill taen;
The father cracks[7] of horses, pleughs, and kye.
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
But blate and laithfu',[8] scarce can weel behave;
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' and sae grave;
Weel-pleased to think her bairn's respected like the lave.[9]

1 strange things. 2 makes. 3 diligent.
4 dally. 5 half. 6 in. 7 talks.
8 bashful and sheepish. 9 rest.

9

O happy love! where love like this is found;
O heart-felt raptures! bliss beyond compare!
I've pacèd much this weary, mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declare: —
"If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair,
In other's arms, breathe out the tender tale
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the ev'ning gale."

10

Is there, in human form, that bears a heart,
A wretch! a villain! lost to love and truth!
That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?
Curse on his perjured arts! dissembling, smooth!
Are honor, virtue, conscience, all exiled?
Is there no pity, no relenting ruth,
Points to the parents fondling o'er their child?
Then paints the ruined maid, and their distraction wild?

11

But now the supper crowns their simple board,
The healsome parritch, chief o' Scotia's food;
The soupe their only hawkie[1] does afford,
That 'yont the hallan[2] snugly chows her cood;
The dame brings forth, in complimental mood,
To grace the lad, her weel-hained kebbuck,[3] fell;[4]
And aft he's prest, and aft he ca's it guid;
The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell,
How 'twas a towmond[5] auld, sin' lint was i' the bell.

12

The chearfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
The big ha'-Bible, ance his father's pride.
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets[6] wearing thin and bare;

1 cow. 2 beyond the partition.
3 well-saved cheese. 4 pungent.
5 twelve-month. 6 gray temples.

Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales[1] a portion with judicious care,
And "Let us worship God!" he says, with solemn air.

13

They chant their artless notes in simple guise,
They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim;
Perhaps *Dundee's* wild-warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive *Martyrs*, worthy of the name;
Or noble *Elgin* beets[2] the heaven-ward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:
Compared with these, Italian trills are tame;
The tickled ears no heart-felt raptures raise;
Nae unison hae they, with our Creator's praise.

14

The priest-like father reads the sacred page,
How Abram was the friend of God on high;
Or, Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny;
Or, how the royal Bard[3] did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire;
Or Job's pathetic plaint, and wailing cry;
Or rapt Isaiah's wild, seraphic fire;
Or other holy Seers that tune the sacred lyre.

15

Perhaps the Christian volume is the theme:
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;
How He, who bore in Heaven the second name,
Had not on earth whereon to lay His head;
How His first followers and servants sped;
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land:
How he, who lone in Patmos banishèd,
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounced by Heaven's command.

16

Then kneeling down to Heaven's Eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:
Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing,"[4]
That thus they all shall meet in future days,
There, ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear;
While circling Time moves round in an eternal sphere.

17

Compared with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method, and of art;
When men display to congregations wide
Devotion's ev'ry grace, except the heart,
The Power, incensed, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
But haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well-pleased, the language of the soul,
And in His Book of Life the inmates poor enroll.

18

Then homeward all take off their sev'ral way;
The youngling cottagers retire to rest:
The parent-pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request,
That He who stills the raven's clam'rous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
Would, in the way His wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide;
But, chiefly, in their hearts with Grace Divine preside.

19

From scenes like these, old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad:
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
"An honest man's the noblest work of God;"[1]
And certes, in fair Virtue's heavenly road,
The cottage leaves the palace far behind;
What is a lordling's pomp? a cumbrous load,
Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
Studied in arts of Hell, in wickedness refined!

20

O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent!

1 chooses. 2 kindles. 3 i.e. David.
4 From Pope's *Windsor Forest.*

1 From Pope's *Essay on Man.*

Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content!
And O! may Heaven their simple lives prevent
From Luxury's contagion, weak and vile!
Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be rent,
A virtuous populace may rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire around their much-loved Isle.

21

O Thou! who poured the patriotic tide,
That streamed thro' Wallace's undaunted heart,
Who dared to, nobly, stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die, the second glorious part:
(The patriot's God, peculiarly Thou art,
His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward!)
O never, never Scotia's realm desert;
But still the patriot, and the patriot-bard
In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard!

1785–6.

## TO A MOUSE

ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST WITH THE PLOUGH, NOVEMBER, 1785

1

Wee, sleekit,[1] cowrin, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty
Wi' bickering brattle![2]
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
Wi' murdering pattle![3]

2

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion
An' fellow mortal!

3

I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen icker in a thrave[4]
'S a sma' request;
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,[5]
An' never miss 't!

1 sleek. 2 with hurrying scamper.
3 plow-staff.
4 An occasional ear in a pile of twenty-four sheaves.
5 remainder.

4

Thy wee-bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin!
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's win's ensuin,
Baith snell[1] an' keen!

5

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till crash! the cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell.

6

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,
Has cost thee monie a weary nibble!
Now thou's turned out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,[2]
To thole[3] the winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch[4] cauld!

7

But Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft agley,[5]
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
For promised joy!

8

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But och! I backward cast my e'e,
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

## TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH IN APRIL, 1786

1

Wee, modest, crimson-tippèd flow'r,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure[6]
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonie gem.

2

Alas! it's no thy neebor sweet,
The bonie lark, companion meet,

1 biting. 2 without house or holding.
3 endure. 4 hoar-frost. 5 askew. 6 dust.

Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet,
Wi' spreckled breast!
When upward-springing, blythe, to greet
The purpling east.

3

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce reared above the parent-earth
Thy tender form.

4

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,
High shelt'ring woods and wa's maun shield:
But thou, beneath the random bield[1]
O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histie[2] stibble-field,
Unseen, alane.

5

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

6

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betrayed,
And guileless trust;
Till she, like thee, all soiled, is laid
Low i' the dust.

7

Such is the fate of simple Bard,
On Life's rough ocean luckless starred!
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er!

8

Such fate to suffering Worth is giv'n,
Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,
By human pride or cunning driv'n
To mis'ry's brink;
Till, wrenched of ev'ry stay but Heav'n,
He, ruined, sink!

9

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine — no distant date;
Stern Ruin's plough-share drives elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight
Shall be thy doom!

1 shelter. 2 bare.

## EPISTLE TO J. LAPRAIK

AN OLD SCOTTISH BARD, APRIL 1, 1785

1

While briers an' woodbines budding green,
And paitricks[1] scraichin loud at e'en,
An' morning poussie[2] whiddin[3] seen,
Inspire my Muse,
This freedom, in an unknown frien'
I pray excuse.

2

On Fasten-e'en[4] we had a rockin,[5]
To ca' the crack[6] and weave our stockin;
And there was muckle fun and jokin,
Ye need na doubt;
At length we had a hearty yokin,[7]
At "sang about."

3

There was ae sang, among the rest,
Aboon them a' it pleased me best,
That some kind husband had addrest
To some sweet wife:
It thirled[8] the heart-strings thro' the breast,
A' to the life.

4

I've scarce heard ought described sae weel,
What gen'rous, manly bosoms feel;
Thought I, "Can this be Pope or Steele,
Or Beattie's wark?"
They tald me 'twas an odd kind chiel
About Muirkirk.

5

It pat me fidgin-fain[9] to hear 't,
An' sae about him there I spier 't;[10]
Then a' that kent him round declared
He had ingine;[11]
That nane excelled it, few cam near 't,
It was sae fine:

6

That, set him to a pint of ale,
An' either douce[12] or merry tale,
Or rhymes an' sangs he'd made himsel,
Or witty catches,
'Tween Inverness an' Teviotdale,
He had few matches.

1 partridges. 2 hare. 3 scudding.
4 The eve of Ash Wednesday. 5 social meeting.
6 have a chat. 7 spell. 8 thrilled.
9 It made me fidget with eagerness.
10 inquired. 11 genius. 12 serious.

7

Then up I gat, an' swoor an aith,
Tho' I should pawn my pleugh an' graith,[1]
Or die a cadger pownie's [2] death,
At some dyke-back,[3]
A pint an' gill I'd gie them baith,
To hear your crack.[4]

8

But, first an' foremost, I should tell,
Amaist as soon as I could spell,
I to the crambo-jingle [5] fell;
Tho' rude an' rough —
Yet crooning to a body's sel,
Does weel eneugh.

9

I am nae poet, in a sense;
But just a rhymer like by chance,
An' hae to learning nae pretence;
Yet, what the matter?
Whene'er my Muse does on me glance,
I jingle at her.

10

Your critic-folk may cock their nose,
And say, "How can you e'er propose,
You wha ken hardly verse frae prose,
To mak a sang?'"
But, by your leaves, my learned foes,
Ye're maybe wrang.

11

What's a' your jargon o' your Schools,
Your Latin names for horns an' stools?
If honest Nature made you fools,
What sairs [6] your grammers?
Ye'd better taen up spades and shools,
Or knappin-hammers.

12

A set o' dull, conceited hashes [7]
Confuse their brains in college-classes,
They gang in stirks,[8] and come out asses,
Plain truth to speak;
An' syne [9] they think to climb Parnassus
By dint o' Greek!

13

Gie me ae spark o' Nature's fire,
That's a' the learning I desire;
Then, tho' I drudge thro' dub an' mire
At pleugh or cart,
My Muse, tho' hamely in attire,
May touch the heart.

1 tools. 2 hawker's pony's. 3 back of a fence.
4 talk. 5 rhyming. 6 serves.
7 dunderheads. 8 young bullocks. 9 then.

14

O for a spunk o' Allan's [1] glee,
Or Fergusson's, the bauld an' slee,
Or bright Lapraik's, my friend to be,
If I can hit it!
That would be lear [2] eneugh for me,
If I could get it.

15

Now, sir, if ye hae friends enow,
Tho' real friends I b'lieve are few;
Yet, if your catalogue be fow,[3]
I'se no insist:
But, gif ye want ae friend that's true,
I'm on your list.

16

I winna blaw about mysel,
As ill I like my fauts to tell;
But friends, an' folks that wish me well,
They sometimes roose [4] me;
Tho', I maun own, as monie still
As far abuse me.

17

There's ae wee faut they whyles lay to me,
I like the lasses — Gude forgie me!
For monie a plack [5] they wheedle frae me
At dance or fair;
Maybe some ither thing they gie me,
They weel can spare.

18

But Mauchline Race or Mauchline Fair,
I should be proud to meet you there:
We 'se gie ae night's discharge to care,
If we forgather;
And hae a swap o' rhymin-ware [6]
Wi' ane anither.

19

The four-gill chap,[7] we'se gar [8] him clatter,
An' kirsen him wi' reekin water; [9]
Syne we'll sit down an' tak our whitter,[10]
To cheer our heart;
An' faith, we'se be acquainted better
Before we part.

20

Awa ye selfish, warly race,
Wha think that havins,[11] sense, an' grace,

1 Allan Ramsay (1686–1758) and Robert Fergusson (1750–74), Scotch poets.
2 learning. 3 full. 4 praise.
5 coin. 6 i.e. exchange poems.
7 i.e. the light drinker. 8 make.
9 And christen himself with steaming water.
10 hearty draught. 11 good manners.

Ev'n love an' friendship should give place
To Catch-the-Plack![1]
I dinna like to see your face,
Nor hear your crack.[2]

21

But ye whom social pleasure charms,
Whose hearts the tide of kindness warms,
Who hold your being on the terms,
"Each aid the others,"
Come to my bowl, come to my arms,
My friends, my brothers!

22

But, to conclude my lang epistle,
As my auld pen's worn to the grissle,
Twa lines frae you wad gar me fissle,[3]
Who am most fervent,
While I can either sing or whistle,
Your friend and servant.

1785.

## TAM O' SHANTER

A TALE

Of Brownyis and of Bogillis full is this Buke.
GAWIN DOUGLAS.

The ruined church of Alloway stands on the banks of the Doon, about three-quarters of a mile from the poet's birthplace, so that the scene of the story is intimately familiar to Burns and to his friends. The poem, first published in *The Edinburgh Magazine* for March, 1791, is a superb example of that mingling of humor and horror which we call the grotesque, and admirable in the rapid movement and vividness of its narrative.

When chapman billies[4] leave the street,
And drouthy[5] neebors neebors meet;
As market-days are wearing late,
An' folk begin to tak the gate;[6]
While we sit bousing at the nappy,[7]
An' getting fou and unco[8] happy,
We think na on the lang Scots miles,
The mosses, waters, slaps,[9] and styles,
That lie between us and our hame,
Whare sits our sulky, sullen dame,
Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

This truth fand honest Tam o' Shanter,
As he frae Ayr ae night did canter:
(Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasses,
For honest men and bonie lasses).

O Tam, had'st thou but been sae wise,
As taen thy ain wife Kate's advice!
She tauld thee weel thou was a skellum,[1]
A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum;[2]
That frae November till October,
Ae market-day thou was nae sober;
That ilka melder[3] wi' the miller,
Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;
That ev'ry naig was ca'd a shoe on,[4]
The smith and thee gat roaring fou on;
That at the Lord's house, even on Sunday,
Thou drank wi' Kirkton Jean till Monday.
She prophesied, that, late or soon,
Thou would be found deep drowned in Doon,
Or catched wi' warlocks[5] in the mirk[9]
By Alloway's auld, haunted kirk.

Ah! gentle dames, it gars me greet,[7]
To think how monie counsels sweet,
How monie lengthened, sage advices
The husband frae the wife despises!

But to our tale: Ae market-night,
Tam had got planted unco right,
Fast by an ingle,[8] bleezing finely,
Wi' reaming swats,[9] that drank divinely;
And at his elbow, Souter[10] Johnie,
His ancient, trusty, drouthy cronie:
Tam lo'ed him like a very brither;
They had been fou for weeks thegither.
The night drave on wi' sangs and clatter;
And ay the ale was growing better:
The landlady and Tam grew gracious
Wi' secret favors, sweet and precious:
The Souter tauld his queerest stories;
The landlord's laugh was ready chorus:
The storm without might rair and rustle,
Tam did na mind the storm a whistle.

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
E'en drowned himsel amang the nappy.
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
The minutes winged their way wi' pleasure:
Kings may be blest but Tam was glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious!

But pleasures are like poppies spread:
You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white — then melts for ever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm.

1 hunt-the-coin. 2 talk. 3 make me tingle (with delight). 4 pedlar-fellows. 5 thirsty. 6 go home. 7 ale. 8 uncommonly. 9 gates.

1 good-for-nothing. 2 babbler. 3 grinding. 4 That every time a nag was shoed. 5 wizards. 6 dark. 7 makes me weep. 8 fireplace. 9 foaming ale. 10 cobbler.

Nae man can tether time or tide;
The hour approaches Tam maun ride:
That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane,
That dreary hour Tam mounts his beast in;
And sic a night he taks the road in,
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

The wind blew as 't wad blawn its last;
The rattling showers rose on the blast;
The speedy gleams the darkness swallowed;
Loud, deep, and lang the thunder bellowed:
That night, a child might understand,
The Deil had business on his hand.

Weel mounted on his gray mare Meg,
A better never lifted leg,
Tam skelpit[1] on thro' dub[2] and mire,
Despising wind, and rain, and fire;
Whiles holding fast his guid blue bonnet,
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet,
Whiles glow'ring round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles[3] catch him unawares:
Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
Whare ghaists and houlets nightly cry.

By this time he was cross the ford,
Whare in the snaw the chapman smoor'd;[4]
And past the birks[5] and meikle stane,
Whare drunken Charlie brak's neck-bane;
And thro' the whins,[6] and by the cairn,[7]
Whare hunters fand the murdered bairn;[8]
And near the thorn, aboon the well,
Whare Mungo's mither hanged hersel.
Before him Doon pours all his floods;
The doubling storm roars thro' the woods;
The lightnings flash from pole to pole;
Near and more near the thunders roll:
When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,
Kirk-Alloway seemed in a bleeze,[9]
Thro' ilka bore[10] the beams were glancing,
And loud resounded mirth and dancing.

Inspiring bold John Barleycorn,
What dangers thou canst make us scorn!
Wi' tippenny,[11] we fear nae evil;
Wi' usquabae,[12] we'll face the Devil!
The swats sae reamed in Tammie's noddle,
Fair play, he cared na deils a boddle.[13]
But Maggie stood, right sair astonished,
Till, by the heel and hand admonished,
She ventured forward on the light;
And, vow! Tam saw an unco sight!

1 hastened. 2 puddle. 3 hobgoblins.
4 smothered. 5 birches. 6 furze.
7 pile of stones. 8 child. 9 blaze.
10 opening. 11 two-penny ale. 12 whiskey.
13 he cared not a farthing for devile.

Warlocks and witches in a dance:
Nae cotillion, brent new[1] frae France,
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
Put life and mettle in their heels.
A winnock-bunker[2] in the east,
There sat Auld Nick, in shape o' beast;
A tousie tyke,[3] black, grim, and large,
To gie them music was his charge:
He screwed the pipes and gart them skirl,[4]
Till roof and rafters a' did dirl.[5]
Coffins stood round, like open presses,
That shawed the dead in their last dresses;
And, by some devilish cantraip[6] sleight,
Each in its cauld hand held a light:
By which heroic Tam was able
To note upon the haly table,
A murderer's banes, in gibbet-airns;[7]
Twa span-lang, wee, unchristened bairns;
A thief new-cutted frae a rape —
Wi' his last gasp his gab[8] did gape;
Five tomahawks wi' bluid red-crusted;
Five scymitars wi' murder crusted;
A garter which a babe had strangled;
A knife a father's throat had mangled —
Whom his ain son o' life bereft —
The grey-hairs yet stack to the heft;
Wi' mair of horrible and awefu',
Which even to name wad be unlawfu'.

As Tammie glowered, amazed, and curious,
The mirth and fun grew fast and furious;
The piper loud and louder blew,
The dancers quick and quicker flew,
They reeled, they set, they crossed, they cleekit,[9]
Till ilka carlin swat and reekit,[10]
And coost her duddies[11] to the wark,
And linket[12] at it in her sark[13]!

Now Tam, O Tam! had thae been queans,[14]
A' plump and strapping in their teens!
Their sarks, instead o' creeshie[15] flannen,
Been snaw-white seventeen hunder linen! —
Thir[16] breeks o' mine, my only pair,
That ance were plush, o' guid blue hair,
I wad hae gi'en them off my hurdies[17]
For ae blink o' the bonie burdies!

But withered beldams, auld and droll,
Rigwoodie[18] hags wad spean[19] a foal,
Louping and flinging on a crummock,[20]
I wonder did na turn thy stomach!

1 brand-new. 2 window-seat. 3 A shaggy dog.
4 made them squeal. 5 ring. 6 magic.
7 irons. 8 mouth. 9 clutched.
10 Till each old hag sweated and steamed.
11 threw off her clothes. 12 tripped.
13 shirt. 14 lasses. 15 greasy. 16 these.
17 buttocks. 18 ancient. 19 wean (by disgust).
20 crooked staff.

But Tam kend what was what fu' brawlie:[1]
There was ae winsome wench and wawlie,[2]
That night enlisted in the core,[3]
Lang after kend on Carrick shore
For monie a beast to dead she shot,
An' perished monie a bonie boat,
And shook baith meikle corn and bear,[4]
And kept the country-side in fear).
Her cutty sark,[5] o' Paisley harn,[6]
That while a lassie she had worn,
In longitude tho' sorely scanty,
It was her best, and she was vauntie.[7] . . .
Ah! little kend thy reverend grannie,
That sark she coft[8] for her wee Nannie,
Wi' twa pund Scots ('twas a' her riches),
Wad ever graced a dance of witches!

But here my Muse her wing maun cour,
Sic flights are far beyond her power:
To sing how Nannie lap and flang
(A souple jad she was and strang),
And how Tam stood like ane bewitched,
And thought his very een enriched;
Even Satan glowered, and fidged[9] fu' fain,
And hotched[10] and blew wi' might and main;
Till first ae caper, syne anither,
Tam tint[11] his reason a' thegither,
And roars out: "Weel done, Cutty-sark!"
And in an instant all was dark;
And scarcely had he Maggie rallied,
When out the hellish legion sallied.

As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke,[12]
When plundering herds assail their byke;[13]
As open pussie's[14] mortal foes,
When, pop! she starts before their nose;
As eager runs the market-crowd,
When "Catch the thief!" resounds aloud:
So Maggie runs, the witches follow,
Wi' monie an eldritch[15] skriech and hollo.

Ah, Tam! ah, Tam! thou'll get thy fairin![16]
In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin!
In vain thy Kate awaits thy comin!
Kate soon will be a woefu' woman!
Now, do thy speedy utmost, Meg,
And win the key-stane of the brig;
There, at them thou thy tail may toss,
A running stream they dare na cross!
But ere the key-stane she could make,
The fient[17] a tail she had to shake;
For Nannie, far before the rest,
Hard upon noble Maggie prest,
And flew at Tam wi' furious ettle;[1]
But little wist she Maggie's mettle!
Ae spring brought off her master hale,
But left behind her ain grey tail:
The carlin[2] claught her by the rump,
And left poor Maggie scarce a stump.

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
Ilk man, and mother's son, take heed:
Whene'er to drink you are inclined,
Or cutty sarks run in your mind,
Think! ye may buy the joys o'er dear:
Remember Tam o' Shanter's mare.

1 finely. 2 well-built. 3 corps. 4 barley
5 short shirt. 6 coarse cloth. 7 proud.
8 bought. 9 fidgeted. 10 hitched his arm.
11 lost. 12 fuss. 13 hive. 14 a hare's.
15 unearthly. 16 reward. 17 devil.

## THE JOLLY BEGGARS

### A CANTATA

*The Jolly Beggars*, fragment though it be, is in some ways Burns's masterpiece. The poet once entered in his commonplace book the observation "that every man, even the worst, has something good about him." In this poem he has taken humanity at its lowest pitch of wretched squalor, and chosen for his setting a disreputable and dirty tavern. His beggars are drunken, lustful vagabonds, to all appearance "down and out." He has concealed nothing, and has made no apologies; but he has found in them a gayety and courage which is not mere bravado. The poem is the triumphant justification of the assertion that "a man's a man for a' that." It was written in 1785, but was not published till after the poet's death.

RECITATIVO

1

When lyart[3] leaves bestrow the yird,[4]
Or, wavering like the bauckie-bird,[5]
Bedim cauld Boreas' blast;
When hailstanes drive wi' bitter skyte,[6]
And infant frosts begin to bite,
In hoary cranreuch[7] drest;
Ae night at e'en a merry core[8]
O' randie, gangrel bodies[9]
In Poosie-Nansie's held the splore,[10]
To drink their orra duddies:[11]
Wi' quaffing and laughing
They ranted[12] an' they sang,
Wi' jumping an' thumping
The vera girdle rang.

2

First, niest[13] the fire, in auld red rags
Ane sat, weel braced wi' mealy bags

1 aim. 2 witch. 3 faded. 4 earth.
5 bat. 6 spirt. 7 hoar-frost. 8 company.
9 Of lawless vagabonds. 10 carousal.
11 To sell their extra clothes for drink.
12 rollicked. 13 next.

And knapsack a' in order;
His doxy lay within his arm;
Wi' usquebae [1] an' blankets warm,
She blinket [2] on her sodger.
An' ay he gies the tozie [3] drab
The tither skelpin [4] kiss,
While she held up her greedy gab [5]
Just like an aumous dish: [6]
Ilk smack still did crack still
Like onie cadger's [7] whup;
Then, swaggering an' staggering,
He roared this ditty up: —

AIR

TUNE: *Soldiers Joy*

1

I am a son of Mars, who have been in many wars,
And show my cuts and scars wherever I come:
This here was for a wench, and that other in a trench
When welcoming the French at the sound of the drum.
Lal de daudle, etc.

2

My prenticeship I past, where my leader breathed his last,
When the bloody die was cast on the heights of Abrám; [8]
And I servèd out my trade when the gallant game was played,
And the Moro [9] low was laid at the sound of the drum.

3

I lastly was with Curtis among the floating batt'ries, [10]
And there I left for witness an arm and a limb;
Yet let my country need me, with Eliott [11] to head me
I'd clatter on my stumps at the sound of the drum.

4

And now, tho' I must beg with a wooden arm and leg
And many a tatter'd rag hanging over my bum,
I'm as happy with my wallet, my bottle, and my callet
As when I used in scarlet to follow a drum.

5

What tho' with hoary locks I must stand the winter shocks,
Beneath the woods and rocks oftentimes for a home?
When the tother bag I sell, and the tother bottle tell,
I could meet a troop of Hell at the sound of a drum.
Lal de daudle, etc.

1 whiskey. 2 smirked. 3 tipsy.
4 smacking. 5 mouth. 6 alms basin.
7 hawker's. 8 i.e. at Quebec (1759).
9 The fortress at Santiago de Cuba, stormed by the British in 1762.
10 At Gibraltar (1782).
11 The heroic defender of Gibraltar (1779–82).

RECITATIVO

He ended; and the kebars [1] sheuk
Aboon the chorus roar;
While frighted rattons backward leuk,
An' seek the benmost bore: [2]
A fairy fiddler frae the neuk, [3]
He skirled [4] out *Encore!*
But up arose the martial chuck,
An' laid the loud uproar: —

AIR

TUNE: *Sodger Laddie*

1

I once was a maid, tho' I cannot tell when,
And still my delight is in proper young men.
Some one of a troop of dragoons was my daddie:
No wonder I'm fond of a sodger laddie!
Sing, lal de dal, etc.

2

The first of my loves was a swaggering blade:
To rattle the thundering drum was his trade;
His leg was so tight, and his cheek was so ruddy,
Transported I was with my sodger laddie.

3

But the godly old chaplain left him in the lurch;
The sword I forsook for the sake of the church;
He riskèd the soul, and I ventured the body:
'Twas then I proved false to my sodger laddie.

4

Full soon I grew sick of my sanctified sot;
The regiment at large for a husband I got·

1 rafters. 2 the inmost hole.
3 corner. 4 screamed.

From the gilded spontoon [1] to the fife I was ready:
I askèd no more but a sodger laddie.

5

But the Peace it reduced me to beg in despair,
Till I met my old boy in a Cunningham Fair;
His rags regimental they fluttered so gaudy:
My heart it rejoiced at a sodger laddie.

6

And now I have lived — I know not how long!
But still I can join in a cup and a song;
And whilst with both hands I can hold the glass steady,
Here's to thee, my hero, my sodger laddie!
Sing, lal de dal, etc.

RECITATIVO

Poor Merry-Andrew [2] in the neuk
Sat guzzling wi' a tinkler-hizzie; [3]
They mind 't na wha the chorus teuk,
Between themselves they were sae busy,
At length, wi' drink an' courting dizzy,
He stoitered [4] up an' made a face;
Then turned an' laid a smack on Grizzie,
Syne [5] tuned his pipes wi' grave grimace: —

AIR

TUNE: *Auld Sir Symon*

1

Sir Wisdom's a fool when he's fou; [6]
Sir Knave is a fool in a session:
He's there but a prentice I trow,
But I am a fool by profession.

2

My grannie she bought me a beuk,
An' I held awa to the school:
I fear I my talent misteuk,
But what will ye hae of a fool?

3

For drink I wad venture my neck;
A hizzie's the half of my craft:
But what could ye other expect
Of ane that's avowedly daft?

4

I ance was tyed up like a stirk [7]
For civilly swearing and quaffing;
I ance was abused i' the kirk
For towsing a lass i' my daffin. [8]

1 short pike (carried by infantry officers).
2 acrobat and clown. 3 tinker-wench.
4 staggered. 5 then. 6 full.
7 young bullock. 8 sky-larking.

5

Poor Andrew that tumbles for sport
Let naebody name wi' a jeer:
There's even, I'm tauld, i' the Court
A tumbler ca'd the Premier.

6

Observed ye yon reverend lad
Mak faces to tickle the mob?
He rails at our mountebank squad —
It's rivalship just i' the job!

7

And now my conclusion I'll tell,
For faith! I'm confoundedly dry:
The chiel that's a fool for himsel,
Guid Lord! he's far dafter than I.

RECITATIVO

Then niest outspak a raucle [1] carlin, [2]
Wha kent fu' weel to cleek the sterlin, [3]
For monie a pursie she had hookèd,
An' had in monie a well been doukèd.
Her love had been a Highland laddie,
But weary fa' the waefu' woodie! [4]
Wi' sighs an' sobs she thus began
To wail her braw [5] John Highlandman: —

AIR

TUNE: *O An' Ye Were Dead, Guidman*

1

A Highland lad my love was born,
The Lalland [6] laws he held in scorn,
But he still was faithfu' to his clan,
My gallant, braw John Highlandman.

CHORUS

Sing hey my braw John Highlandman!
Sing ho my braw John Highlandman!
There's not a lad in a' the lan'
Was match for my John Highlandman!

2

With his philibeg, [7] an' tartan plaid,
An' guid claymore [8] down by his side,
The ladies' hearts he did trepan,
My gallant, braw John Highlandman.

3

We rangèd a' from Tweed to Spey,
An' lived like lords an' ladies gay,
For a Lalland face he fearèd none,
My gallant, braw John Highlandman.

1 sturdy. 2 old woman.
3 Who knew full well how to snatch money.
4 But bad luck to the woful gallows!
5 gayly dressed. 6 Lowland.
7 kilt. 8 sword.

4

They banished him beyond the sea,
But ere the bud was on the tree,
Adown my cheeks the pearls ran,
Embracing my John Highlandman.

5

But, Och! they catched him at the last,
And bound him in a dungeon fast.
My curse upon them every one —
They've hanged my braw John Highland-
man!

6

And now a widow I must mourn
The pleasures that will ne'er return;
No comfort but a hearty can
When I think on John Highlandman.

CHORUS

Sing hey my braw John Highlandman!
Sing ho my braw John Highlandman!
There's not a lad in a' the lan'
Was match for my John Highlandman!

RECITATIVO

1

A pigmy scraper on a fiddle,
Wha used to trystes [1] an' fairs to driddle,[2]
Her strappin limb an' gawsie [3] middle
(He reached nae higher)
Had holed his heartie like a riddle,[4]
An' blawn 't on fire.

2

Wi' hand on hainch [5] and upward e'e,
He crooned his gamut, one, two, three,
Then in an *arioso* key
The wee Apollo
Set off wi' *allegretto* glee
His *giga* solo: —

AIR

TUNE: *Whistle Owre the Lave O't*

1

Let me ryke [6] up to dight [7] that tear;
An' go wi' me an' be my dear,
An' then your every care an' fear
May whistle owre the lave [8] o't.

CHORUS

I am a fiddler to my trade,
An' a' the tunes that e'er I played,
The sweetest still to wife or maid
Was *Whistle Owre the Lave O't.*

2

At kirns [1] an' weddins we'se be there,
An' O, sae nicely 's we will fare!
We'll bowse about till Daddie Care
Sing *Whistle Owre the Lave O't.*

3

Sae merrily the banes we'll pyke,[2]
An' sun oursels about the dyke;
An' at our leisure, when ye like,
We'll — whistle owre the lave o't!

4

But bless me wi' your heav'n o' charms,
An' while I kittle hair on thairms,[3]
Hunger, cauld, an' a' sic harms
May whistle owre the lave o't.

CHORUS

I am a fiddler to my trade,
An' a' the tunes that e'er I played,
The sweetest still to wife or maid
Was *Whistle Owre the Lave O't.*

RECITATIVO

1

Her charms had struck a sturdy caird [4]
As weel as poor gut-scraper;
He taks the fiddler by the beard,
An' draws a roosty rapier;
He swoor by a' was swearing worth
To speet [5] him like a pliver,[6]
Unless he would from that time forth
Relinquish her for ever.

2

Wi' ghastly e'e poor Tweedle-Dee
Upon his hunkers [7] bended,
An' prayed for grace wi' ruefu' face,
An' sae the quarrel ended.
But tho' his little heart did grieve
When round the tinkler prest her,
He feigned to snirtle [8] in his sleeve
When thus the caird addressed her: —

AIR

TUNE: *Clout the Cauldron*

1

My bonie lass, I work in brass,
A tinkler is my station;
I've travelled round all Christian ground
In this my occupation;

1 cattle-markets. 2 toddle. 3 buxom. 4 sieve.
5 haunch. 6 reach. 7 wipe. 8 rest.

1 harvest-homes. 2 pick.
3 tickle the hair (of my bow) on the catgut.
4 tinker. 5 run through. 6 plover.
7 buttocks. 8 sniggle.

I've taen the gold, an' been enrolled
In many a noble squadron;
But vain they searched when off I marched
To go an' clout [1] the cauldron.

2

Despise that shrimp, that withered imp,
With a' his noise an' cap'rin,
An' take a share wi' those that bear
The budget [2] and the apron!
And by that stowp,[3] my faith an' houpe!
And by that dear Kilbaigie! [4]
If e'er ye want, or meet wi' scant,
May I ne'er weet my craigie! [5]

RECITATIVO

1

The caird prevailed: th' unblushing fair
In his embraces sunk,
Partly wi' love o'ercome sae sair,
An' partly she was drunk.
Sir Violino, with an air
That showed a man o' spunk,
Wished unison between the pair,
An' made the bottle clunk [6]
To their health that night.

2

But hurchin [7] Cupid shot a shaft,
That played a dame a shavie: [8]
The fiddler raked her fore and aft
Behint the chicken cavie; [9]
Her lord, a wight of Homer's craft,[10]
Tho' limpin' wi' the spavie,[11]
He hirpled [12] up, an' lap like daft,
An' shored [13] them "Dainty Davie"
O' boot [14] that night.

3

He was a care-defying blade
As ever Bacchus listed!
Tho' Fortune sair upon him laid,
His heart, she ever missed it.
He had no wish but — to be glad,
Nor want but — when he thristed,
He hated nought but — to be sad;
An' thus the Muse suggested
His sang that night.

AIR

TUNE: *For A' That, An' A' That*

1

I am a Bard, of no regard
Wi' gentle folks an' a' that,
But Homer-like the glowrin byke,[1]
Frae town to town I draw that.

CHORUS

For a' that, an' a' that,
An' twice as muckle 's a' that,
I've lost but ane, I've twa behin',
I've wife eneugh for a' that.

2

I never drank the Muses' stank,[2]
Castalia's burn,[3] an' a' that;
But there it streams, an' richly reams [4] —
My Helicon I ca' that.

3

Great love I bear to a' the fair,
Their humble slave an' a' that;
But lordly will, I hold it still
A mortal sin to thraw [5] that.

4

In raptures sweet this hour we meet
Wi' mutual love an' a' that;
But for how lang the flie may stang,
Let inclination law [6] that!

5

Their tricks an' craft hae put me daft,
They've taen me in, an' a' that;
But clear your decks, an' here's the Sex!
I like the jads for a' that.

CHORUS

For a' that, an' a that,
An' twice as muckle 's a' that,
My dearest bluid, to do them guid,
They're welcome till 't for a' that!

RECITATIVO

So sung the Bard, and Nansie's wa's
Shook with a thunder of applause,
Re-echoed from each mouth!
They toomed their pocks,[7] they pawned their duds,
They scarcely left to coor their fuds,[8]
To quench their lowin drouth.[9]
Then owre again the jovial thrang
The Poet did request
To lowse his pack, an' wale [10] a sang,
A ballad o' the best:
He rising, rejoicing
Between his twa Deborahs,
Looks round him, an' found them
Impatient for the chorus: —

1 patch. 2 tinker's bag of tools. 3 drinking cup. 4 A brand of whiskey. 5 throat. 6 gurgle. 7 urchin. 8 trick. 9 chicken-coop. 10 i.e., a ballad-singer. 11 spavin. 12 hobbled. 13 offered. 14 gratis.

1 the staring crowd. 2 pool. 3 brook. 4 foams. 5 thwart. 6 decide. 7 emptied their wallets. 8 cover their tails. 9 burning thirst. 10 choose.

AIR

TUNE: *Jolly Mortals, Fill Your Glasses*

1

See the smoking bowl before us!
Mark our jovial, ragged ring!
Round and round take up the chorus,
And in raptures let us sing:

CHORUS

A fig for those by law protected!
Liberty's a glorious feast,
Courts for cowards were erected,
Churches built to please the priest!

2

What is title, what is treasure,
What is reputation's care?
If we lead a life of pleasure,
'Tis no matter how or where!

3

With the ready trick and fable
Round we wander all the day;
And at night in barn or stable
Hug our doxies on the hay.

4

Does the train-attended carriage
Thro' the country lighter rove?
Does the sober bed of marriage
Witness brighter scenes of love?

5

Life is all a variorum,
We regard not how it goes;
Let them prate about decorum,
Who have character to lose.

6

Here's to budgets, bags, and wallets!
Here's to all the wandering train!
Here's our ragged brats and callets![1]
One and all, cry out, Amen!

CHORUS

A fig for those by law protected!
Liberty's a glorious feast,
Courts for cowards were erected,
Churches built to please the priest!

## MY NANIE, O

1

Behind yon hills where Lugar flows
'Mang moors an' mosses many, O,
The wintry sun the day has closed,
And I'll awa to Nanie, O.

2

The westlin wind blaws loud an' shill,[1]
The night's baith mirk[2] and rainy, O;
But I'll get my plaid, an' out I'll steal,
An' owre the hill to Nanie, O.

3

My Nanie's charming, sweet, an' young;
Nae artfu' wiles to win ye, O:
May ill befa' the flattering tongue
That wad beguile my Nanie, O!

4

Her face is fair, her heart is true;
As spotless as she's bonie, O,
The op'ning gowan,[3] wat wi' dew,
Nae purer is than Nanie, O.

5

A country lad is my degree,
An' few there be that ken me, O;
But what care I how few they be?
I'm welcome ay to Nanie, O.

6

My riches a's my penny-fee,[4]
An' I maun guide it cannie,[5] O;
But warl's gear ne'er troubles me,
My thoughts are a' — my Nanie, O.

7

Our auld guidman[6] delights to view
His sheep an' kye thrive bonie, O;
But I'm as blythe that hauds his pleugh,
An' has nae care but Nanie, O.

8

Come weel, come woe, I care na by;
I'll tak what Heav'n will send me, O:
Nae ither care in life have I,
But live, an' love my Nanie, O.

1784.

## GREEN GROW THE RASHES, O

CHORUS

Green grow the rashes,[7] O;
Green grow the rashes, O;
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend,
Are spent among the lasses, O.

1 wenches.

1 shrill. 2 dark. 3 daisy. 4 wages. 5 carefully. 6 husbandman. 7 rushes.

1

There's nought but care on ev'ry han',
In every hour that passes, O:
What signifies the life o' man,
An' 'twere nae for the lasses, O.

2

The war'ly race may riches chase,
An' riches still may fly them, O;
An' tho' at last they catch them fast,
Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O.

3

But gie me a cannie [1] hour at e'en,
My arms about my dearie, O,
An' war'ly cares an' war'ly men
May a' gae tapsalteerie,[2] O!

4

For you sae douce,[3] ye sneer at this;
Ye're nought but senseless asses, O;
The wisest man the warl' e'er saw,[4]
He dearly loved the lasses, O.

5

Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
Her noblest work she classes, O:
Her prentice han' she tried on man,
An' then she made the lasses, O.

CHORUS

Green grow the rashes, O;
Green grow the rashes, O;
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend,
Are spent among the lasses, O.

1786.

## WILL YE GO TO THE INDIES, MY MARY

1

Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
And leave auld Scotia's shore?
Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
Across th' Atlantic roar?

2

O, sweet grows the lime and the orange,
And the apple on the pine;
But a' the charms o' the Indies
Can never equal thine.

3

I hae sworn by the Heavens to my Mary,
I hae sworn by the Heavens to be true,
And sae may the Heavens forget me,
When I forget my vow!

4

O, plight me your faith, my Mary,
And plight me your lily-white hand!
O, plight me your faith, my Mary,
Before I leave Scotia's strand!

5

We hae plighted our troth, my Mary,
In mutual affection to join;
And curst be the cause that shall part us!
The hour and the moment o' time!

1786.

1 quiet. 2 topsy-turvy.
3 sedate. 4 i.e. Solomon.

## THE SILVER TASSIE

1

Go, fetch to me a pint o' wine,
And fill it in a silver tassie,[1]
That I may drink before I go
A service to my bonie lassie!
The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith,
Fu' loud the wind blaws frae the Ferry,
The ship rides by the Berwick-Law,
And I maun leave my bonie Mary.

2

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
The glittering spears are rankèd ready,
The shouts o' war are heard afar,
The battle closes deep and bloody.
It's not the roar o' sea or shore
Wad mak me langer wish to tarry,
Nor shouts o' war that's heard afar:
It's leaving thee, my bonie Mary!

1788.

## OF A' THE AIRTS

1

Of a' the airts [2] the wind can blaw
I dearly like the west,
For there the bonie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best.
There wild woods grow, and rivers row,[3]
And monie a hill between,
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

2

I see her in the dewy flowers —
I see her sweet and fair.
I hear her in the tunefu' birds —
I hear her charm the air.

1 cup. 2 directions. 3 roll.

There's not a bonie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw,[1] or green,
There's not a bonie bird that sings,
But minds me o' my Jean.

1788? Published 1790.

## AULD LANG SYNE

CHORUS

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne!

1

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne!

2

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp,[2]
And surely I'll be mine,
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne!

3

We twa hae run about the braes,[3]
And pou'd the gowans[4] fine,
But we've wandered monie a weary fit[5]
Sin' auld lang syne.

4

We twa hae paidled in the burn[6]
Frae morning sun till dine,
But seas between us braid hae roared
Sin' auld lang syne.

5

And there's a hand, my trusty fiere,[7]
And gie's a hand o' thine,
And we'll tak a right guid-willie waught[8]
For auld lang syne!

CHORUS

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne!

1788.

## JOHN ANDERSON MY JO

1

John Anderson my jo,[9] John,
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonie brow was brent;[1]
But now your brow is beld,[2] John,
Your locks are like the snaw,
But blessings on your frosty pow,[3]
John Anderson my jo!

2

John Anderson my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither,
And monie a cantie[4] day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither:
Now we maun totter down, John,
And hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson my jo!

Published 1790.

## TAM GLEN

1

My heart is a-breaking, dear tittie,[5]
Some counsel unto me come len'.
To anger them a' is a pity,
But what will I do wi' Tam Glen?

2

I'm thinking, wi' sic a braw[6] fellow
In poortith[7] I might mak a fen'.[8]
What care I in riches to wallow,
If I mauna marry Tam Glen?

3

There's Lowrie the laird o' Dumeller:
"Guid day to you," brute! he comes ben.[9]
He brags and he blaws o' his siller,
But when will he dance like Tam Glen?

4

My minnie[10] does constantly deave[11] me,
And bids me beware o' young men.
They flatter, she says, to deceive me —
But wha can think sae o' Tam Glen?

5

My daddie says, gin I'll forsake him,
He'd gie me guid hunder marks ten.
But if it's ordained I maun take him,
O, wha will I get but Tam Glen?

6

Yestreen at the valentines' dealing,
My heart to my mou gied a sten,[12]

1 wood. 2 pint-cup. 3 hillsides.
4 picked the daisies. 5 foot. 6 brook.
7 comrade. 8 draught of good will. 9 sweetheart.

1 straight. 2 bald. 3 head. 4 cheerful.
5 sister. 6 fine. 7 poverty. 8 shift.
9 in. 10 mother. 11 deafen. 12 gave a leap.

For thrice I drew ane without failing,
And thrice it was written "Tam Glen!"

7

The last Halloween I was waukin [1]
My droukit sark-sleeve,[2] as ye ken —
His likeness came up the house staukin,[3]
And the very grey breeks [4] o' Tam Glen!

8

Come, counsel, dear tittie, don't tarry!
I'll gie ye my bonie black hen,
Gif ye will advise me to marry
The lad I lo'e dearly, Tam Glen.

Published 1790.

## WILLIE BREWED A PECK O' MAUT

CHORUS

We are na fou,[5] we're nae that fou,
But just a drappie in our e'e!
The cock may craw, the day may daw,
And ay we'll taste the barley-bree!

1

O, Willie brewed a peck o' maut,
And Rob and Allan cam to see.
Three blyther hearts that lee-lang [6] night
Ye wad na found in Christendie.

2

Here are we met three merry boys,
Three merry boys I trow are we;
And monie a night we've merry been,
And monie mae [7] we hope to be!

3

It is the moon, I ken her horn,
That's blinkin in the lift [8] sae hie:
She shines sae bright to wyle us hame,
But, by my sooth, she'll wait a wee!

4

Wha first shall rise to gang awa,
A cuckold, coward loun is he!
Wha first beside his chair shall fa',
He is the King amang us three!

CHORUS

We are na fou, we're nae that fou,
But just a drappie in our e'e!
The cock may craw, the day may daw,
And ay we'll taste the barley-bree!

1789.

1 watching. 2 my drenched shirt-sleeve.
3 stalking. 4 breeches. 5 full.
6 live-long. 7 more. 8 sky.

## AE FOND KISS

1

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever!
Ae farewell, and then forever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.
Who shall say that Fortune grieves him,
While the star of hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me,
Dark despair around benights me.

2

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy:
Naething could resist my Nancy!
But to see her was to love her,
Love but her, and love for ever.
Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met — or never parted —
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

3

Fare-thee-weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare-thee-weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka [1] joy and treasure,
Peace, Enjoyment, Love and Pleasure!
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever!
Ae farewell, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

Published 1792.

## SWEET AFTON

1

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes! [2]
Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise!
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream —
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream!

2

Thou stock dove whose echo resounds thro' the glen,
Ye wild whistling blackbirds in yon thorny den,
Thou green-crested lapwing, thy screaming forbear —
I charge you, disturb not my slumbering fair!

1 each. 2 hillsides.

3

How lofty, sweet Afton, thy neighboring hills,
Far marked with the courses of clear, winding rills!
There daily I wander, as noon rises high,
My flocks and my Mary's sweet cot in my eye.

4

How pleasant thy banks and green vallies below,
Where wild in the woodlands the primroses blow!
There oft, as mild Ev'ning weeps over the lea,
The sweet-scented birk[1] shades my Mary and me.

5

Thy crystal stream, Afton, how lovely it glides,
And winds by the cot where my Mary resides!
How wanton thy waters her snowy feet lave,
As, gathering sweet flowerets, she stems thy clear wave!

6

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes!
Flow gently, sweet river, the theme of my lays!
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream —
Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream!

1789.

## YE FLOWERY BANKS

1

Ye flowery banks o' bonie Doon,
How can ye blume sae fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care?

2

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie bird,
That sings upon the bough:
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause Luve was true!

3

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie bird,
That sings beside thy mate:
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate!

4

Aft hae I roved by bonie Doon
To see the woodbine twine,
And ilka[1] bird sang o' its luve,
And sae did I o' mine.

5

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose
Frae aff its thorny tree,
And my fause luver staw my rose,
But left the thorn wi' me.

1791?

## A RED, RED ROSE

1

O, my luve is like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June.
O, my luve is like the melodie,
That's sweetly played in tune.

2

As fair art thou, my bonie lass,
So deep in luve am I,
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

3

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun!
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

4

And fare thee weel, my only luve,
And fare thee weel a while!
And I will come again, my luve,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile!

Published 1796.

## LAST MAY A BRAW WOOER

1

Last May a braw wooer cam down the lang glen,
And sair wi' his love he did deave[2] me.
I said there was naething I hated like men:
The deuce gae wi'm to believe me, believe me —
The deuce gae wi'm to believe me!

2

He spak o' the darts in my bonie black een,
And vowed for my love he was diein.

1 birch.

1 each. 2 deafen.

I said, he might die when he liket for Jean:
The Lord forgie me for liein, for liein —
The Lord forgie me for liein!

3

A weel-stocket mailen,[1] himself for the laird,
And marriage aff-hand were his proffers:
I never loot on that I kenned it, or cared,
But thought I might hae waur offers, waur offers —
But thought I might hae waur offers.

4

But what wad ye think? In a fortnight or less
(The Deil tak his taste to gae near her!)
He up the Gate-Slack to my black cousin, Bess!
Guess ye how, the jad! I could bear her, could bear her —
Guess ye how, the jad! I could bear her.

5

But a' the niest week, as I petted[2] wi' care,
I gaed to the tryste[3] o' Dalgarnock,
And wha but my fine fickle lover was there?
I glowered as I'd seen a warlock,[4] a warlock —
I glowered as I'd seen a warlock.

6

But owre my left shouther I gae him a blink,
Lest neebors might say I was saucy.
My wooer he capered as he'd been in drink,
And vowed I was his dear lassie, dear lassie —
And vowed I was his dear lassie!

7

I spiered[5] for my cousin fu' couthy[6] and sweet:
Gin she had recovered her hearin?
And how her new shoon fit her auld, shachled[7] feet?
But heavens! how he fell a swearin, a swearin —
But heavens! how he fell a swearin!

8

He beggèd for gude sake, I wad be his wife,
Or else I wad kill him wi' sorrow;
So e'en to preserve the poor body in life,
I think I maun wed him to-morrow, to-morrow —
I think I maun wed him to-morrow!

Published 1799.

1 farm. 2 sulked. 3 fair. 4 wizard.
5 asked. 6 kind. 7 shapeless.

## SCOTS, WHA HAE

1

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed
Or to victorie!

2

Now's the day, and now's the hour:
See the front o' battle lour,
See approach proud Edward's power —
Chains and slaverie!

3

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave? —
Let him turn, and flee!

4

Wha for Scotland's King and Law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand or freeman fa',
Let him follow me!

5

By Oppression's woes and pains,
By your sons in servile chains,
We will drain our dearest veins
But they shall be free!

6

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Let us do, or die!

1794.

## HIGHLAND MARY

1

Ye banks and braes[1] and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie![2]
There Summer first unfald her robes,
And there the langest tarry!
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary!

2

How sweetly bloomed the gay, green birk,[3]
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasped her to my bosom!

1 hillsides. 2 muddy. 3 birch.

The golden hours on angel wings
Flew o'er me and my dearie:
For dear to me as light and life
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

3

Wi' monie a vow and locked embrace
Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder.
But O, fell Death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary!

4

O, pale, pale now, those rosy lips
I aft hae kissed sae fondly;
And closed for ay, the sparkling glance
That dwalt on me sae kindly;
And mouldering now in silent dust
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

1792.

## IS THERE FOR HONEST POVERTY

1

Is there for honest poverty
That hings his head, an' a' that?
The coward slave, we pass him by —
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
Our toils obscure, an' a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gowd [1] for a' that.

2

What though on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hoddin [2] grey, an' a' that?
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine —
A man's a man for a' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
Their tinsel show, an' a' that,
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that.

3

Ye see yon birkie [3] ca'd "a lord,"
Wha struts, an' stares, an' a' that?
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a cuif [4] for a' that.
For a' that, an' a' that,
His ribband, star, an' a' that,
The man o' independent mind,
He looks an' laughs at a' that.

4

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, an' a' that!
But an honest man's aboon his might —
Guid faith, he mauna fa' [1] that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
Their dignities, an' a' that,
The pith o' sense an' pride o' worth
Are higher rank than a' that.

5

Then let us pray that come it may
(As come it will for a' that)
That Sense and Worth o'er a' the earth
Shall bear the gree [2] an' a' that!
For a' that, an' a' that,
It's comin yet for a' that,
That man to man the world o'er
Shall brithers be for a' that.

1795.

1 gold. 2 homespun. 3 fellow. 4 ninny.

## O, WERT THOU IN THE CAULD BLAST

1

O, wert thou in the cauld blast
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry airt,[3]
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee.
Or did Misfortune's bitter storms
Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
Thy bield [4] should be my bosom,
To share it a', to share it a'.

2

Or were I in the wildest waste,
Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,
The desert were a Paradise,
If thou wert there, if thou wert there.
Or were I monarch of the globe,
Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
The brightest jewel in my crown
Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

1796.

1 claim. 2 have the first place.
3 direction of the wind. 4 shelter.

## MARY MORISON

1

O Mary, at thy window be!
It is the wished, the trysted hour.
Those smiles and glances let me see,
That make the miser's treasure poor.

How blythely wad I bide the stoure,[1]
A weary slave frae sun to sun,
Could I the rich reward secure —
The lovely Mary Morison!

2

Yestreen, when to the trembling string
The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha',
To thee my fancy took its wing,
I sat, but neither heard or saw:
Tho' this was fair, and that was braw,
And yon the toast of a' the town,
I sighed and said amang them a': —
"Ye are na Mary Morison!"

3

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace
Wha for thy sake wad gladly die?
Or canst thou break that heart of his
Whase only faut is loving thee?
If love for love thou wilt na gie,
At least be pity to me shown:
A thought ungentle canna be
The thought o' Mary Morison.

[1] conflict.

Pub. 1800.

## WILLIAM BLAKE (1757–1827)

William Blake was born in London in 1757. He was a painter and an engraver as well as a poet, often combining all his arts in the production of a piece. Nearly all his books, in fact, were published by Blake himself. He engraved the poem upon a plate, with the illustration or design to fit it; and his devoted wife bound the printed sheets into a book. His best lyrics appeared in *Poetical Sketches* (1783), *Songs of Innocence* (1789), and *Songs of Experience* (1794). In addition to his poems, he composed a large number of "prophetic books," weird in their fantasy, obscure, and difficult. Among his drawings, his illustrations for the Book of Job are considered the best. He died in 1827.

Blake is one of the most baffling figures in English literature. His eccentric but powerful imagination produced the confusing "prophetic books"; yet it produced, also, the perfect lyrics in *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*. All that he did, in literature and in drawing, was stamped by originality. If there is a clue or key to his later compositions, it is his mysticism. The mystic believes that he can free himself of the physical world, and, transcending things material, come directly in touch with the infinite, or ultimate truth. Blake often had moments of ecstasy, during which he saw visions and wrote as under a spell. As a man, he was simple and devout, living an isolated but contented life, happy in his home associations and in his work.

A good collection of his poems is the edition prepared, with a memoir, by William Michael Rossetti (Bell). Among numerous biographies may be mentioned those by Chesterton, Gilchrist, Swinburne, and Symons. James Thomson (B.V.) has an essay on Blake's poetical method in *Biographical and Critical Studies*. Among recent studies, most useful are S. Foster Damon's, and the critical edition of the prophetic writings by D. J. Sloss and J. P. R. Wallis (Oxford).

### SONG

My silks and fine array,
My smiles and languished air,
By love are driv'n away;
And mournful lean Despair
Brings me yew to deck my grave:
Such end true lovers have.

His face is fair as heaven,
When springing buds unfold;
O why to him was't given
Whose heart is wintry cold?
His breast is love's all-worshiped tomb,
Where all love's pilgrims come.

Bring me an axe and spade,
Bring me a winding-sheet;
When I my grave have made
Let winds and tempests beat:
Then down I'll lie as cold as clay.
True love doth pass away!

Pub. 1783.

### MAD SONG

The wild winds weep,
And the night is a-cold;
Come hither, Sleep,
And my griefs unfold:
But lo! the morning peeps
Over the eastern steeps,
And the rustling beds of dawn
The earth do scorn.

Lo! to the vault
Of pavèd heaven,

With sorrow fraught,
My notes are driven:
They strike the ear of night,
Make weep the eyes of day;
They make mad the roaring winds,
And with tempests play.

Like a fiend in a cloud,
With howling woe
After night I do crowd,
And with night will go;
I turn my back to the east
From whence comforts have increased;
For light doth seize my brain
With frantic pain.

Pub. 1783.

## SONG

How sweet I roamed from field to field,
And tasted all the summer's pride;
Till I the Prince of Love beheld,
Who in the sunny beams did glide.

He showed me lilies for my hair,
And blushing roses for my brow;
And led me through his gardens fair,
Where all his golden pleasures grow.

With sweet May-dews my wings were wet,
And Phœbus fired my vocal rage;
He caught me in his silken net,
And shut me in his golden cage.

He loves to sit and hear me sing,
Then laughing sports and plays with me;
Then stretches out my golden wing,
And mocks my loss of liberty.

Pub. 1783.

## TO THE MUSES

Whether on Ida's shady brow,
Or in the chambers of the East,
The chambers of the sun, that now
From ancient melody have ceased;

Whether in Heaven ye wander fair,
Or the green corners of the earth,
Or the blue regions of the air
Where the melodious winds have birth;

Whether on crystal rocks ye rove,
Beneath the bosom of the sea,
Wandering in many a coral grove,
Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry!

How have you left the ancient love
That bards of old enjoyed in you!
The languid strings do scarcely move!
The sound is forced, the notes are few!

Pub. 1783.

## INTRODUCTION *to* SONGS OF INNOCENCE

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he laughing said to me:

"Pipe a song about a Lamb!"
So I piped with merry cheer.
"Piper, pipe that song again;"
So I piped: he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!"
So I sang the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book, that all may read."
So he vanished from my sight,
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

Pub. 1789.

## THE LAMB

Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, and bid thee feed,
By the stream and o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee:
He is callèd by thy name,
For He calls Himself a Lamb,
He is meek, and He is mild;
He became a little child.
I a child, and thou a lamb,
We are callèd by His name.
Little Lamb, God bless thee!
Little Lamb, God bless thee!

Pub. 1789.

## INFANT JOY

"I have no name;
I am but two days old."
— What shall I call thee?
"I happy am;
Joy is my name."
— Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty joy!
Sweet joy, but two days old;
Sweet joy I call thee:
Thou dost smile:
I sing the while,
Sweet joy befall thee!

Pub. 1789.

## THE LITTLE BLACK BOY

My mother bore me in the southern wild,
And I am black, but O my soul is white!
White as an angel is the English child,
But I am black, as if bereaved of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree,
And, sitting down before the heat of day,
She took me on her lap and kissèd me,
And, pointing to the east, began to say:

"Look on the rising sun; — there God does live,
And gives his light, and gives his heat away;
And flowers and trees and beasts and men receive
Comfort in morning, joy in the noonday.

"And we are put on earth a little space,
That we may learn to bear the beams of love;
And these black bodies and this sunburnt face
Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

"For when our souls have learned the heat to bear,
The cloud will vanish, we shall hear his voice,
Saying: 'Come out from the grove, my love and care,
And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice.'"

Thus did my mother say, and kissèd me;
And thus I say to little English boy.
When I from black, and he from white cloud free,
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy,

I'll shade him from the heat, till he can bear
To lean in joy upon our father's knee;
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,
And be like him, and he will then love me.

Pub. 1789.

## A CRADLE SONG

Sweet dreams, form a shade
O'er my lovely infant's head!
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams
By happy, silent, moony beams!

Sweet sleep, with soft down
Weave thy brows an infant crown.
Sweet sleep, Angel mild,
Hover o'er my happy child!

Sweet smiles, in the night
Hover over my delight;
Sweet smiles, mother's smile,
All the livelong night beguile.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,
Chase not slumber from thy eyes.
Sweet moans, sweeter smile,
All the dovelike moans beguile.

Sleep, sleep, happy child,
All creation slept and smiled;
Sleep, sleep, happy sleep,
While o'er thee thy mother weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face
Holy image I can trace.
Sweet babe, once like thee,
Thy Maker lay and wept for me:

Wept for me, for thee, for all,
When He was an infant small.
Thou His image ever see,
Heavenly face that smiles on thee!

Smiles on thee, on me, on all;
Who became an infant small.
Infant smiles are His own smiles;
Heaven and earth to peace beguiles.

Pub. 1789.

## CRADLE SONG

FROM SONGS OF EXPERIENCE

Sleep! sleep! beauty bright,
Dreaming o'er the joys of night;
Sleep! sleep! in thy sleep
Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face
Soft desires I can trace,
Secret joys and secret smiles,
Little pretty infant wiles.

As thy softest limbs I feel,
Smiles as of the morning steal
O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast
Where thy little heart does rest.

O, the cunning wiles that creep
In thy little heart asleep!
When thy little heart does wake,
Then the dreadful light shall break.

Pub. 1794.

## THE TIGER

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand and what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

Pub. 1794.

## THE CLOD AND THE PEBBLE

"Love seeketh not itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care,
But for another gives its ease,
And builds a Heaven in Hell's despair."

So sung a little clod of clay,
Trodden with the cattle's feet,
But a pebble of the brook
Warbled out these meters meet:

"Love seeketh only Self to please,
To bind another to its delight,
Joys in another's loss of ease,
And builds a Hell in Heaven's despite."

Pub. 1794.

## A LITTLE BOY LOST

"Nought loves another as itself,
Nor venerates another so,
Nor is it possible to thought
A greater than itself to know:

"And, Father, how can I love you
Or any of my brothers more?
I love you like the little bird
That picks up crumbs around the door."

The Priest sat by and heard the child,
In trembling zeal he seized his hair:
He led him by his little coat,
And all admired the priestly care.

And standing on the altar high,
"Lo! what a fiend is here," said he,
"One who sets reason up for judge
Of our most holy mystery."

The weeping child could not be heard,
The weeping parents wept in vain;
They stripped him to his little shirt,
And bound him in an iron chain;

And burned him in a holy place,
Where many had been burned before.
The weeping parents wept in vain.
Are such things done on Albion's[1] shore?

Pub. 1794.

## NIGHT

The sun descending in the west,
The evening star does shine;
The birds are silent in their nest,
And I must seek for mine.

1 England's.

The moon, like a flower
In heaven's high bower,
With silent delight
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell, green fields and happy grove,
Where flocks have ta'en delight;
Where lambs have nibbled, silent move
The feet of angels bright:
Unseen they pour blessing,
And joy without ceasing,
On each bud and blossom,
On each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,
Where birds are covered warm;
They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them all from harm.
If they see any weeping
That should have been sleeping,
They pour sleep on their head,
And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tigers howl for prey,
They pitying stand and weep,
Seeking to drive their thirst away,
And keep them from the sheep.
But if they rush dreadful,
The angels most heedful
Receive each mild spirit,
New worlds to inherit.

And there the lion's ruddy eyes
Shall flow with tears of gold:
And pitying the tender cries,
And walking round the fold,
Saying: "Wrath by His meekness,
And by His health sickness,
Are driven away
From our immortal day.

"And now beside thee, bleating lamb,
I can lie down and sleep,
Or think on Him who bore thy name,
Graze after thee, and weep.
For, washed in life's river,
My bright mane for ever
Shall shine like the gold,
As I guard o'er the fold."

Pub. 1794.

## STANZAS *from* MILTON

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among these dark Satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

Pub. 1804.

## LOVE'S SECRET

Never seek to tell thy love,
Love that never told can be;
For the gentle wind doth move
Silently, invisibly.

I told my love, I told my love,
I told her all my heart,
Trembling, cold, in ghastly fears: —
Ah! she did depart.

Soon after she was gone from me
A traveller came by,
Silently, invisibly:
He took her with a sigh.

Pub. 1804.

# THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

# THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

The nineteenth century opened upon Europe distracted by war. The French Revolution, begun s a movement for freedom and the extension of political rights to the people, culminated in the eneral struggle between France and the other powers. In Great Britain, the doctrines of the evolution at first were eagerly welcomed by many, as reflecting that spirit of individualism and evolt against society which was spreading through Europe in the latter part of the eighteenth entury. On the other hand, the conservative mind, which sees in established institutions, social, olitical, and religious, the sacred results of a kind of instinctive wisdom on the part of the race, acted vigorously against the subversive movement. The chief spokesman of this view was dmund Burke. After the execution of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, Great Britain declared ar against France, and from that time on was the chief mover in the various coalitions against iat country. Especially after Napoleon came into power, and tried to force Europe into a tariff nion which threatened British trade, Great Britain was involved in a national crisis comparable ) that which she had experienced under Elizabeth. Once more the country was threatened with nvasion. And as the struggle with Philip II had led to an extraordinary outburst of patriotism, so id that with Napoleon: the height of national glory reached in the repulse of the Armada was ouched again in Nelson's victory at Trafalgar and Wellington's at Waterloo.

The wars which followed the French Revolution were the first in which the people of the nation ere deeply involved. Accordingly we find the Government resorting to espionage and punishient to suppress opinion hostile to the war. After the fall of Napoleon the Governments of the reat Powers formed a holy alliance to prevent any future revolutionary movement; and although reat Britain did not join this alliance, the policy continued of repressing sternly all popular emands for reform of institutions or freedom of discussion. These demands assumed a menacing haracter in consequence of a change in character on the part of the country — the most significant i its history since the Norman Conquest. Up to the close of the eighteenth century, Great ritain had remained in the main an agricultural country, with trade centering in a few large towns. delightful picture of English middle-class society, unconcerned with any problem save that of erpetuating itself, is given in Miss Austen's novels. Early in the nineteenth century, however, a ries of mechanical inventions led to the great advance in manufacturing which is called the ndustrial Revolution. In the case of cloth, for example, in place of a hand loom operated by a eaver in his cottage, the power loom was installed in great buildings, which, located together, iade the nucleus of industrial cities, from which goods were sent over the world. Between 1770 nd 1831 the population of Liverpool multiplied five times. The population of Manchester rose om 41,000, in 1774, to 270,000, in 1831. The population of the entire country between 1800 and 850 rose from 9,000,000, to 18,000,000. As there was no legislation to control the industrial evelopment, there was great suffering on the part of the workers. The first step necessary to fit ie government of Great Britain to these new conditions was a change in representation in Parliaient, in which the landed interest controlled most of the seats. Postponed by the war with rance, this reform was urged by the Whig Party after 1815, and finally carried amid great popular amor in 1832.

The careers of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey may be regarded as typical of the changing titude of men in this period. All three were in their early twenties when the French Revolution roke out, and all enthusiastically supported it, and opposed the war with France. All suffered omewhat from the persecution, political and social, which was directed against the pro-French. ater they rallied to the support of established institutions, accepting Burke's view of their sanction by divine guidance and human experience. They became opposed to democratic reforms in tate, Church, and education. Sir Walter Scott was from his youth an advocate of aristocratic ontrol. His martial poetry was an inspiration to his countrymen in time of war; and his novels rew a glamour about the aristocratic institutions which the country was fighting to defend. On ie other hand, a group of poets of the succeeding generation were representative of the altered eling of the time. Byron expressed the weariness of the human spirit in bondage to conventions nd institutions, and became to all Europe a voice of protest and revolt. Shelley was a more ncere revolutionist, who had a program of doing away with authority and placing the relations f men and women on a basis of mutual trust and good will. A lesser poet, Thomas Hood, expressed in a few memorable lyrics the sufferings of the exploited workers.

All of these poets worked under the impulse, felt increasingly since the middle of the eighteenth entury, toward the enlargement of the boundaries of poetry in subject-matter and technical forms. Wordsworth was the most important influence in this direction. He advanced the theory that he proper subject of poetry was the actual experience of simple country-folk, and its suitable nguage the words in which they naturally spoke. This was in opposition to the limitations hich the early eighteenth century had accepted as to subject-matter and style. The enlargement f the subject-matter and technique of poetry took place in other directions also, under the impulse f that spirit of individual freedom and impatience of social restraint which we call romanticism.

The poets of the eighteenth century had tended, in their revival of classical tradition, to live together in London, and to seek uniformity in their habits and interests as well as their style. Among the early nineteenth-century poets, the most powerful impulse was escape. They did not congregate in London. Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey settled near Lake Windermere and became known as the "Lake Poets." Wordsworth made specifically the greatest contribution to modern poetry in giving to it natural scenery as its subject-matter. Coleridge let his imagination feed upon his own consciousness, enriched by reading of remote times and places. Scott indulged in romantic reproductions of past ages. Byron and Shelley were both exiles from their native land; and both expressed imaginatively their spirit of revolt, the one in poetic tales of individual adventure, the other in dreams of the golden age. Keats escaped from the tedium of conventional life into the region of art. And all developed rare and wonderful forms of poetry to fit themes which could not be dealt with in the prescribed forms of heroic couplet or pentameter blank verse. Altogether this period is one of immense expansion in poetry through the play of the imagination set free from social or conventional standards by the impulse of escape which we call romantic.

In prose literature the predominant forms, the novel and the essay, were inherited from the eighteenth century; but they experienced a similar enlargement. The work of Jane Austen, indeed, is the perfect flowering of the novel of manners and social life which came in with Richardson: but the fiction of her contemporaries, Jane Porter and Sir Walter Scott, showed the imaginative lure of the past. The essays of Charles Lamb and William Hazlitt are lineal descendants from *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*, but they are infinitely richer in imagination and resources of style. Thomas De Quincey, like Coleridge, used his inner life as material for his most characteristic work; and his vast range of subject-matter is largely chosen for its quality of yielding to imaginative treatment. One enterprise which appealed to the romantic spirit of the age was the discovery of the half-forgotten writers of the seventeenth century. Lamb published specimens of their dramatic poetry; Hazlitt made them known by his lectures; and Lamb and Hazlitt with De Quincey were influenced by them in style. On the other hand, the new critical journals — the *Edinburgh Review*, founded in 1805, *The Quarterly* in 1809, *Blackwood's Magazine* in 1817 — were in the main concerned with the maintenance of accepted literary standards.

The literature of the early nineteenth century does not, on the whole, suggest the period of industrial problems, political strife, and social tension which was beginning. Scott, Coleridge, and Wordsworth dealt with the French Revolution: the latter celebrated the achievements and heroes of the war in splendid occasional verse. Shelley pictured the golden age returning; but of the Industrial Revolution through which Great Britain was passing they seem unconscious. Literature, although no longer resident extensively in London, was still something of an institution apart carried on by a special caste for a selected audience. Of the changes which were to break down this seclusion, to enlarge this audience from a group interested in literature as an art, to the vast mass of men and women concerned in their reading primarily with life and its issues, the first took place with the passage of the Reform Bill in 1832. Five years later, Queen Victoria succeeded to the throne, and the Victorian Age was officially begun.

The student will find the following works useful: O. Elton, *Survey of English Literature*, Vols. I and II; H. D. Traill, *Social England*, Vol. IV; W. L. Courthope, *History of English Poetry*, Vol. VI; E. Dowden, *The French Revolution and English Literature;* Beers, *History of English Romanticism in the Nineteenth Century;* C. H. Herford, *Age of Wordsworth;* H. A. Taine, *History of English Literature*, Vol. IV; A. Symons, *The Romantic Movement in English Poetry.*

## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770–1850)

William Wordsworth's life was long. Like his poetry, it was simple, calm, and sincere, with only here and there a flare-up of passion or vigorous action. He was born on April 7, 1770, at Cockermouth, in the Lake Country with which his name is forever linked. His mother died when he was eight, and his father five years later. After an elementary education at the village school in Hawkshead, he entered, in 1787, St. John's College, Cambridge, where he carried on his studies, evidently, in erratic fashion. During the year before his graduation he took a walking trip through the Alps, and in 1791, after taking his B.A., he went to France for over a year. The results of this visit are significant in the poet's development. Here he became engaged in a romantic love affair (recently uncovered sympathetically by Professors Harper and Legouis); his faith in nature and in childhood, already strong through the teachings of Rousseau and the circumstances of his upbringing, was increased; and his natural sympathy for the poor and lowly led him, under the influence of the French Revolution, to rebel against all shams and injustice in the social order.

Returning home, without funds and somewhat disillusioned by the Reign of Terror, he decided definitely to become a poet, a determination which was helped measurably by a small legacy from a

iend. He accordingly settled with his ever helpful and inspiring sister Dorothy, in Racedown, Dorsetshire. In 1797 he became a neighbor of Coleridge's at Alfoxden, in Somersetshire. Here Wordsworth planned a monumental work, *The Recluse*, of which *The Recluse*, 1800, *The Prelude*, 1798–1805, and *The Excursion*, 1797–1814, long as they are, are but fragments of the unfinished whole. Here, too, with Coleridge he planned, and published in 1798, the famous *Lyrical Ballads*, in which Wordsworth was to make wonderful the familiar, and Coleridge was to familiarize the wonderful.

After eight months in Germany, 1798–99, Wordsworth moved with his sister to Grasmere. In 1802 he married Dorothy's friend, Mary Hutchinson. Of their five children two died in 1812. In 1814 he moved to Rydal Mount, where he had among his neighbors De Quincey, Coleridge, and Southey. The year 1843 brought him the laureateship. He died on April 23, 1850.

Wordsworth's life breaks in the middle. During the first half, he was of the eighteenth century, trusting his reason and his senses, with the fearlessness and hopefulness of youth. He was courageously non-conforming, with a vigorous optimism and a spontaneity almost pagan. During the latter half of his life these qualities are largely lacking. He foreshadows the "mid-Victorian." His optimism is argued. It is one's duty not to be pessimistic. He is serene, but it is not the serenity that he achieved from the struggle, as in his earlier years, but the calmness of the onlooker. He writes much, but his work is perfunctory, seldom inspired. *The Ode to Duty*, 1805, is, as Legouis points out, significant of a vital change in Wordsworth.

To Wordsworth poetry is the record and analysis of the human spirit. He strives truthfully to bring out of the chaos of life order and symmetry and all that makes for beauty. This beauty he finds most often when man is in close touch and in harmony with nature. It is for a good reason that he himself lived in the country, in daily association with the out-of-doors. From nature he derived most of his subjects; and in nature he found God manifested.

Wordsworth is often called a philosophic poet. This is not quite accurate, for he elaborates no great system. He has ideas, but they are the thoughts that come from intuition, what Shelley calls the visitations of the divine to man. His greatness lies in his ability to group details or feelings that every one recognizes into a poetic pattern which brings out the larger or the inner truth. He does not argue, but arranges and composes. His simplicity and directness in description of natural scenery, his sincerity and kindliness, his meditative pathos, flash from his poems with a quiet, unexpected beauty. His genius removes what Coleridge calls "the film of familiarity," and shows us in simple things the sublime and wonderful that was hitherto hidden.

Wordsworth has written much that is commonplace. His best, however, places him among the greatest of English poets.

Excellent one-volume editions of the poems are the Cambridge (Houghton Mifflin Company), the Globe (Macmillan), and the Oxford. The best critical biographies are by Legouis, Harper, and Sir Walter Raleigh. See also the essays by Matthew Arnold, Pater, and Swinburne. For reminiscences and contemporary accounts, see Dorothy Wordsworth's Journals, De Quincey, Coleridge, Hazlitt, and Jeffrey.

In the following selections Wordsworth's own headnotes are given whenever they exist. These are the notes that Wordsworth dictated to Miss Isabella Fenwick about 1843.

## LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

"Actually composed while I was sitting by the side of the brook that runs down from the coomb, in which stands the village of Alford, through the grounds of Alfoxden. It was a favorite resort of mine. The brook fell down a sloping rock so as to make a waterfall considerable for that country, and across the pool below had fallen a tree, an ash if I rightly remember, from which rose perpendicularly, boughs in search of the light intercepted by the deep shade above. The boughs bore leaves of green that for want of sunshine had faded into almost lily-white; and from the underside of this natural sylvan bridge depended long and beautiful tresses of ivy which waved gently in the breeze that might poetically speaking be called the breath of the waterfall. This motion varied of course in proportion to the power of water in the brook. When, with dear friends, I revisited this spot, after an interval of more than forty years, this interesting feature of the scene was gone. To the owner of the place I could not but regret that the beauty of this retired part of the grounds had not tempted him to make it more accessible by a path, not broad or obtrusive, but sufficient for persons who love such scenes to creep along without difficulty." — (Wordsworth.)

I heard a thousand blended notes
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What Man has made of Man.

Through primrose tufts, in that sweet bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;

And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure, —
But the least motion which they made
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What Man has made of Man?

1798.

## EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY

"This poem is a favorite among the Quakers, as I have learnt on many occasions. It was composed in front of the house at Alfoxden, in the spring of 1798." — (Wordsworth.)

"Why, William, on that old gray stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away?

"Where are your books? — that light bequeathed
To beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

"You look round on your Mother Earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you;
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake,
And thus I made reply: —

"The eye, — it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will.

"Nor less I deem that there are powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things forever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come
But we must still be seeking?

"Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old gray stone,
And dream my time away."

1798.

## THE TABLES TURNED

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT

Up! up! my friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! up! my friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long, green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless, —
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings,
Our meddling intellect
Misshapes the beauteous forms of things, —
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

1798.

## LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR JULY 13, 1798

"No poem of mine was composed under circumstances more pleasant for me to remember than this. I began it upon leaving Tintern, after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was entering Bristol in the evening, after a ramble of four or five days, with my Sister. Not a line of it was altered, and not any part of it written down till I reached Bristol. It was published almost immediately after in the Lyrical Ballads." — (Wordsworth.)

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a soft inland murmur. — Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild, secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone.
These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration: — feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood
In which the burden of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened: — that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on, —
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.
If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft —
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart —
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!
And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led: more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads, than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all. — I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colors and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest

Unborrowed from the eye. — That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompence. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear, — both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.
Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay:
For thou art with me here upon the banks
Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend;[1] and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain-winds be free
To blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance —
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence — wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service: rather say
With warmer love — oh! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake!

1798.

[1] His sister, Dorothy.

## LUCY

Who Lucy was is not known. The only information that Wordsworth has given in regard to the five poems is that they were composed in Germany in 1799 — "Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower" in the Hartz Forest.

I

Strange fits of passion have I known:
And I will dare to tell,
But in the Lover's ear alone,
What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day
Fresh as a rose in June,
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath an evening-moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
All over the wide lea;
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot;
And, as we climbed the hill,
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon!
And all the while my eyes I kept
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof
He raised, and never stopped:
When down behind the cottage roof,
At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
Into a Lover's head!
"O mercy!" to myself I cried,
"If Lucy should be dead!"

2

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove;
A maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone
Half-hidden from the eye!
— Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!

3

I travelled among unknown men
In lands beyond the sea;
Nor, England! did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream!
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
The joy of my desire;
And she I cherished turned her wheel
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed
The bowers where Lucy played;
And thine too is the last green field
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

4

Three years she grew in sun and shower;
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown:
This Child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Ev'n in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mold the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

"And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake — The work was done —
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

5

A slumber did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears:

She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

1799.

## LUCY GRAY

OR, SOLITUDE

"Written at Goslar in Germany. It was founded on a circumstance told me by my Sister, of a little girl who, not far from Halifax in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snow-storm. Her footsteps were traced by her parents to the middle of the lock of a canal, and no other vestige of her, backward or forward, could be traced. The body however was found in the canal. The way in which the incident was treated and the spiritualising of the character might furnish hints for contrasting the imaginative influences which I have endeavored to throw over common life with Crabbe's matter of fact style of treating subjects of the same kind. This is not spoken to his disparagement, far from it, but to direct the attention of thoughtful readers, into whose hands these notes may fall, to a comparison that may both enlarge the circle of their sensibilities, and tend to produce in them a catholic judgment." — (Wordsworth.)

Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray:
And, when I crossed the wild,
I chanced to see, at break of day,
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
She dwelt on a wide moor, —
The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

"To-night will be a stormy night, —
You to the town must go;
And take a lantern, Child, to light
Your mother through the snow."

"That, Father! will I gladly do:
'Tis scarcely afternoon, —
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the moon!"

At this the father raised his hook,
And snapped a fagot-band;
He plied his work; — and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe:
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time:
She wandered up and down;
And many a hill did Lucy climb:
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At daybreak on the hill they stood
That overlooked the moor;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

They wept, — and, turning homeward, cried,
"In heaven we all shall meet!" —
When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's edge
They tracked the footmarks small;
And through the broken hawthorn-hedge,
And by the long stone wall;

And then an open field they crossed:
The marks were still the same;
They tracked them on, nor ever lost;
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank;
And further there were none!

— Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.

1799.

## THE SIMPLON PASS

——— Brook and road
Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy Pass,
And with them did we journey several hours
At a slow step. The immeasurable height

Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,
The stationary blasts of waterfalls,
And in the narrow rent, at every turn,
Winds thwarting winds bewildered and forlorn,
The torrents shooting from the clear blue sky,
The rocks that muttered close upon our ears,
Black drizzling crags that spake by the wayside
As if a voice were in them, the sick sight
And giddy prospect of the raving stream,
The unfettered clouds and region of the heavens,
Tumult and peace, the darkness and the light —
Were all like workings of one mind, the features
Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree,
Characters of the great Apocalypse,
The types and symbols of Eternity,
Of first, and last, and midst, and without end.

1799.

## MICHAEL

### A PASTORAL POEM

"Written at Town-end, Grasmere, about the same time as *The Brothers*. The Sheepfold, on which so much of the poem turns, remains, or rather the ruins of it. The character and circumstances of Luke were taken from a family to whom had belonged, many years before, the house we lived in at Town-end, along with some fields and woodlands on the eastern shore of Grasmere. The name of the Evening Star was not in fact given to this house, but to another on the same side of the valley, more to the north." — (Wordsworth.)

If from the public way you turn your steps
Up the tumultuous brook of Greenhead Ghyll,
You will suppose that with an upright path
Your feet must struggle; in such bold ascent
The pastoral mountains front you, face to face.
But, courage! for around that boisterous brook
The mountains have all opened out themselves,
And made a hidden valley of their own.
No habitation can be seen; but they
Who journey thither find themselves alone
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites
That overhead are sailing in the sky.
It is in truth an utter solitude;
Nor should I have made mention of this Dell
But for one object which you might pass by,
Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones!
And to that simple object appertains
A story — unenriched with strange events,
Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside,
Or for the summer shade. It was the first
Of those domestic tales that spake to me
Of shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
Whom I already loved; not verily
For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
Where was their occupation and abode.
And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy
Careless of books, yet having felt the power
Of Nature, by the gentle agency
Of natural objects, led me on to feel
For passions that were not my own, and think
(At random and imperfectly indeed)
On man, the heart of man, and human life.
Therefore, although it be a history
Homely and rude, I will relate the same
For the delight of a few natural hearts;
And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake
Of youthful Poets, who among these hills
Will be my second self when I am gone.

Upon the forest-side in Grasmere Vale
There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name;
An old man, stout of heart, and strong of limb.
His bodily frame had been from youth to age
Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen,
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
And watchful more than ordinary men.
Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,
Of blasts of every tone; and, oftentimes,
When others heeded not, he heard the South
Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
"The winds are now devising work for me!"
And, truly, at all times, the storm, that drives
The traveller to a shelter, summoned him
Up to the mountains: he had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him, and left him, on the heights.

So lived he till his eightieth year was past.
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,
Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.
Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed
The common air; hills, which with vigorous step
He had so often climbed; which had impressed
So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;
Which, like a book, preserved the memory
Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts
The certainty of honorable gain:
Those fields, those hills — what could they less? — had laid
Strong hold on his affections, were to him
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in singleness.
His Helpmate was a comely matron, old,
Though younger than himself full twenty years.
She was a woman of a stirring life,
Whose heart was in her house: two wheels she had
Of antique form; this large, for spinning wool;
That small, for flax; and if one wheel had rest,
It was because the other was at work.
The Pair had but one inmate in their house,
An only Child, who had been born to them
When Michael, telling o'er his years, began
To deem that he was old, — in shepherd's phrase,
With one foot in the grave. This only Son,
With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a storm,
The one of an inestimable worth,
Made all their household. I may truly say,
That they were as a proverb in the vale
For endless industry. When day was gone,
And from their occupations out of doors
The Son and Father were come home, even then,
Their labor did not cease; unless when all
Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and there,
Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed milk,
Sat round the basket piled with oaten cakes,
And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when the meal
Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was named)
And his old Father both betook themselves
To such convenient work as might employ
Their hands by the fireside; perhaps to card
Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair
Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,
Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge,
That in our ancient uncouth country style
With huge and black projection overbrowed
Large space beneath, as duly as the light
Of day grew dim, the Housewife hung a lamp;
An aged utensil, which had performed
Service beyond all others of its kind.
Early at evening did it burn — and late,
Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
Which, going by from year to year, had found,
And left, the couple neither gay perhaps
Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,
Living a life of eager industry.
And now, when Luke had reached his eighteenth year,
There by the light of this old lamp they sate,
Father and Son, while far into the night
The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,
Making the cottage through the silent hours
Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.
This light was famous in its neighborhood,
And was a public symbol of the life
That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it chanced,
Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
Stood single, with large prospect, north and south,
High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,
And westward to the village near the lake;
And from this constant light, so regular
And so far seen, the House itself, by all
Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
Both old and young, was named THE EVENING STAR.

Thus living on through such a length of years,
The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs
Have loved his Helpmate; but to Michael's heart
This son of his old age was yet more dear —
Less from instinctive tenderness, the same
Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood of all —

Than that a child, more than all other gifts
That earth can offer to declining man,
Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,
And stirrings of inquietude, when they
By tendency of nature needs must fail.
Exceeding was the love he bare to him,
His heart and his heart's joy! For often-times
Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
Had done him female service, not alone
For pastime and delight, as is the use
Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced
To acts of tenderness; and he had rocked
His cradle, as with a woman's gentle hand.
And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy
Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love,
Albeit of a stern unbending mind,
To have the Young-one in his sight, when he
Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's stool
Sat with a fettered sheep before him stretched
Under the large old oak, that near his door
Stood single, and, from matchless depth of shade,
Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the sun,
Thence in our rustic dialect was called
The CLIPPING TREE,[1] a name which yet it bears.
There, while they two were sitting in the shade,
With others round them, earnest all and blithe,
Would Michael exercise his heart with looks
Of fond correction and reproof bestowed
Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep
By catching at their legs, or with his shouts
Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears.
And when by Heaven's good grace the boy grew up
A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek
Two steady roses that were five years old,
Then Michael from a winter coppice cut
With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped
With iron, making it throughout in all
Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,
And gave it to the Boy; wherewith equipt
He as a watchman oftentimes was placed
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock;
And, to his office prematurely called,
There stood the urchin, as you will divine,
Something between a hindrance and a help;
And for this cause not always, I believe,
Receiving from his Father hire of praise;
Though nought was left undone which staff, or voice,
Or looks, or threatening gestures, could perform.
But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand
Against the mountain blasts; and to the heights,
Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,
He with his Father daily went, and they
Were as companions, why should I relate
That objects which the Shepherd loved before
Were dearer now? that from the Boy there came
Feelings and emanations — things which were
Light to the sun and music to the wind;
And that the old Man's heart seemed born again?
Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew up:
And now, when he had reached his eighteenth year,
He was his comfort and his daily hope.
While in this sort the simple household lived
From day to day, to Michael's ear there came
Distressful tidings. Long before the time
Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been bound
In surety for his brother's son, a man
Of an industrious life, and ample means;
But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
Had prest upon him; and old Michael now
Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,
A grievous penalty, but little less
Than half his substance. This unlooked-for claim,
At the first hearing, for a moment took
More hope out of his life than he supposed
That any old man ever could have lost.
As soon as he had armed himself with strength
To look his trouble in the face, it seemed
The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once
A portion of his patrimonial fields.
Such was his first resolve; he thought again,
And his heart failed him. "Isabel," said he,
Two evenings after he had heard the news,
"I have been toiling more than seventy years,
And in the open sunshine of God's love
Have we all lived; yet if these fields of ours
Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think

[1] Clipping is the word used in the North of England for shearing. (Wordsworth.)

That I could not lie quiet in my grave.
Our lot is a hard lot; the sun himself
Has scarcely been more diligent than I;
And I have lived to be a fool at last
To my own family. An evil man
That was, and made an evil choice, if he
Were false to us; and if he were not false,
There are ten thousand to whom loss like this
Had been no sorrow. I forgive him; — but
'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.
"When I began, my purpose was to speak
Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.
Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel; the land
Shall not go from us, and it shall be free;
He shall possess it, free as is the wind
That passes over it. We have, thou know'st,
Another kinsman, — he will be our friend
In this distress. He is a prosperous man,
Thriving in trade, — and Luke to him shall go,
And with his kinsman's help and his own thrift
He quickly will repair this loss, and then
He may return to us. If here he stay,
What can be done? Where every one is poor,
What can be gained?"
At this the old Man paused,
And Isabel sat silent, for her mind
Was busy, looking back into past times.
There's Richard Bateman, thought she to herself,
He was a parish-boy; — at the church-door
They made a gathering for him, shillings, pence
And halfpennies, wherewith the neighbors bought
A basket, which they filled with pedlar's wares;
And, with this basket on his arm, the lad
Went up to London, found a master there,
Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy
To go and overlook his merchandise
Beyond the seas; where he grew wondrous rich,
And left estates and monies to the poor,
And, at his birth-place, built a chapel, floored
With marble which he sent from foreign lands.
These thoughts, and many others of like sort,
Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,
And her face brightened. The old Man was glad,
And thus resumed: — "Well, Isabel! this scheme
These two days, has been meat and drink to me.
Far more than we have lost is left us yet.
— We have enough; — I wish indeed that I
Were younger; — but this hope is a good hope.
— Make ready Luke's best garments, of the best
Buy for him more, and let us send him forth
To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night:
— If he *could* go, the Boy should go to-night."
Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth
With a light heart. The Housewife for five days
Was restless morn and night, and all day long
Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare
Things needful for the journey of her son.
But Isabel was glad when Sunday came
To stop her in her work: for, when she lay
By Michael's side, she through the last two nights
Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep
And when they rose at morning she could see
That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon
She said to Luke, while they two by themselves
Were sitting at the door, "Thou must not go
We have no other Child but thee to lose,
None to remember; — do not go away,
For if thou leave thy Father he will die."
The Youth made answer with a jocund voice;
And Isabel, when she had told her fears,
Recovered heart. That evening her best fare
Did she bring forth, and all together sat
Like happy people round a Christmas fire.
With daylight Isabel resumed her work;
And all the ensuing week the house appeared
As cheerful as a grove in Spring: at length
The expected letter from their kinsman came
With kind assurances that he would do
His utmost for the welfare of the Boy;
To which, requests were added, that forth with
He might be sent to him. Ten times or more
The letter was read over; Isabel
Went forth to show it to the neighbors round;
Nor was there at that time on English land
A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel
Had to her house returned, the old Man said,
"He shall depart to-morrow." To this word

The Housewife answered, talking much of things
Which, if at such short notice he should go,
Would surely be forgotten. But at length
She gave consent, and Michael was at ease.
Near the tumultuous brook of Greenhead Ghyll,
In that deep valley, Michael had designed
To build a Sheepfold; and, before he heard
The tidings of his melancholy loss,
For this same purpose he had gathered up
A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's edge
Lay thrown together, ready for the work.
With Luke that evening thitherward he walked:
And soon as they had reached the place he stopped,
And thus the old Man spake to him: — "My Son,
To-morrow thou wilt leave me: with full heart
I look upon thee, for thou art the same
That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,
And all thy life has been my daily joy.
I will relate to thee some little part
Of our two histories; 'twill do thee good
When thou art from me, even if I should touch
On things thou canst not know of. —— After thou
First cam'st into the world — as oft befalls
To new-born infants — thou didst sleep away
Two days, and blessings from thy Father's tongue
Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed on,
And still I loved thee with increasing love.
Never to living ear came sweeter sounds
Than when I heard thee by our own fireside
First uttering, without words, a natural tune;
While thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy joy
Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month followed month,
And in the open fields my life was passed
And on the mountains; else I think that thou
Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's knees.
But we were playmates, Luke: among these hills,
As well thou knowest, in us the old and young
Have played together, nor with me didst thou
Lack any pleasure which a boy can know."
Luke had a manly heart; but at these words
He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped his hand,
And said, "Nay, do not take it so — I see
That these are things of which I need not speak.
— Even to the utmost I have been to thee
A kind and a good Father: and herein
I but repay a gift which I myself
Received at others' hands; for, though now old
Beyond the common life of man, I still
Remember them who loved me in my youth.
Both of them sleep together: here they lived,
As all their Forefathers had done; and when
At length their time was come, they were not loth
To give their bodies to the family mold.
I wished that thou should'st live the life they lived:
But, 'tis a long time to look back, my Son,
And see so little gain from threescore years.
These fields were burthened when they came to me;
Till I was forty years of age, not more
Than half of my inheritance was mine.
I toiled and toiled; God blessed me in my work,
And till these three weeks past the land was free.
— It looks as if it never could endure
Another Master. Heaven forgive me, Luke,
If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good
That thou should'st go."
At this the old Man paused;
Then, pointing to the stones near which they stood,
Thus, after a short silence, he resumed:
"This was a work for us; and now, my Son,
It is a work for me. But, lay one stone, —
Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own hands.
Nay, Boy, be of good hope; — we both may live
To see a better day. At eighty-four
I still am strong and hale; — do thou thy part;
I will do mine. — I will begin again
With many tasks that were resigned to thee:
Up to the heights, and in among the storms,
Will I without thee go again, and do
All works which I was wont to do alone,
Before I knew thy face. — Heaven bless thee, Boy!
Thy heart these two weeks has been beating fast
With many hopes; it should be so; — yes — yes —
I knew that thou could'st never have a wish
To leave me, Luke: thou hast been bound to me

Only by links of love: when thou art gone,
What will be left to us! — But, I forget
My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,
As I requested; and hereafter, Luke,
When thou art gone away, should evil men
Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,
And of this moment; hither turn thy thoughts,
And God will strengthen thee: amid all fear
And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou
May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers lived,
Who, being innocent, did for that cause
Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee well;
When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt see
A work which is not here: a covenant
'Twill be between us; but, whatever fate
Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,
And bear thy memory with me to the grave."
The Shepherd ended here; and Luke stooped down,
And, as his Father had requested, laid
The first stone of the Sheepfold. At the sight
The old Man's grief broke from him; to his heart
He pressed his Son, he kissèd him and wept;
And to the house together they returned.
— Hushed was that House in peace, or seeming peace,
Ere the night fell: — with morrow's dawn the Boy
Began his journey, and when he had reached
The public way, he put on a bold face;
And all the neighbors, as he passed their doors,
Came forth with wishes and with farewell prayers,
That followed him till he was out of sight.
A good report did from their Kinsman come,
Of Luke and his well-doing: and the Boy
Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,
Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were throughout
"The prettiest letters that were ever seen."
Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.
So, many months passed on: and once again
The Shepherd went about his daily work
With confident and cheerful thoughts; and now
Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour
He to that valley took his way, and there
Wrought at the Sheepfold. Meantime Luke began
To slacken in his duty; and, at length,
He in the dissolute city gave himself
To evil courses: ignominy and shame
Fell on him, so that he was driven at last
To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.
There is a comfort in the strength of love;
'Twill make a thing endurable, which else
Would overset the brain, or break the heart:
I have conversed with more than one who well
Remember the old Man, and what he was
Years after he had heard this heavy news.
His bodily frame had been from youth to age
Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks
He went, and still looked up to sun and cloud,
And listened to the wind; and, as before,
Performed all kinds of labor for his sheep,
And for the land, his small inheritance.
And to that hollow dell from time to time
Did he repair, to build the Fold of which
His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet
The pity which was then in every heart
For the old Man — and 'tis believed by all
That many and many a day he thither went,
And never lifted up a single stone.
There, by the Sheepfold, sometimes was he seen
Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,
Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.
The length of full seven years, from time to time,
He at the building of this Sheepfold wrought,
And left the work unfinished when he died.
Three years, or little more, did Isabel
Survive her Husband: at her death the estate
Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.
The Cottage which was named the EVENING STAR
Is gone; — the ploughshare has been through the ground
On which it stood; great changes have been wrought
In all the neighborhood: — yet the oak is left
That grew beside their door; and the remains
Of the unfinished Sheepfold may be seen
Beside the boisterous brook of Greenhead Ghyll.

1800.

## THE PRELUDE

The poem is dedicated to "a dear friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius," — Coleridge.

In this long poem Wordsworth meant to embody his views on "man, nature, and society," to quote his own words. It is his poetic auto-

biography and confession of faith, in which are found his reactions to the events in his life, and the development of his philosophy, especially his belief that love of nature leads to love of man, that knowledge comes not so much from thinking as from deep feeling, and that this lofty feeling arises most often when one is in communion with nature.

### *From* Book First

#### INTRODUCTION — CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL-TIME

And in the frosty season, when the sun
Was set, and visible for many a mile
The cottage windows blazed through twilight gloom,
I heeded not their summons: happy time
It was indeed for all of us — for me
It was a time of rapture! Clear and loud
The village clock tolled six, — I wheeled about,
Proud and exulting like an untired horse
That cares not for his home. All shod with steel,
We hissed along the polished ice in games
Confederate, imitative of the chase
And woodland pleasures, — the resounding horn,
The pack loud chiming, and the hunted hare.
So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
And not a voice was idle; with the din
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud;
The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron; while far distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars
Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the west
The orange sky of evening died away.
Not seldom from the uproar I retired
Into a silent bay, or sportively
Glanced sideway, leaving the tumultuous throng,
To cut across the reflex of a star
That fled, and, flying still before me, gleamed
Upon the glassy plain; and oftentimes,
When we had given our bodies to the wind,
And all the shadowy banks on either side
Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still
The rapid line of motion, then at once
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs
Wheeled by me — even as if the earth had rolled
With visible motion her diurnal round!
Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

### *From* Book Ninth

#### RESIDENCE IN FRANCE

A band of military Officers,
Then stationed in the city, were the chief
Of my associates: some of these wore swords
That had been seasoned in the wars, and all
Were men well-born; the chivalry of France.
In age and temper differing, they had yet
One spirit ruling in each heart; alike
(Save only one, hereafter to be named)
Were bent upon undoing what was done:
This was their rest and only hope; therewith
No fear had they of bad becoming worse,
For worst to them was come; nor would have stirred,
Or deemed it worth a moment's thought to stir,
In anything, save only as the act
Looked thitherward. One, reckoning by years,
Was in the prime of manhood, and erewhile
He had sat lord in many tender hearts;
Though heedless of such honors now, and changed:
His temper was quite mastered by the times,
And they had blighted him, had eaten away
The beauty of his person, doing wrong
Alike to body and to mind: his port,
Which once had been erect and open, now
Was stooping and contracted, and a face,
Endowed by Nature with her fairest gifts
Of symmetry and light and bloom, expressed,
As much as any that was ever seen,
A ravage out of season, made by thoughts
Unhealthy and vexatious. With the hour,
That from the press of Paris duly brought
Its freight of public news, the fever came,
A punctual visitant, to shake this man,
Disarmed his voice and fanned his yellow cheek
Into a thousand colors; while he read,
Or mused, his sword was haunted by his touch
Continually, like an uneasy place
In his own body. 'Twas in truth an hour
Of universal ferment; mildest men
Were agitated; and commotions, strife
Of passion and opinion, filled the walls
Of peaceful houses with unquiet sounds.
The soil of common life was, at that time,
Too hot to tread upon. Oft said I then,
And not then only, "What a mockery this
Of history, the past and that to come!
Now do I feel how all men are deceived,

Reading of nations and their works, in faith,
Faith given to vanity and emptiness;
Oh! laughter for the page that would reflect
To future times the face of what now is!"
The land all swarmed with passion, like a plain
Devoured by locusts, — Carra, Gorsas, — add
A hundred other names, forgotten now,
Nor to be heard of more; yet, they were powers,
Like earthquakes, shocks repeated day by day,
And felt through every nook of town and field.

. . . . . .

Meantime, day by day, the roads
Were crowded with the bravest youth of France,
And all the promptest of her spirits, linked
In gallant soldiership, and posting on
To meet the war upon her frontier bounds.
Yet at this very moment do tears start
Into mine eyes: I do not say I weep —
I wept not then, — but tears have dimmed my sight,
In memory of the farewells of that time,
Domestic severings, female fortitude
At dearest separation, patriot love
And self-devotion, and terrestrial hope,
Encouraged with a martyr's confidence;
Even files of strangers merely seen but once,
And for a moment, men from far with sound
Of music, martial tunes, and banners spread,
Entering the city, here and there a face,
Or person, singled out among the rest,
Yet still a stranger and beloved as such;
Even by these passing spectacles my heart
Was oftentimes uplifted, and they seemed
Arguments sent from Heaven to prove the cause
Good, pure, which no one could stand up against,
Who was not lost, abandoned, selfish, proud,
Mean, miserable, wilfully depraved,
Hater perverse of equity and truth.

Among that band of Officers was one,
Already hinted at, of other mold —
A patriot, thence rejected by the rest,
And with an oriental loathing spurned,
As of a different caste. A meeker man
Than this lived never, nor a more benign,
Meek though enthusiastic. Injuries
Made *him* more gracious, and his nature then
Did breathe its sweetness out most sensibly,
As aromatic flowers on Alpine turf,
When foot hath crushed them. He through the events
Of that great change wandered in perfect faith,
As through a book, an old romance, or tale
Of Fairy, or some dream of actions wrought
Behind the summer clouds. By birth he ranked
With the most noble, but unto the poor
Among mankind he was in service bound,
As by some tie invisible, oaths professed
To a religious order. Man he loved
As man; and, to the mean and the obscure,
And all the homely in their homely works,
Transferred a courtesy which had no air
Of condescension; but did rather seem
A passion and a gallantry, like that
Which he, a soldier, in his idler day
Had paid to woman: somewhat vain he was
Or seemed so, yet it was not vanity,
But fondness, and a kind of radiant joy
Diffused around him, while he was intent
On works of love or freedom, or revolved
Complacently the progress of a cause,
Whereof he was a part: yet this was meek
And placid, and took nothing from the man
That was delightful. Oft in solitude
With him did I discourse about the end
Of civil government, and its wisest forms;
Of ancient loyalty, and chartered rights,
Custom and habit, novelty and change;
Of self-respect, and virtue in the few
For patrimonial honor set apart,
And ignorance in the laboring multitude.
For he, to all intolerance indisposed,
Balanced these contemplations in his mind;
And I, who at that time was scarcely dipped
Into the turmoil, bore a sounder judgment
Than later days allowed; carried about me,
With less alloy to its integrity,
The experience of past ages, as, through help
Of books and common life, it makes sure way
To youthful minds, by objects over near
Not pressed upon, nor dazzled or misled
By struggling with the crowd for present ends.

But though not deaf, nor obstinate to find
Error without excuse upon the side
Of them who strove against us, more delight
We took, and let this freely be confessed,
In painting to ourselves the miseries
Of royal courts, and that voluptuous life
Unfeeling, where the man who is of soul
The meanest thrives the most; where dignity,
True personal dignity, abideth not;
A light, a cruel, and vain world cut off
From the natural inlets of just sentiment,

From lowly sympathy and chastening truth;
Where good and evil interchange their names,
And thirst for bloody spoils abroad is paired
With vice at home. We added dearest themes —
Man and his noble nature, as it is
The gift which God has placed within his power,
His blind desires and steady faculties
Capable of clear truth, the one to break
Bondage, the other to build liberty
On firm foundations, making social life,
Through knowledge spreading and imperishable,
As just in regulation, and as pure
As individual in the wise and good.

We summoned up the honorable deeds
Of ancient Story, thought of each bright spot,
That would be found in all recorded time,
Of truth preserved and error passed away;
Of single spirits that catch the flame from Heaven,
And how the multitudes of men will feed
And fan each other; thought of sects, how keen
They are to put the appropriate nature on,
Triumphant over every obstacle
Of custom, language, country, love, or hate,
And what they do and suffer for their creed;
How far they travel, and how long endure;
How quickly mighty Nations have been formed,
From least beginnings; how, together locked
By new opinions, scattered tribes have made
One body, spreading wide as clouds in heaven.
To aspirations then of our own minds
Did we appeal; and, finally, beheld
A living confirmation of the whole
Before us, in a people from the depth
Of shameful imbecility uprisen,
Fresh as the morning star. Elate we looked
Upon their virtues; saw, in rudest men,
Self-sacrifice the firmest; generous love,
And continence of mind, and sense of right,
Uppermost in the midst of fiercest strife.

? 1799.

### *From* Book Eleventh
#### France (*concluded*)

O pleasant exercise of hope and joy![1]
For mighty were the auxiliars which then stood
Upon our side, us who were strong in love!
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven! — O times,
In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
Of custom, law, and statute took at once
The attraction of a country in romance!
When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights,
When most intent on making of herself
A prime enchantress — to assist the work,
Which then was going forward in her name!
Not favored spots alone, but the whole earth
The beauty wore of promise — that which sets
(As at some moments might not be unfelt
Among the bowers of Paradise itself)
The budding rose above the rose full-blown.
What temper at the prospect did not wake
To happiness unthought of? The inert
Were roused, and lively natures rapt away!
They who had fed their childhood upon dreams,
The playfellows of fancy, — who had made
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and strength
Their ministers, — who in lordly wise had stirred
Among the grandest objects of the sense,
And dealt with whatsoever they found there
As if they had within some lurking right
To wield it; — they, too, who of gentle mood
Had watched all gentle motions, and to these
Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers more mild,
And in the region of their peaceful selves; —
Now was it that both found, the meek and lofty
Did both find, helpers to their hearts' desire,
And stuff at hand, plastic as they could wish;
Were called upon to exercise their skill,
Not in Utopia, subterranean fields,
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where!
But in the very world, which is the world
Of all of us, — the place where, in the end,
We find our happiness, or not at all!

1805.

[1] These lines were originally published in Coleridge's magazine, *The Friend*, with the title, *French Revolution, as it Appeared to Enthusiasts at its Commencement.*

## MY HEART LEAPS UP

"Written at Town-end, Grasmere." — (Wordsworth.)

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began,
So is it now I am a man,

So be it when I shall grow old
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man:
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.[1]

1802.

## TO THE CUCKOO

"Composed in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere." — (Wordsworth.)

O blithe New-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice.
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear,
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the vale,
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my schoolboy days
I listened to; that cry
Which made me look a thousand ways,
In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessed Bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faery place,
That is fit home for thee!

1804.

## RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE

"Written at Town-end, Grasmere. This old Man I met a few hundred yards from my cottage; and the account of him is taken from his own mouth. I was in the state of feeling described in the beginning of the poem, while crossing over Barton Fell from Mr. Clarkson's, at the foot of Ullswater, towards Askham. The image of the hare I then observed on the ridge of the Fell." — (Wordsworth.)

There was a roaring in the wind all night;
The rain came heavily and fell in floods;
But now the sun is rising calm and bright;
The birds are singing in the distant woods;
Over his own sweet voice the stock-dove broods;
The jay makes answer as the magpie chatters;
And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of waters.

All things that love the sun are out of doors;
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;
The grass is bright with rain-drops; — on the moors
The hare is running races in her mirth;
And with her feet she from the plashy earth
Raises a mist; that, glittering in the sun,
Runs with her all the way, wherever she doth run.

I was a Traveller then upon the moor;
I saw the hare that raced about with joy;
I heard the woods and distant waters roar;
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy:
The pleasant season did my heart employ:
My old remembrances went from me wholly;
And all the ways of men, so vain and melancholy.

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might
Of joy in minds that can no further go,
As high as we have mounted in delight
In our dejection do we sink as low;
To me that morning did it happen so;
And fears and fancies thick upon me came;
Dim sadness, and blind thoughts, I knew not, nor could name.

I heard the skylark warbling in the sky;
And I bethought me of the playful hare:
Even such a happy child of earth am I;
Even as these blissful creatures do I fare;
Far from the world I walk, and all from care
But there may come another day to me, —
Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and poverty.

My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
As if life's business were a summer mood;

[1] I.e. reverence for God as He appears in nature.

As if all needful things would come unsought
To genial faith, still rich in genial good;
But how can he expect that others should
Build for him, sow for him, and at his call
Love him, who for himself will take no heed at all?

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous Boy,
The sleepless soul that perished in his pride;
Of him [1] who walked in glory and in joy,
Following his plough, along the mountain-side:
By our own spirits we are deified:
We Poets in our youth begin in gladness;
But thereof come in the end despondency and madness.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,
A leading from above, a something given,
Yet it befell, that, in this lonely place,
When I with these untoward thoughts had striven,
Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven,
I saw a man before me unawares:
The oldest man he seemed that ever wore gray hairs.

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
Couched on the bald top of an eminence,
Wonder to all who do the same espy,
By what means it could thither come, and whence:
So that it seems a thing endued with sense;—
Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a shelf
Of rock or sand reposeth, there to sun itself;—

Such seemed this man, not all alive nor dead,
Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age:
His body was bent double, feet and head
Coming together in life's pilgrimage;
As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage
Of sickness felt by him in times long past,
A more than human weight upon his frame had cast.

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and pale face,
Upon a long gray staff of shaven wood:
And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,
Upon the margin of that moorish flood
Motionless as a cloud the old man stood,
That heareth not the loud winds when they call,
And moveth all together, if it move at all.

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond
Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look
Upon that muddy water, which he conned,
As if he had been reading in a book:
And now a stranger's privilege I took;
And, drawing to his side, to him did say,
"This morning gives us promise of a glorious day."

A gentle answer did the old man make,
In courteous speech which forth he slowly drew;
And him with further words I thus bespake:
"What occupation do you there pursue?
This is a lonesome place for one like you."
Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise
Broke from the sable orbs of his yet vivid eyes.
His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,
But each in solemn order followed each,
With something of a lofty utterance drest,—
Choice word and measured phrase, above the reach
Of ordinary men; a stately speech;
Such as grave livers do in Scotland use,
Religious men, who give to God and man their dues.

He told, that to these waters he had come
To gather leeches, being old and poor:
Employment hazardous and wearisome!
And he had many hardships to endure:
From pond to pond he roamed, from moor to moor,
Housing, with God's good help, by choice or chance;
And in this way he gained an honest maintenance.

The old man still stood talking by my side;
But now his voice to me was like a stream
Scarce heard; nor word from word could I divide;
And the whole body of the man did seem
Like one whom I had met with in a dream;
Or like a man from some far region sent,
To give me human strength, by apt admonishment.

My former thoughts returned: the fear that kills
And hope that is unwilling to be fed;
Cold, pain, and labor, and all fleshly ills;
And mighty poets in their misery dead.
— Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,
My question eagerly did I renew,
"How is it that you live, and what is it you do?"

[1] Burns.

He with a smile did then his words repeat;
And said, that, gathering leeches, far and wide
He travelled; stirring thus about his feet
The waters of the pools where they abide.
"Once I could meet with them on every side;
But they have dwindled long by slow decay;
Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may."

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
The old man's shape, and speech, — all troubled me:
In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
About the weary moors continually,
Wandering about alone and silently.
While I these thoughts within myself pursued,
He, having made a pause, the same discourse renewed.

And soon with this he other matter blended,
Cheerfully uttered, with demeanor kind,
But stately in the main; and when he ended,
I could have laughed myself to scorn, to find
In that decrepit man so firm a mind.
"God," said I, "be my help and stay secure;
I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely moor!"

1802.

## COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, SEPTEMBER 3, 1802

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning: silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky, —
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendor valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

1802.

## COMPOSED BY THE SEASIDE NEAR CALAIS, AUGUST 1802

Fair Star of evening, Splendor of the west,
Star of my Country! — on the horizon's brink
Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to sink
On England's bosom; yet well pleased to rest,
Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest
Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I think,
Should'st be my Country's emblem; and should'st wink,
Bright Star! with laughter on her banners, drest
In thy fresh beauty. There! that dusky spot
Beneath thee, that is England; there she lies.
Blessings be on you both! one hope, one lot,
One life, one glory! — I, with many a fear
For my dear Country, many heartfelt sighs,
Among men who do not love her, linger here.

1802.

## IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING CALM AND FREE

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea:
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder — everlastingly.
Dear Child! [1] dear Girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;
And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

1802.

## ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC [2]

Once did She hold the gorgeous East in fee
And was the safeguard of the West; the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest child of Liberty.
She was a maiden city, bright and free;
No guile seduced, no force could violate;
And when she took unto herself a mate,
She must espouse [3] the everlasting Sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay, —
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reached its final day

1 Wordsworth's French daughter, Caroline.
2 By Napoleon, in 1797.
3 Referring to the annual ceremony when the Doge of Venice married the Adriatic by tossing a ring into its waters.

Men are we, and must grieve when even the shade
Of that which once was great is passed away.
1802.

## TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE[1]

Toussaint, the most unhappy man of men!
Whether the whistling Rustic tend his plough
Within thy hearing, or thy head be now
Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless den; —
O miserable Chieftain! where and when
Wilt thou find patience? Yet die not; do thou
Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow:
Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,
Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left behind
Powers that will work for thee; air, earth, and skies;
There's not a breathing of the common wind
That will forget thee; thou hast great allies;
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable mind.
1802.

## NEAR DOVER, SEPTEMBER 1802

Inland, within a hollow vale, I stood;
And saw, while sea was calm and air was clear,
The coast of France — the coast of France how near!
Drawn almost into frightful neighborhood.
I shrunk; for verily the barrier flood
Was like a lake, or river bright and fair,
A span of waters; yet what power is there!
What mightiness for evil and for good!
Even so doth God protect us if we be
Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters roll,
Strength to the brave, and Power, and Deity;
Yet in themselves are nothing! One decree
Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the soul
Only, the Nations shall be great and free.
1802

## WRITTEN IN LONDON, 1802

"This was written immediately after my return from France to London, when I could not but be struck, as here described, with the vanity and parade of our own country, especially in great towns and cities, as contrasted with the quiet, and I may say the desolation, that the revolution had produced in France. This must be borne in mind, or else the reader may think that in this and the succeeding Sonnets I have exaggerated the mischief engendered and fostered among us by undisturbed wealth. It would not be easy to conceive with what a depth of feeling I entered into the struggle carried on by the Spaniards for their deliverance from the usurped power of the French. Many times have I gone from Allan Bank in Grasmere vale, where we were then residing, to the top of the Raise-gap as it is called, so late as two o'clock in the morning, to meet the carrier bringing the newspaper from Keswick. Imperfect traces of the state of mind in which I then was may be found in my Tract on the Convention of Cintra, as well as in these Sonnets." — (Wordsworth.)

O Friend! I know not which way I must look
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest
To think that now our life is only drest
For show; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,
Or groom! — We must run glittering like a brook
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest;
The wealthiest man among us is the best:
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry; and these we adore:
Plain living and high thinking are no more:
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws.

## LONDON, 1802

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men:
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea,
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free;
So didst thou travel on life's common way
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

## TO THE DAISY

"Composed in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere." — (Wordsworth.)

With little here to do or see
Of things that in the great world be,

[1] The Haitian general, son of African slaves, who abolished slavery on the island of Santo Domingo. After a successful resistance to the French, he was captured in 1801 and imprisoned in Paris, where he died the following year, shortly after Wordsworth's sonnet was written.

Sweet Daisy! oft I talk to thee
For thou art worthy,
Thou unassuming Common-place
Of Nature, with that homely face,
And yet with something of a grace
Which Love makes for thee!

Oft on the dappled turf at ease
I sit and play with similes,
Loose types of things through all degrees,
Thoughts of thy raising;
And many a fond and idle name
I give to thee, for praise or blame
As is the humor of the game,
While I am gazing.

A nun demure, of lowly port;
Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,
In thy simplicity the sport
Of all temptations;
A queen in crown of rubies drest;
A starveling in a scanty vest;
Are all, as seems to suit thee best,
Thy appellations.

A little Cyclops, with one eye
Staring to threaten and defy,
That thought comes next — and instantly
The freak is over,
The shape will vanish, and behold!
A silver shield with boss of gold
That spreads itself, some faery bold
In fight to cover.

I see thee glittering from afar —
And then thou art a pretty star,
Not quite so fair as many are
In heaven above thee!
Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest; —
May peace come never to his nest
Who shall reprove thee!

Sweet Flower! for by that name at last
When all my reveries are past
I call thee, and to that cleave fast,
Sweet silent Creature!
That breath'st with me in sun and air,
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
My heart with gladness, and a share
Of thy meek nature!

1802.

## WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN MEMORY

When I have borne in memory what has tamed
Great nations; how ennobling thoughts depart
When men change swords for ledgers, and
desert
The student's bower for gold, — some fears
unnamed
I had, my Country! — am I to be blamed?
Now, when I think of thee, and what thou
art,
Verily, in the bottom of my heart
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
For dearly must we prize thee; we who find
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;
And I by my affection was beguiled:
What wonder if a Poet now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

1802.

## AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS
### 1803

"For illustration, see my Sister's Journal." — (Wordsworth.)

SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH

I shiver, Spirit fierce and bold,
At thought of what I now behold:
As vapors breathed from dungeons cold,
Strike pleasure dead,
So sadness comes from out the mould
Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,
And thou forbidden to appear?
As if it were thyself that's here
I shrink with pain;
And both my wishes and my fear
Alike are vain.

Off weight — nor press on weight! — away
Dark thoughts! — they came, but not to stay;
With chastened feelings would I pay
The tribute due
To him, and aught that hides his clay
From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth
He sang, his genius "glinted" forth,
Rose like a star that touching earth,
For so it seems,
Doth glorify its humble birth
With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,
The struggling heart, where be they now?
Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,
The prompt, the brave,

Slept, with the obscurest, in the low
And silent grave.

I mourned with thousands, but as one
More deeply grieved, for He was gone
Whose light I hailed when first it shone,
And showed my youth
How Verse may build a princely throne
On humble truth.

Alas! where'er the current tends,
Regret pursues and with it blends, —
Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends
By Skiddaw [1] seen, —
Neighbors we were, and loving friends
We might have been;

True friends though diversely inclined;
But heart with heart and mind with mind,
Where the main fibres are entwined,
Through Nature's skill,
May even by contraries be joined
More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow;
Thou "poor Inhabitant below,"
At this dread moment — even so —
Might we together
Have sat and talked where gowans [2] blow,
Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been placed
Within my reach; of knowledge graced
By fancy what a rich repast!
But why go on? —
Oh! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,
His grave grass-grown.

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,
(Not three weeks past the Stripling died,)
Lies gathered to his Father's side,
Soul-moving sight!
Yet one to which is not denied
Some sad delight:

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed
Hath early found among the dead,
Harbored where none can be misled,
Wronged, or distrest;
And surely here it may be said
That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace
Checked oft-times in a devious race,
May He who halloweth the place
Where Man is laid
Receive thy Spirit in the embrace
For which it prayed!

Sighing I turned away; but ere
Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear,
Music that sorrow comes not near,
A ritual hymn,
Chaunted in love that casts out fear
By Seraphim.

[1] A mountain in Cumberland, not far from Scotland.
[2] daisies.

## THE SOLITARY REAPER

This and the preceding poem were written in Scotland during the tour that Wordsworth made with his sister and Coleridge.

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again!

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending; —
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore
Long after it was heard no more.

1803.

## SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT

[1] Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The germ of this poem was four lines composed as a part of the verse on the Highland Girl. Though

beginning in this way, it was written from my heart, as is sufficiently obvious." — (Wordsworth.)

She was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair;
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful dawn;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit yet a Woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin-liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food,
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death:
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect Woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel-light.

1804.

## I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD

"Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The Daffodils grew and still grow on the margin of Ullswater, and probably may be seen to this day as beautiful in the month of March, nodding their golden heads beside the dancing and foaming waves." — (Wordsworth.)

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed — and gazed — but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

1804.

## ELEGIAC STANZAS

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE CASTLE IN A STORM, PAINTED BY SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT

"Sir George Beaumont painted two pictures of this subject, one of which he gave to Mrs. Wordsworth, saying she ought to have it; but Lady Beaumont interfered, and after Sir George's death she gave it to Sir Uvedale Price, in whose house at Foxley I have seen it." — (Wordsworth.)

I was thy neighbor once, thou rugged Pile!
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee:
I saw thee every day; and all the while
Thy form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air!
So like, so very like, was day to day!
Whene'er I looked, thy image still was there;
It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm! it seemed no sleep;
No mood, which season takes away, or brings:
I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle things.

Ah! then, if mine had been the Painter's hand,
To express what then I saw; and add the gleam,
The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile,
Amid a world how different from this!
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile;
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house divine
Of peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven; —
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine,
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such picture would I at that time have made:
And seen the soul of truth in every part,
A steadfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been, — 'tis so no more;
I have submitted to a new control;
A power is gone, which nothing can restore;
A deep distress hath humanized my soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea, and be what I have been:
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old;
This, which I know, I speak with mind serene.

Then, Beaumont, friend! who would have been the friend,
If he had lived, of him[1] whom I deplore,
This work of thine I blame not, but commend;
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

Oh, 'tis a passionate work! — yet wise and well,
Well chosen is the spirit that is here;
That hulk which labors in the deadly swell,
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear!

And this huge castle, standing here sublime,
I love to see the look with which it braves,
Cased in the unfeeling armor of old time,
The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
Housed in a dream, at distance from the kind!
Such happiness, wherever it be known,
Is to be pitied; for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be borne!
Such sights, or worse, as are before me here.
Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

1805.

[1] Wordsworth's brother John, a sea-captain, who was lost with his ship in 1805.

## ODE TO DUTY

"This ode is on the model of Gray's Ode to Adversity, which is copied from Horace's Ode to Fortune. Many and many a time have I been twitted by my wife and sister for having forgotten this dedication of myself to the stern lawgiver. Transgressor indeed I have been, from hour to hour, from day to day: I would fain hope, however, not more flagrantly or in a worse way than most of my tuneful brethren. But these last words are in a wrong strain. We should be rigorous to ourselves and forbearing, if not indulgent, to others, and, if we make comparisons at all, it ought to be with those who have morally excelled us.

"'Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eo perductus, ut non tantum recte facere possim, sed nisi recte facere non possim.'" — (Wordsworth.)

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free,
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad hearts! without reproach or blot,
Who do thy work, and know it not:
Oh! if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power! around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright
And happy will our nature be
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.
And they a blissful course may hold
Ev'n now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried,
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust:
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred

The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control,
But in the quietness of thought:
Me this unchartered freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance-desires:
My hopes no more must change their name;
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face:
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the Stars from wrong;
And the most ancient Heavens, through Thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
O let my weakness have an end!
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And in the light of truth thy Bondman let me live.

1805.

## TO A SKYLARK

Up with me! up with me into the clouds!
For thy song, Lark, is strong;
Up with me! up with me into the clouds!
Singing, singing,
With clouds and sky about thee ringing,
Lift me, guide me till I find
That spot which seems so to thy mind!

I have walked through wildernesses dreary,
And to-day my heart is weary;
Had I now the wings of a Faery,
Up to thee would I fly.
There is madness about thee, and joy divine
In that song of thine;
Lift me, guide me high and high
To thy banqueting-place in the sky.

Joyous as morning,
Thou art laughing and scorning;
Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest,
And, though little troubled with sloth,
Drunken Lark! thou wouldst be loth
To be such a traveller as I.
Happy, happy liver,
With a soul as strong as a mountain river
Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver,
Joy and jollity be with us both!

Alas! my journey, rugged and uneven,
Through prickly moors or dusty ways must wind;
But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,
As full of gladness and as free of heaven,
I, with my fate contented, will plod on,
And hope for higher raptures, when life's day is done.

1805.

## CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR

"The course of the great war with the French naturally fixed one's attention upon the military character, and, to the honor of our country, there were many illustrious instances of the qualities that constitute its highest excellence. Lord Nelson carried most of the virtues that the trials he was exposed to in his department of the service necessarily call forth and sustain, if they do not produce the contrary vices. But his public life was stained with one great crime, so that, though many passages of these lines were suggested by what was generally known as excellent in his conduct, I have not been able to connect his name with the poem as I could wish, or even to think of him with satisfaction in reference to the idea of what a warrior ought to be. For the sake of such of my friends as may happen to read this note I will add, that many elements of the character here portrayed were found in my brother John, who perished by shipwreck as mentioned elsewhere. His messmates used to call him the Philosopher, from which it must be inferred that, the qualities and dispositions I allude to had not escaped their notice. He often expressed his regret, after the war had continued some time, that he had not chosen the Naval, instead of the East India Company's service, to which his family connection had led him. He greatly valued moral and religious instruction for youth, as tending to make good sailors. The best, he used to say, came from Scotland; the next to them, from the North of England, especially from Westmoreland and Cumberland, where thanks to the piety and local attachments of our ancestors, endowed, or, as they are commonly called, free, schools abound." — (Wordsworth.)

In the above lines Wordsworth has given his account of the genesis of the poem. His happy warrior, however, is not a military man in the narrow sense of the word. He is not a Nelson or a Wellington, but rather Wordsworth himself or his brother John. Note in the poem

the recurrence of some of Wordworth's favorite themes: the glories of childhood; nature and intuition as sources of wisdom; the insistence upon duty, especially in keeping to a trust or to a "law in calmness made"; and the emphasis upon moral goodness, simplicity, gentleness, and faith.

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to be?
—It is the generous spirit, who, when brought
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought:
Whose high endeavors are an inward light
That makes the path before him always bright:
Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn;
Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,
But makes his moral being his prime care;
Who, doomed to go in company with pain,
And fear, and bloodshed, miserable train!
Turns his necessity to glorious gain;
In face of these doth exercise a power
Which is our human nature's highest dower;
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
Of their bad influence, and their good receives:
By objects, which might force the soul to abate
Her feeling, rendered more compassionate;
Is placable, — because occasions rise
So often that demands such sacrifice;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
As tempted more; more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and distress;
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness:
—'Tis he whose law is reason; who depends
Upon that law as on the best of friends;
Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
To evil for a guard against worse ill,
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest;
He labors good on good to fix, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows:
— Who, if he rise to station of command,
Rises by open means; and there will stand
On honorable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire:
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim;
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
For wealth, or honors, or for worldly state;
Whom they must follow, on whose head must fall,
Like showers of manna, if they come at all:
Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
Is happy as a lover; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired;
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;
Or if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need:
— He who, though thus endued as with a sense
And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes;
Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be,
Are at his heart; and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve;
More brave for this, that he hath much to love: —
'Tis, finally, the man, who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a nation's eye,
Or left unthought of in obscurity, —
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not,
Plays, in the many games of life, that one
Where what he most doth value must be won:
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpast:
Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
Forever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
And leave a dead, unprofitable name,
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause, —
This is the happy Warrior; this is he
That every man in arms should wish to be.

1806.

## ODE ON INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY

### FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

"This was composed during my residence at Town-end, Grasmere. Two years at least passed between the writing of the four first stanzas and the remaining part. To the attentive and competent reader the whole sufficiently explains itself; but there may be no harm in adverting here to particular feelings or *experiences* of my own mind on which the structure of the poem partly rests. Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I have said elsewhere —

> 'A simple child,
> That lightly draws its breath,
> And feels its life in every limb,
> What should it know of death!' —

But it was not so much from feelings of animal vivacity that *my* difficulty came as from a sense of the indomitableness of the Spirit within me. I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost to persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated, in something of the same way, to heaven. With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality. At that time I was afraid of such processes. In later periods of life I have deplored, as we have all reason to do, a subjugation of an opposite character, and have rejoiced over the remembrances, as is expressed in the lines —

> 'Obstinate questionings
> Of sense and outward things,
> Fallings from us, vanishings;' etc.

To that dream-like vividness and splendor which invest objects of sight in childhood, every one, I believe, if he would look back, could bear testimony, and I need not dwell upon it here: but having in the poem regarded it as presumptive evidence of a prior state of existence, I think it right to protest against a conclusion, which has given pain to some good and pious persons, that I meant to inculcate such a belief. It is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith, as more than an element in our instincts of immortality. But let us bear in mind that, though the idea is not advanced in revelation, there is nothing there to contradict it, and the fall of Man presents an analogy in its favor. Accordingly, a pre-existent state has entered into the popular creeds of many nations; and, among all persons acquainted with classic literature, is known as an ingredient in Platonic philosophy. Archimedes said that he could move the world if he had a point where to rest his machine. Who has not felt the same aspirations as regards the world of his own mind? Having to wield some of its elements when I was impelled to write this poem on the 'Immortality of the Soul,' I took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorising me to make for my purpose the best use of it I could as a poet

> 'The Child is Father of the Man;
> And I could wish my days to be
> Bound each to each by natural piety.'
>
> (Wordsworth.)

There was a time when meadow, grove, and
stream,
The earth, and every common sight
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore; —
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see
no more.

The rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the rose;
The moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are
bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the
earth.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong.
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the
steep; —
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong:
I hear the echoes through the mountains
throng,
The winds come to me from the fields of
sleep,
And all the earth is gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every beast keep holiday; —
Thou child of joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou
happy
Shepherd-boy!

Ye blesséd Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel — I feel it all.
Oh evil day! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning
This sweet May-morning;
And the children are culling
On every side
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm
And the babe leaps up on his mother's arm: —
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
— But there's a tree, of many, one,
A single field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone:
The pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
And, even with something of a mother's mind
And no unworthy aim,
The homely nurse doth all she can
To make her foster-child, her inmate, Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' darling of a pigmy size!
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learnéd art;
A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
That life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy soul's immensity;
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal Mind, —
Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That Nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest,
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast: —
— Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts, before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
Are yet a master-light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,
Nor man nor boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence, in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither;
Can in a moment travel thither —
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then, sing ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We, in thought, will join your throng
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
Forbode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway:
I love the brooks which down their channels fret
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;
The innocent brightness of a new-born day
Is lovely yet;
The clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober coloring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

1802–06.

## THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for every thing, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. — Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn, —
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn.

1806.

## SONG AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE

UPON THE RESTORATION [1] OF LORD CLIFFORD,[2] THE SHEPHERD, TO THE ESTATES AND HONORS OF HIS ANCESTORS

"This poem was composed at Coleorton while I was walking to and fro along the path that led from Sir George Beaumont's Farm-house, where we resided, to the Hall which was building at that time." — (Wordsworth.)

High in the breathless Hall the Minstrel sate,
And Emont's murmur mingled with the Song. —
The words of ancient time I thus translate,
A festal strain that hath been silent long: —
"From town to town, from tower to tower,
The red rose [3] is a gladsome flower.
Her thirty years of winter past,
The red rose is revived at last;
She lifts her head for endless spring,
For everlasting blossoming:
Both roses flourish, red and white: [4]
In love and sisterly delight
The two that were at strife are blended,
And all old troubles now are ended. —
Joy! joy to both! but most to her
Who is the flower of Lancaster!
Behold her how She smiles to-day
On this great throng, this bright array!
Fair greeting doth she send to all
From every corner of the hall;
But chiefly from above the board
Where sits in state our rightful Lord,
A Clifford to his own restored!

They came with banner, spear, and shield,
And it was proved in Bosworth-field.[5]
Not long the Avenger was withstood, —
Earth helped him with the cry of blood:
St. George was for us, and the might
Of blessed Angels crowned the right.
Loud voice the Land has uttered forth,
We loudest in the faithful North:
Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,
Our streams proclaim a welcoming;
Our strong-abodes and castles see
The glory of their loyalty.
How glad is Skipton at this hour —
Though lonely, a deserted Tower;
Knight, squire, and yeoman, page and groom:
We have them at the feast of Brough'm.

How glad Pendragon — though the sleep
Of years be on her! — She shall reap
A taste of this great pleasure, viewing
As in a dream her own renewing.
Rejoiced is Brough, right glad I deem
Beside her little humble stream;
And she that keepeth watch and ward
Her statelier Eden's course to guard;
They both are happy at this hour,
Though each is but a lonely Tower: —
But here is perfect joy and pride
For one fair House by Emont's side,
This day, distinguished without peer
To see her Master and to cheer —
Him, and his Lady-mother dear!
Oh! it was a time forlorn
When the fatherless was born —
Give her wings that she may fly,
Or she sees her infant die!
Swords that are with slaughter wild
Hunt the Mother and the Child.
Who will take them from the light?
— Yonder is a man in sight —
Yonder is a house — but where?
No, they must not enter there.
To the caves, and to the brooks,
To the clouds of heaven she looks;
She is speechless, but her eyes
Pray in ghostly agonies.
Blissful Mary, Mother mild,
Maid and Mother undefiled,
Save a Mother and her Child!

Now who is he that bounds with joy
On Carrock's side, a Shepherd-boy?
No thoughts hath he but thoughts that pass
Light as the wind along the grass.
Can this be He who hither came
In secret, like a smothered flame?
O'er whom such thankful tears were shed
For shelter, and a poor man's bread!
God loves the Child; and God hath willed
That those dear words should be fulfilled,
The Lady's words, when forced away,
The last she to her Babe did say:
'My own, my own, thy Fellow-guest
I may not be; but rest thee, rest,
For lowly shepherd's life is best!'

Alas! when evil men are strong
No life is good, no pleasure long.
The Boy must part from Mosedale's groves,
And leave Blencathara's rugged coves,
And quit the flowers that summer brings
To Glenderamakin's lofty springs;
Must vanish, and his careless cheer
Be turned to heaviness and fear.
— Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld praise!
Hear it, good man, old in days!

1 When Henry VII became king.
2 He was forced to flee by the Yorkists during the War of the Roses, and for twenty-four years lived, deprived of his estates, as a shepherd.
3 The symbol or badge of the house of Lancaster.
4 I.e. the house of York.
5 Scene of the last battle in the War of the Roses, where Richard III was overthrown in 1485.

Thou tree of covert and of rest
For this young Bird that is distrest;
Among thy branches safe he lay,
And he was free to sport and play,
When falcons were abroad for prey.
A recreant harp, that sings of fear
And heaviness in Clifford's ear!
I said, when evil men are strong,
No life is good, no pleasure long,
A weak and cowardly untruth!
Our Clifford was a happy Youth,
And thankful through a weary time,
That brought him up to manhood's prime.
— Again he wanders forth at will,
And tends a flock from hill to hill:
His garb is humble; ne'er was seen
Such garb with such a noble mien;
Among the shepherd grooms no mate
Hath he, a Child of strength and state!
Yet lacks not friends for simple glee,
Nor yet for higher sympathy.
To his side the fallow-deer
Came, and rested without fear;
The eagle, lord of land and sea,
Stooped down to pay him fealty;
And both the undying fish that swim
Through Bowscale-tarn did wait on him;
The pair were servants of his eye
In their immortality;
And glancing, gleaming, dark or bright,
Moved to and fro, for his delight.
He knew the rocks which Angels haunt
Upon the mountains visitant;
He hath kenned them taking wing:
And into caves where Faeries sing
He hath entered; and been told
By Voices how men lived of old.
Among the heavens his eye can see
The face of thing that is to be;
And, if that men report him right,
His tongue could whisper words of might.
— Now another day is come,
Fitter hope, and nobler doom;
He hath thrown aside his crook,
And hath buried deep his book;
Armor rusting in his halls
On the blood of Clifford calls: —
'Quell the Scot,' exclaims the Lance —
Bear me to the heart of France,
Is the longing of the Shield —
Tell thy name, thou trembling Field;
Field of death, where'er thou be,
Groan thou with our victory!
Happy day, and mighty hour,
When our Shepherd, in his power,
Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,
To his ancestors restored
Like a re-appearing Star,
Like a glory from afar,
First shall head the flock of war!"

Alas! the impassioned minstrel did not know
How, by Heaven's grace, this Clifford's heart was framed,
How he, long forced in humble walks to go,
Was softened into feeling, soothed, and tamed.

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie;
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

In him the savage virtue of the Race,
Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were dead:
Nor did he change; but kept in lofty place
The wisdom which adversity had bred.

Glad were the vales, and every cottage hearth;
The Shepherd-lord was honored more and more;
And, ages after he was laid in earth,
"The good Lord Clifford" was the name he bore.

1807.

## LAODAMIA

"Written at Rydal Mount. The incident of the trees growing and withering put the subject into my thoughts, and I wrote with the hope of giving it a loftier tone than, so far as I know, has been given to it by any of the Ancients who have treated of it. It cost me more trouble than almost anything of equal length I have ever written." — (Wordsworth.)

"With sacrifice before the rising morn
Vows have I made by fruitless hope inspired;
And from the infernal Gods, 'mid shades forlorn
Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I required:
Celestial pity I again implore; —
Restore him to my sight — great Jove, restore!"

So speaking, and by fervent love endowed
With faith, the Suppliant heavenward lifts her hands;
While, like the sun emerging from a cloud,
Her countenance brightens — and her eye expands;

Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature grows;
And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror! what hath she perceived? — O joy!
What doth she look on? — whom doth she behold?
Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy?
His vital presence? his corporeal mold?
It is — if sense deceive her not — 'tis He!
And a God leads him, winged Mercury!

Mild Hermes spake — and touched her with his wand
That calms all fear: "Such grace hath crowned thy prayer,
Laodamía! that at Jove's command
Thy Husband walks the paths of upper air:
He comes to tarry with thee three hours' space;
Accept the gift, behold him face to face!"

Forth sprang the impassioned Queen her Lord to clasp;
Again that consummation she essayed;
But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp
As often as that eager grasp was made.
The Phantom parts — but parts to re-unite,
And re-assume his place before her sight.

"Protesiláus, lo! thy guide is gone!
Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy voice:
This is our palace, — yonder is thy throne;
Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on will rejoice.
Not to appal me have the gods bestowed
This precious boon; and blest a sad abode."

"Great Jove, Laodamía! doth not leave
His gifts imperfect: — Spectre though I be,
I am not sent to scare thee or deceive;
But in reward of thy fidelity.
And something also did my worth obtain;
For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain.

"Thou knowest, the Delphic oracle foretold
That the first Greek who touched the Trojan strand
Should die; but me the threat could not withhold:
A generous cause a victim did demand;
And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain;
A self-devoted chief — by Hector slain."

"Supreme of Heroes — bravest, noblest, best!
Thy matchless courage I bewail no more,
Which then, when tens of thousands were deprest
By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore;
Thou found'st — and I forgive thee — here thou art —
A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

"But thou, though capable of sternest deed,
Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave;
And he, whose power restores thee, hath decreed
Thou should'st elude the malice of the grave:
Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair
As when their breath enriched Thessalian air.

"No Spectre greets me, — no vain Shadow this;
Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my side!
Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial kiss
To me, this day, a second time thy bride!"
Jove frowned in heaven: the conscious Parcæ [1] threw
Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

"This visage tells thee that my doom is past:
Nor should the change be mourned, even if the joys
Of sense were able to return as fast
And surely as they vanish. Earth destroys
Those raptures duly — Erebus disdains:
Calm pleasures there abide — majestic pains.

"Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control
Rebellious passion: for the Gods approve
The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul;
A fervent, not ungovernable, love.
Thy transports moderate; and meekly mourn
When I depart, for brief is my sojourn —"

"Ah, wherefore? — Did not Hercules by force
Wrest from the guardian Monster of the tomb
Alcestis, a reanimated corse,
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal bloom?
Medea's spells dispersed the weight of years,
And Æson stood a youth 'mid youthful peers.

"The Gods to us are merciful — and they
Yet further may relent: for mightier far

1 Fates.

Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the sway
Of magic potent over sun and star,
Is love, though oft to agony distrest,
And though his favorite seat be feeble woman's breast.

"But if thou goest, I follow —" "Peace!" he said; —
She looked upon him and was calmed and cheered;
The ghastly color from his lips had fled;
In his deportment, shape, and mien, appeared
Elysian beauty, melancholy grace,
Brought from a pensive though a happy place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel
In worlds whose course is equable and pure;
No fears to beat away — no strife to heal —
The past unsighed for, and the future sure;
Spake of heroic acts in graver mood
Revived, with finer harmony pursued;

Of all that is most beauteous — imaged there
In happier beauty; more pellucid streams,
An ampler ether, a diviner air,
And fields invested with purpureal gleams;
Climes which the sun, who sheds the brightest day
Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which hath earned
That privilege by virtue. — "Ill," said he,
"The end of man's existence I discerned,
Who from ignoble games and revelry
Could draw, when we had parted, vain delight,
While tears were thy best pastime, day and night;

"And while my youthful peers before my eyes
(Each hero following his peculiar bent)
Prepared themselves for glorious enterprise
By martial sports, — or, seated in the tent,
Chieftains and kings in council were detained;
What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchained.

"The wished-for wind was given: — I then revolved
The oracle, upon the silent sea;
And, if no worthier led the way, resolved
That, of a thousand vessels, mine should be
The foremost prow in pressing to the strand, —
Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan sand.

"Yet bitter, oft-times bitter, was the pang
When of thy loss I thought, beloved Wife!
On thee too fondly did my memory hang,
And on the joys we shared in mortal life, —
The paths which we had trod — these fountains, flowers, —
My new-planned cities, and unfinished towers.

"But should suspense permit the Foe to cry
'Behold they tremble! — haughty their array.
Yet of their number no one dares to die?'
In soul I swept the indignity away:
Old frailties then recurred: — but lofty thought,
In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

"And Thou, though strong in love, art all too weak
In reason, in self-government too slow;
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek
Our blest re-union in the shades below.
The invisible world with thee hath sympathized;
Be thy affections raised and solemnized.

"Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend —
Seeking a higher object. Love was given,
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end;
For this the passion to excess was driven —
That self might be annulled: her bondage prove
The fetters of a dream, opposed to love." ——

Aloud she shrieked! for Hermes re-appears!
Round the dear Shade she would have clung, — 'tis vain:
The hours are past — too brief had they been years;
And him no mortal effort can detain:
Swift, toward the realms that know not earthly day,
He through the portal takes his silent way,
And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse she lay.

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reproved,
She perished; and, as for a wilful crime,
By the just Gods, whom no weak pity moved,
Was doomed to wear out her appointed time,
Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather flowers
Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.

— Yet tears to human suffering are due;
And mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown
Are mourned by man, and not by man alone,

As fondly he believes. — Upon the side
Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)
A knot of spiry trees for ages grew
From out the tomb of him for whom she died;
And ever, when such stature they had gained
That Ilium's walls were subject to their view,
The trees' tall summits withered at the sight;
A constant interchange of growth and blight.[1]

1814.

## COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING OF EXTRAORDINARY SPLENDOR AND BEAUTY

"Felt and in a great measure composed upon the little mount in front of our abode at Rydal." — (Wordsworth.)

1

Had this effulgence disappeared
With flying haste, I might have sent,
Among the speechless clouds, a look
Of blank astonishment;
But 'tis endued with power to stay,
And sanctify one closing day,
That frail Mortality may see —
What is? — ah no, but what *can* be!
Time was when field and watery cove
With modulated echoes rang,
While choirs of fervent Angels sang
Their vespers in the grove;
Or, crowning, star-like, each some sovereign height,
Warbled, for heaven above and earth below,
Strains suitable to both. — Such holy rite,
Methinks, if audibly repeated now
From hill or valley, could not move
Sublimer transport, purer love,
Than doth this silent spectacle — the gleam —
The shadow — and the peace supreme!

2

No sound is uttered, — but a deep
And solemn harmony pervades
The hollow vale from steep to steep,
And penetrates the glades.
Far-distant images draw nigh,
Called forth by wondrous potency
Of beamy radiance, that imbues,
Whate'er it strikes, with gem-like hues!
In vision exquisitely clear,
Herds range along the mountain side;
And glistening antlers are descried;
And gilded flocks appear.
Thine is the tranquil hour, purpureal Eve!
But long as god-like wish, or hope divine,
Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe
That this magnificence is wholly thine!
— From worlds not quickened by the sun
A portion of the gift is won;
An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is spread
On ground which British shepherds tread!

3

And, if there be whom broken ties
Afflict, or injuries assail,
Yon hazy ridges to their eyes
Present a glorious scale,
Climbing suffused with sunny air,
To stop — no record hath told where!
And tempting Fancy to ascend,
And with immortal Spirits blend!
— Wings at my shoulders seem to play;
But, rooted here, I stand and gaze
On those bright steps that heavenward raise
Their practicable way.
Come forth, ye drooping old men, look abroad,
And see to what fair countries ye are bound!
And if some traveller, weary of his road,
Hath slept since noon-tide on the grassy ground
Ye Genii! to his covert speed;
And wake him with such gentle heed
As may attune his soul to meet the dower
Bestowed on this transcendent hour!

4

Such hues from their celestial Urn
Were wont to stream before mine eye,
Where'er it wandered in the morn
Of blissful infancy.
This glimpse of glory, why renewed?
Nay, rather speak with gratitude;
For, if a vestige of those gleams
Survived, 'twas only in my dreams.
Dread Power! whom peace and calmness serve
No less than Nature's threatening voice,
If aught unworthy be my choice,
From THEE if I would swerve;
Oh, let thy grace remind me of the light
Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored;
Which, at this moment, on my waking sight
Appears to shine, by miracle restored;
My soul, though yet confined to earth,
Rejoices in a second birth!

[1] For the account of these long-lived trees, see Pliny's *Natural History*, lib. xvi. cap. 44; and for the features in the character of Protesilaus see the *Iphigenia in Aulis* of Euripides. Virgil places the Shade of Laodamia in a mournful region, among unhappy Lovers,

"—— His Laodamia,
It comes ——" (Wordsworth.)

— 'Tis past, the visionary splendor fades;
And night approaches with her shades.
1818.

## MUTABILITY [1]

From low to high doth dissolution climb,
And sink from high to low, along a scale
Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail;
A musical but melancholy chime,
Which they can hear who meddle not with crime,
Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.
Truth fails not; but her outward forms that bear
The longest date do melt like frosty rime,
That in the morning whitened hill and plain
And is no more; drop like the tower sublime
Of yesterday, which royally did wear
His crown of weeds, but could not even sustain
Some casual shout that broke the silent air,
Or the unimaginable touch of Time.
1821.

## INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE [1]

Tax not the royal Saint with vain expense,
With ill-matched aims the Architect who planned
(Albeit laboring for a scanty band
Of white-robed Scholars only) this immense
And glorious work of fine intelligence!
— Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely-calculated less or more: —
So deemed the man who fashioned for the sense
These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof
Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand cells
Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
Lingering — and wandering on as loth to die;
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
That they were born for immortality.
1821.

## THE TROSACHS

"As recorded in my sister's Journal, I had first seen the Trosachs in her and Coleridge's company. The sentiment that runs through this Sonnet was natural to the season in which I saw again this beautiful spot; but this and some other sonnets that follow were colored by the remembrance of my recent visit to Sir Walter Scott, and the melancholy errand on which he was going." — (Wordsworth.)

There's not a nook within this solemn Pass
But were an apt confessional for One
Taught by his summer spent, his autumn gone,
That Life is but a tale of morning grass
Withered at eve. From scenes of art which chase
That thought away, turn, and with watchful eyes
Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,
Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear than glass
Untouched, unbreathed upon: — Thrice happy quest,
If from a golden perch of aspen spray
(October's workmanship to rival May),
The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast
That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught lay,
Lulling the year, with all its cares, to rest!
1831.

## PREFACE TO *LYRICAL BALLADS*

### 1800

The discussion aroused by *Lyrical Ballads* on its first publication led Wordsworth to add a preface to the second edition in 1800, which he continued to revise until it received its final form in 1845. In it he attacks the false and artificial conventions to which poetry had been submitted, and expounds his own theories of poetic art. These theories are discussed with critical insight by Coleridge in *Biographia Literaria*, Chapters 14, 17, and 18. Standing at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century, as forerunner of the new poetry, the preface is one of the most important documents in English criticism.

The first Volume of these Poems has already been submitted to general perusal. It was published as an experiment, which, I hoped, might be of some use to ascertain how far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation, that sort of pleasure and that quantity of pleasure may be imparted, which a Poet may rationally endeavor to impart.

I had formed no very inaccurate estimate of the probable effect of those Poems: I flattered myself that they who should be pleased with them would read them with more than common pleasure; and, on the other hand, I was well aware, that by those who should dis-

[1] From the *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*.

like them they would be read with more than common dislike. The result has differed from my expectation in this only, that a greater number have been pleased than I ventured to hope I should please.

. . . . . .

Several of my Friends are anxious for the success of these Poems, from a belief that, if the views with which they were composed were indeed realized, a class of poetry would be produced, well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and not unimportant in the quality and in the multiplicity of its moral relations: and on this account they have advised me to prefix a systematic defence of the theory upon which the Poems were written. But I was unwilling to undertake the task, knowing that on this occasion the Reader would look coldly upon my arguments, since I might be suspected of having been principally influenced by the selfish and foolish hope of *reasoning* him into an approbation of these particular Poems: and I was still more unwilling to undertake the task, because adequately to display the opinions, and fully to enforce the arguments, would require a space wholly disproportionate to a preface. For, to treat the subject with the clearness and coherence of which it is susceptible, it would be necessary to give a full account of the present state of the public taste in this country, and to determine how far this taste is healthy or depraved; which, again, could not be determined without pointing out in what manner language and the human mind act and re-act on each other, and without retracing the revolutions, not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself. I have therefore altogether declined to enter regularly upon this defence; yet I am sensible that there would be some impropriety in abruptly obtruding upon the Public, without a few words of introduction, Poems so materially different from those upon which general approbation is at present bestowed.

It is supposed that by the act of writing in verse an Author makes a formal engagement that he will gratify certain known habits of association; that he not only thus apprises the Reader that certain classes of ideas and expressions will be found in his book, but that others will be carefully excluded. This exponent or symbol held forth by metrical language must in different eras of literature have excited very different expectations: for example, in the age of Catullus, Terence, and Lucretius, and that of Statius or Claudian; and in our own country, in the age of Shakespeare and Beaumont and Fletcher, and that of Donne and Cowley, or Dryden, or Pope. I will not take upon me to determine the exact import of the promise which, by the act of writing in verse, an Author in the present day makes to his reader; but it will undoubtedly appear to many persons that I have not fulfilled the terms of an engagement thus voluntarily contracted. They who have been accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to its conclusion, will, no doubt, frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness: they will look round for poetry, and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts can be permitted to assume that title. I hope, therefore, the reader will not censure me for attempting to state what I have proposed to myself to perform; and also (as far as the limits of a preface will permit) to explain some of the chief reasons which have determined me in the choice of my purpose: that at least he may be spared any unpleasant feeling of disappointment, and that I myself may be protected from one of the most dishonorable accusations which can be brought against an Author, namely, that of an indolence which prevents him from endeavoring to ascertain what is his duty, or, when his duty is ascertained, prevents him from performing it.

The principal object, then, proposed in these Poems, was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain coloring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect, and further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings;

and from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. The language, too, of these men is adopted (purified indeed from what appears to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust), because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions. Accordingly such a language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honor upon themselves and their art, in proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes and fickle appetites of their own creation.[1]

I cannot, however, be insensible to the present outcry against the triviality and meanness, both of thought and language, which some of my contemporaries have occasionally introduced into their metrical compositions; and I acknowledge that this defect, where it exists, is more dishonorable to the Writer's own character than false refinement or arbitrary innovation, though I should contend at the same time that it is far less pernicious in the sum of its consequences. From such verses the Poems in these volumes will be found distinguished at least by one mark of difference, that each of them has a worthy *purpose*. Not that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally conceived; but habits of meditation have, I trust, so prompted and regulated my feelings, as that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings, will be found to carry along with them a *purpose*. If this opinion be erroneous, I can have little right to the name of a Poet. For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: and though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representatives of all our past feelings; and as, by contemplating the relation of these general representatives to each other, we discover what is really important to men, so, by the repetition and continuance of this act, our feelings will be connected with important subjects, till at length, if we be originally possessed of much sensibility, such habits of mind will be produced that, by obeying blindly and mechanically the impulses of those habits, we shall describe objects, and utter sentiments, of such a nature, and in such connection with each other, that the understanding of the Reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affections strengthened and purified.

It has been said that each of these Poems has a purpose. Another circumstance must be mentioned which distinguishes these Poems from the popular Poetry of the day; it is this, that the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling.

A sense of false modesty shall not prevent me from asserting that the Reader's attention is pointed to this mark of distinction, far less for the sake of these particular Poems than from the general importance of the subject. The subject is indeed important! For the human mind is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants; and he must have a very faint perception of its beauty and dignity who does not know this, and who does not further know, that one being is elevated above another, in proportion as he possesses this capability. It has therefore appeared to me, that to endeavor to produce or enlarge this capability is one of the best services in which, at any period, a Writer can be engaged; but this service, excellent at all times, is especially so at the present day. For a multitude of causes, unknown to former times, are now acting with a combined force to blunt the discriminating powers of the mind, and, unfitting it for all voluntary exertion, to reduce it to a state of almost savage torpor. The most effective of these causes are the great national events which are daily taking place, and the increasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupations produces a craving for extraordinary

[1] It is worth while here to observe that the affecting parts of Chaucer are almost always expressed in language pure and universally intelligible even to this day. (Wordsworth.)

incident which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies. To this tendency of life and manners the literature and theatrical exhibitions of the country have conformed themselves. The invaluable works of our elder writers, I had almost said the works of Shakespeare and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German Tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse.—When I think upon this degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation, I am almost ashamed to have spoken of the feeble endeavor made in these volumes to counteract it; and, reflecting upon the magnitude of the general evil, I should be oppressed with no dishonorable melancholy, had I not a deep impression of certain inherent and indestructible qualities of the human mind, and likewise of certain powers in the great and permanent objects that act upon it, which are equally inherent and indestructible; and were there not added to this impression a belief that the time is approaching when the evil will be systematically opposed by men of greater powers, and with far more distinguished success.

Having dwelt thus long on the subjects and aim of these Poems, I shall request the Reader's permission to apprise him of a few circumstances relating to their *style*, in order, among other reasons, that he may not censure me for not having performed what I never attempted. The Reader will find that personifications of abstract ideas rarely occur in these volumes, and are utterly rejected as an ordinary device to elevate the style and raise it above prose. My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men; and assuredly such personifications do not make any natural or regular part of that language. They are, indeed, a figure of speech occasionally prompted by passion, and I have made use of them as such; but have endeavored utterly to reject them as a mechanical device of style, or as a family language which Writers in metre seem to lay claim to by prescription. I have wished to keep the Reader in the company of flesh and blood, persuaded that by so doing I shall interest him. Others who pursue a different track will interest him likewise; I do not interfere with their claim, but wish to prefer a claim of my own. There will also be found in these volumes little of what is usually called poetic diction; as much pains has been taken to avoid it as is ordinarily taken to produce it; this has been done for the reason already alleged, to bring my language near to the language of men; and further, because the pleasure which I have proposed to myself to impart is of a kind very different from that which is supposed by many persons to be the proper object of poetry. Without being culpably particular, I do not know how to give my Reader a more exact notion of the style in which it was my wish and intention to write, than by informing him that I have at all times endeavored to look steadily at my subject; consequently there is, I hope, in these Poems little falsehood of description, and my ideas are expressed in language fitted to their respective importance. Something must have been gained by this practice, as it is friendly to one property of all good poetry, namely, good sense; but it has necessarily cut me off from a large portion of phrases and figures of speech which from father to son have long been regarded as the common inheritance of Poets. I have also thought it expedient to restrict myself still further, having abstained from the use of many expressions, in themselves proper and beautiful, but which have been foolishly repeated by bad Poets, till such feelings of disgust are connected with them as it is scarcely possible by any art of association to overpower.

If in a poem there should be found a series of lines, or even a single line, in which the language, though naturally arranged, and according to the strict laws of metre, does not differ from that of prose, there is a numerous class of critics who, when they stumble upon these prosaisms, as they call them, imagine that they have made a notable discovery, and exult over the Poet as over a man ignorant of his own profession. Now these men would establish a canon of criticism which the Reader will conclude he must utterly reject, if he wishes to be pleased with these volumes. And it would be a most easy task to prove to him that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings, even of Milton himself. To illustrate the subject in a general manner, I will here adduce a short composition of Gray, who was at the head of those who, by their reasonings, have attempted to widen the space of separation betwixt Prose

and Metrical composition, and was more than any other man curiously elaborate in the structure of his own poetic diction.

In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire:
The birds in vain their amorous descant join,
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire.
These ears, alas! for other notes repine;
*A different object do these eyes require;*
*My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;*
*And in my breast the imperfect joys expire:*
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men;
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;
To warm their little loves the birds complain.
*I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,*
*And weep the more because I weep in vain.*

It will easily be perceived, that the only part of this Sonnet which is of any value is the lines printed in Italics; it is equally obvious that, except in the rhyme, and in the use of the single word "fruitless" for fruitlessly, which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose.

By the foregoing quotation it has been shown that the language of Prose may yet be well adapted to poetry; and it was previously asserted that a large portion of the language of every good poem can in no respect differ from that of good Prose. We will go further. It may be safely affirmed that there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition. We are fond of tracing the resemblance between Poetry and Painting, and, accordingly, we call them Sisters: but where shall we find bonds of connection sufficiently strict to typify the affinity betwixt metrical and prose composition? They both speak by and to the same organs; the bodies in which both of them are clothed may be said to be of the same substance, their affections are kindred, and almost identical, not necessarily differing in degree; Poetry [1] sheds no tears "such as angels weep," but natural and human tears; she can boast of no celestial ichor that distinguishes her vital juices from those of Prose; the same human blood circulates through the veins of them both.

If it be affirmed that rhyme and metrical arrangement of themselves constitute a distinction which overturns what has just been said on the strict affinity of metrical language with that of Prose, and paves the way for other artificial distinctions which the mind voluntarily admits, I answer that the language of such Poetry as is here recommended is, as far as is possible, a selection of the language really spoken by men; that this selection, wherever it is made with true taste and feeling, will of itself form a distinction far greater than would at first be imagined, and will entirely separate the composition from the vulgarity and meanness of ordinary life; and, if metre be superadded thereto, I believe that a dissimilitude will be produced altogether sufficient for the gratification of a rational mind. What other distinction would we have? Whence is it to come? And where is it to exist? Not, surely, where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters: it cannot be necessary here, either for elevation of style, or any of its supposed ornaments: for, if the Poet's subject be judiciously chosen, it will naturally, and upon fit occasion, lead him to passions, the language of which, if selected truly and judiciously, must necessarily be dignified and variegated, and alive with metaphors and figures. I forbear to speak of an incongruity which would shock the intelligent Reader, should the Poet interweave any foreign splendor of his own with that which the passion naturally suggests: it is sufficient to say that such addition is unnecessary. And, surely, it is more probable that those passages, which with propriety abound with metaphors and figures, will have effect if, upon other occasions where the passions are of a milder character, the style also be subdued and temperate.

But, as the pleasure which I hope to give by the Poems now presented to the reader must depend entirely on just notions upon this subject, and as it is in itself of high importance to our taste and moral feelings, I cannot content myself with these detached remarks. And if, in what I am about to say, it shall appear to some that my labor is unnecessary, and that I am like a man fighting a battle without enemies, such persons may be reminded that, whatever may be the language outwardly holden by men, a practical faith in the opinions which I am wishing to establish is almost unknown. If my conclusions are admitted, and carried as far as they must be carried if admitted at all, our judgments concerning the works of the greatest Poets, both ancient and modern, will be

[1] I here use the word "Poetry" (though against my own judgment) as opposed to the word Prose, and synonymous with metrical composition. But much confusion has been introduced into criticism by this contradistinction of Poetry and Prose, instead of the more philosophical one of Poetry and Matter of Fact, or Science. The only strict antithesis to Prose is Metre; nor is this, in truth, a *strict* antithesis; because lines and passages of metre so naturally occur in writing prose, that it would be scarcely possible to avoid them, even were it desirable. (Wordsworth.)

far different from what they are at present, both when we praise and when we censure: and our moral feelings influencing and influenced by these judgments will, I believe, be corrected and purified.

Taking up the subject, then, upon general grounds, let me ask what is meant by the word Poet? What is a Poet? To whom does he address himself? And what language is to be expected from him? — He is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the Universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them. To these qualities he has added a disposition to be affected more than other men by absent things as if they were present; an ability of conjuring up in himself passions, which are indeed far from being the same as those produced by real events, yet (especially in those parts of the general sympathy which are pleasing and delightful) do more nearly resemble the passions produced by real events than anything which, from the motions of their own minds merely, other men are accustomed to feel in themselves; — whence, and from practice, he has acquired a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels, and especially those thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without immediate external excitement.

But, whatever portion of this faculty we may suppose even the greatest Poet to possess, there cannot be a doubt that the language which it will suggest to him must often, in liveliness and truth, fall short of that which is uttered by men in real life, under the actual pressure of those passions, certain shadows of which the Poet thus produces, or feels to be produced, in himself.

However exalted a notion we would wish to cherish of the character of a Poet, it is obvious that, while he describes and imitates passions, his employment is in some degree mechanical, compared with the freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering. So that it will be the wish of the Poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes, nay, for short spaces of time, perhaps, to let himself slip into an entire delusion, and even confound and identify his own feelings with theirs; modifying only the language which is thus suggested to him by a consideration that he describes for a particular purpose, that of giving pleasure. Here, then, he will apply the principle of selection which has been already insisted upon. He will depend upon this for removing what would otherwise be painful or disgusting in the passion; he will feel that there is no necessity to trick out or to elevate nature: and, the more industriously he applies this principle the deeper will be his faith that no words, which *his* fancy or imagination can suggest, will be to be compared with those which are the emanations of reality and truth.

But it may be said by those who do not object to the general spirit of these remarks, that, as it is impossible for the Poet to produce upon all occasions language as exquisitely fitted for the passion as that which the real passion itself suggests, it is proper that he should consider himself as in the situation of a translator, who does not scruple to substitute excellencies of another kind for those which are unattainable by him; and endeavors occasionally to surpass his original, in order to make some amends for the general inferiority to which he feels that he must submit. But this would be to encourage idleness and unmanly despair. Further, it is the language of men who speak of what they do not understand; who talk of Poetry as of a matter of amusement and idle pleasure; who will converse with us as gravely about a *taste* for Poetry, as they express it, as if it were a thing as indifferent as a taste for rope-dancing or Frontiniac or Sherry. Aristotle, I have been told, has said, that Poetry is the most philosophic of all writing: it is so: its object is truth, not individual and local, but general, and operative; not standing upon external testimony, but carried alive into the heart by passion; truth which is its own testimony, which gives competence and confidence to the tribunal to which it appeals, and receives them from the same tribunal. Poetry is the image of man and nature. The obstacles which stand in the way of the fidelity of the Biographer and Historian, and of their consequent utility, are incalculably greater than those which are to be encountered by the Poet who comprehends the dignity of his art. The Poet writes under one restriction only, namely, that of the necessity of giving immediate pleasure to a human Being pos-

sessed of that information which may be expected from him, not as a lawyer, a physician, a mariner, an astronomer, or a natural philosopher, but as a Man. Except this one restriction, there is no object standing between the Poet and the image of things; between this, and the Biographer and Historian, there are a thousand.

Nor let this necessity of producing immediate pleasure be considered as a degradation of the Poet's art. It is far otherwise. It is an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe, an acknowledgment the more sincere because not formal, but indirect; it is a task light and easy to him who looks at the world in the spirit of love: further, it is a homage paid to the native and naked dignity of man, to the grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which he knows, and feels, and lives, and moves. We have no sympathy but what is propagated by pleasure: I would not be misunderstood; but wherever we sympathize with pain, it will be found that the sympathy is produced and carried on by subtle combinations with pleasure. We have no knowledge, that is, no general principles drawn from the contemplation of particular facts, but what has been built up by pleasure, and exists in us by pleasure alone. The Man of science, the Chemist and Mathematician, whatever difficulties and disgusts they may have had to struggle with, know and feel this. However painful may be the objects with which the Anatomist's knowledge is connected, he feels that his knowledge is pleasure; and where he has no pleasure he has no knowledge. What then does the Poet? He considers man and the objects that surround him as acting and re-acting upon each other, so as to produce an infinite complexity of pain and pleasure; he considers man in his own nature and in his ordinary life as contemplating this with a certain quantity of immediate knowledge, with certain convictions, intuitions, and deductions, which from habit acquire the quality of intuitions; he considers him as looking upon this complex scene of ideas and sensations, and finding everywhere objects that immediately excite in him sympathies which, from the necessities of his nature, are accompanied by an overbalance of enjoyment.

To this knowledge which all men carry about with them, and to these sympathies in which, without any other discipline than that of our daily life, we are fitted to take delight, the Poet principally directs his attention. He considers man and nature as essentially adapted to each other, and the mind of man as naturally the mirror of the fairest and most interesting qualities of nature. And thus the Poet, prompted by this feeling of pleasure which accompanies him through the whole course of his studies, converses with general nature, with affections akin to those which, through labor and length of time, the Man of science has raised up in himself, by conversing with those particular parts of nature which are the objects of his studies. The knowledge both of the Poet and the Man of science is pleasure; but the knowledge of the one cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, our natural and inalienable inheritance; the other is a personal and individual acquisition, slow to come to us, and by no habitual and direct sympathy connecting us with our fellow-beings. The Man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude: the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science. Emphatically may it be said of the Poet, as Shakespeare hath said of man, "that he looks before and after." He is the rock of defence for human nature; an upholder and preserver, carrying everywhere with him relationship and love. In spite of difference of soil and climate, of language and manners, of laws and customs, in spite of things silently gone out of mind, and things violently destroyed; the Poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time. The objects of the Poet's thoughts are everywhere; though the eyes and senses of man are, it is true, his favorite guides, yet he will follow whereso-ever he can find an atmosphere of sensation in which to move his wings. Poetry is the first and last of all knowledge — it is as immortal as the heart of man. If the labours of Men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition, and in the impressions which we habitually receive, the Poet will sleep then no more than at present; he will be ready to follow the steps of the Man of science, not only in those general indirect effects, but he will be at his side, carrying sensation into the midst of the objects of the science itself. The remotest discoveries of the Chemist, the Botanist, or Mineralogist, will be as proper

objects of the Poet's art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us, and the relations under which they are contemplated by the followers of these respective sciences shall be manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings. If the time should ever come when what is now called science, thus familiarized to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood, the Poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration, and will welcome the Being thus produced, as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man. — It is not, then, to be supposed that any one, who holds that sublime notion of Poetry which I have attempted to convey, will break in upon the sanctity and truth of his pictures by transitory and accidental ornaments, and endeavor to excite admiration of himself by arts, the necessity of which must manifestly depend upon the assumed meanness of his subject.

What I have thus far said applies to Poetry in general; but especially to those parts of composition where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters; and upon this point it appears to authorize the conclusion that there are few persons of good sense who would not allow that the dramatic parts of composition are defective in proportion as they deviate from the real language of nature, and are colored by a diction of the Poet's own, either peculiar to him as an individual Poet or belonging simply to Poets in general; to a body of men who, from the circumstance of their compositions being in metre, it is expected will employ a particular language.

It is not, then, in the dramatic parts of composition that we look for this distinction of language; but still it may be proper and necessary where the Poet speaks to us in his own person and character. To this I answer by referring the Reader to the description which I have before given of a Poet. Among the qualities there enumerated as principally conducing to form a Poet, is implied nothing differing in kind from other men, but only in degree. The sum of what was said is, that the poet is chiefly distinguished from other men by a greater promptness to think and feel without immediate external excitement, and a greater power in expressing such thoughts and feelings as are produced in him in that manner. But these passions and thoughts and feelings are the general passions and thoughts and feelings of men. And with what are they connected? Undoubtedly with our moral sentiments and animal sensations, and with the causes which excite these; with the operations of the elements, and the appearances of the visible universe; with storm and sunshine, with the revolutions of the seasons, with cold and heat, with loss of friends and kindred, with injuries and resentments, gratitude and hope, with fear and sorrow. These, and the like, are the sensations and objects which the Poet describes, as they are the sensations of other men, and the objects which interest them. The Poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions. How, then, can his language differ in any material degree from that of all other men who feel vividly and see clearly? It might be *proved* that it is impossible. But supposing that this were not the case, the Poet might then be allowed to use a peculiar language when expressing his feelings for his own gratification, or that of men like himself. But Poets do not write for Poets alone, but for men. Unless, therefore, we are advocates for that admiration which subsists upon ignorance, and that pleasure which arises from hearing what we do not understand, the Poet must descend from this supposed height; and, in order to excite rational sympathy, he must express himself as other men express themselves. To this it may be added, that while he is only selecting from the real language of men, or, which amounts to the same thing, composing accurately in the spirit of such selection, he is treading upon safe ground, and we know what we are to expect from him. Our feelings are the same with respect to metre; for, as it may be proper to remind the Reader, the distinction of metre is regular and uniform, and not, like that which is produced by what is usually called POETIC DICTION, arbitrary, and subject to infinite caprices upon which no calculation whatever can be made. In the one case, the Reader is utterly at the mercy of the Poet respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion; whereas, in the other, the metre obeys certain laws, to which the Poet and Reader both willingly submit because they are certain, and because no interference is made by them with the passion but such as the concurring testimony of ages has shown to heighten and improve the pleasure which co-exists with it.

It will now be proper to answer an obvious question, namely, Why, professing these opinions, have I written in verse? To this, in addition to such answer as is included in what I have already said, I reply, in the first

place, Because, however I may have restricted myself, there is still left open to me what confessedly constitutes the most valuable object of all writing, whether in prose or verse; the great and universal passions of men, the most general and interesting of their occupations, and the entire world of nature before me — to supply endless combinations of forms and imagery. Now, supposing for a moment that whatever is interesting in these objects may be as vividly described in prose, why should I be condemned for attempting to superadd to such description the charm which, by the consent of all nations, is acknowledged to exist in metrical language? To this, by such as are yet unconvinced, it may be answered that a very small part of the pleasure given by Poetry depends upon the metre, and that it is injudicious to write in metre, unless it be accompanied with the other artificial distinctions of style with which metre is usually accompanied, and that, by such deviation, more will be lost from the shock which will thereby be given to the Reader's associations than will be counterbalanced by any pleasure which he can derive from the general power of numbers. In answer to those who still contend for the necessity of accompanying metre with certain appropriate colors of style in order to the accomplishment of its appropriate end, and who also, in my opinion, greatly underrate the power of metre in itself, it might, perhaps, as far as relates to these Volumes, have been almost sufficient to observe, that poems are extant, written upon more humble subjects, and in a more naked and simple style than I have aimed at, which poems have continued to give pleasure from generation to generation. Now, if nakedness and simplicity be a defect, the fact here mentioned affords a strong presumption that poems somewhat less naked and simple are capable of affording pleasure at the present day; and, what I wished *chiefly* to attempt, at present, was to justify myself for having written under the impression of this belief.

But various causes might be pointed out why, when the style is manly, and the subject of some importance, words metrically arranged will long continue to impart such a pleasure to mankind as he who proves the extent of that pleasure will be desirous to impart. The end of poetry is to produce excitement in co-existence with an overbalance of pleasure; but, by the supposition, excitement is an unusual and irregular state of the mind; ideas and feelings do not, in that state, succeed each other in accustomed order. If the words, however, by which this excitement is produced be in themselves powerful, or the images and feelings have an undue proportion of pain connected with them, there is some danger that the excitement may be carried beyond its proper bounds. Now the co-presence of something regular, something to which the mind has been accustomed in various moods and in a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling, and of feeling not strictly and necessarily connected with the passion. This is unquestionably true; and hence, though the opinion will at first appear paradoxical, from the tendency of metre to divest language, in a certain degree, of its reality, and thus to throw a sort of half-consciousness of unsubstantial existence over the whole composition, there can be little doubt but that more pathetic situations and sentiments, that is, those which have a greater proportion of pain connected with them, may be endured in metrical composition, especially in rhyme, than in prose. The metre of the old ballads is very artless, yet they contain many passages which would illustrate this opinion; and, I hope, if the following poems be attentively perused, similar instances will be found in them. This opinion may be further illustrated by appealing to the Reader's own experience of the reluctance with which he comes to the reperusal of the distressful parts of *Clarissa Harlowe*, or *The Gamester*; while Shakespeare's writings, in the most pathetic scenes, never act upon us, as pathetic, beyond the bounds of pleasure — an effect which, in a much greater degree than might at first be imagined, is to be ascribed to small, but continual and regular impulses of pleasurable surprise from the metrical arrangement. — On the other hand (what it must be allowed will much more frequently happen), if the Poet's words should be incommensurate with the passion, and inadequate to raise the Reader to a height of desirable excitement, then (unless the Poet's choice of his metre has been grossly injudicious), in the feelings of pleasure which the reader has been accustomed to connect with metre in general, and in the feeling, whether cheerful or melancholy, which he has been accustomed to connect with that particular movement of metre, there will be found something which will greatly contribute to impart passion to the words, and to effect the complex end which the Poet proposes to himself.

If I had undertaken a SYSTEMATIC defence of the theory here maintained, it would have been my duty to develop the various causes upon which the pleasure received from metrical language depends. Among the chief of these causes is to be reckoned a principle which must be well known to those who have made any of the Arts the object of accurate reflection; namely, the pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude. This principle is the great spring of the activity of our minds, and their chief feeder. From this principle the direction of the sexual appetite, and all the passions connected with it, take their origin: it is the life of our ordinary conversation; and upon the accuracy with which similitude in dissimilitude, and dissimilitude in similitude, are perceived, depend our taste and our moral feelings. It would not be a useless employment to apply this principle to the consideration of metre, and to show that metre is hence enabled to afford much pleasure, and to point out in what manner that pleasure is produced. But my limits will not permit me to enter upon this subject, and I must content myself with a general summary.

I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity: the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of re-action, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on; but the emotion of whatever kind, and in whatever degree, from various causes, is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will, upon the whole, be in a state of enjoyment. If Nature be thus cautious to preserve in a state of enjoyment a being so employed, the Poet ought to profit by the lesson held forth to him, and ought especially to take care, that, whatever passions he communicates to his Reader, those passions, if his Reader's mind be sound and vigorous, should always be accompanied with an overbalance of pleasure. Now the music of harmonious metrical language, the sense of difficulty overcome, and the blind association of pleasure which has been previously received from works of rhyme or metre of the same or similar construction, an indistinct perception perpetually renewed of language closely resembling that of real life, and yet, in the circumstance of metre, differing from it so widely — all these imperceptibly make up a complex feeling of delight, which is of the most important use in tempering the painful feeling always found intermingled with powerful descriptions of the deeper passions. This effect is always produced in pathetic and impassioned poetry; while, in lighter compositions, the ease and gracefulness with which the Poet manages his numbers are themselves confessedly a principal source of the gratification of the Reader. All that it is *necessary* to say, however, upon this subject, may be effected by affirming, what few persons will deny, that of two descriptions either of passions, manners, or characters, each of them equally well executed, the one in prose and the other in verse, the verse will be read a hundred times where the prose is read once.

Having thus explained a few of my reasons for writing in verse, and why I have chosen subjects from common life, and endeavored to bring my language near to the real language of men, if I have been too minute in pleading my own cause, I have at the same time been treating a subject of general interest; and for this reason a few words shall be added with reference solely to these particular poems, and to some defects which will probably be found in them. I am sensible that my associations must have sometimes been particular instead of general, and that, consequently, giving to things a false importance, I may have sometimes written upon unworthy subjects; but I am less apprehensive on this account, than that my language may frequently have suffered from those arbitrary connections of feelings and ideas with particular words and phrases from which no man can altogether protect himself. Hence I have no doubt that, in some instances, feelings, even of the ludicrous, may be given to my Readers by expressions which appeared to me tender and pathetic. Such faulty expressions, were I convinced they were faulty at present, and that they must necessarily continue to be so, I would willingly take all reasonable pains to correct. But it is dangerous to make these alterations on the simple authority of a few individuals, or even of certain classes of men; for where the understanding of an author is not convinced, or his feelings altered, this cannot be done without great injury to himself: for his own feelings are his stay and support; and, if he set them aside in one instance, he may be induced to

repeat this act till his mind shall lose all confidence in itself, and becomes utterly debilitated. To this it may be added, that the Reader ought never to forget that he is himself exposed to the same errors as the Poet, and, perhaps, in a much greater degree: for there can be no presumption in saying of most readers, that it is not probable they will be so well acquainted with the various stages of meaning through which words have passed, or with the fickleness or stability of the relations of particular ideas to each other; and, above all, since they are so much less interested in the subject, they may decide lightly and carelessly.

Long as the reader has been detained, I hope he will permit me to caution him against a mode of false criticism which has been applied to poetry, in which the language closely resembles that of life and nature. Such verses have been triumphed over in parodies of which Dr. Johnson's stanza is a fair specimen:

> "I put my hat upon my head
> And walked into the Strand,
> And there I met another man
> Whose hat was in his hand."

Immediately under these lines I will place one of the most justly-admired stanzas of the "Babes in the Wood."

> "These pretty Babes with hand in hand
> Went wandering up and down;
> But never more they saw the Man
> Approaching from the Town."

In both these stanzas the words, and the order of the words, in no respect differ from the most unimpassioned conversation. There are words in both, for example, "The Strand," and "the Town," connected with none but the most familiar ideas; yet the one stanza we admit as admirable, and the other as a fair example of the superlatively contemptible. Whence arises this difference? Not from the metre, not from the language, not from the order of the words; but the *matter* expressed in Dr. Johnson's stanza is contemptible. The proper method of treating trivial and simple verses, to which Dr. Johnson's stanza would be a fair parallelism, is not to say, this is a bad kind of poetry, or, this is not poetry; but, this wants sense; it is neither interesting in itself, nor can *lead* to anything interesting; the images neither originate in that sane state of feeling which arises out of thought, nor can excite thought or feeling in the Reader. This is the only sensible manner of dealing with such verses. Why trouble yourself about the species till you have previously decided upon the genus? Why take pains to prove that an ape is not a Newton, when it is self-evident that he is not a man?

One request I must make of my Reader, which is, that in judging these Poems he would decide by his own feelings genuinely, and not by reflection upon what will probably be the judgment of others. How common is it to hear a person say, I myself do not object to this style of composition, or this or that expression, but, to such and such classes of people it will appear mean or ludicrous! This mode of criticism, so destructive of all sound unadulterated judgment, is almost universal: let the Reader then abide independently by his own feelings, and, if he finds himself affected, let him not suffer such conjectures to interfere with his pleasure.

If an Author, by any single composition, has impressed us with respect for his talents, it is useful to consider this as affording a presumption, that on other occasions where we have been displeased he, nevertheless, may not have written ill or absurdly; and further, to give him so much credit for this one composition as may induce us to review what has displeased us, with more care than we should otherwise have bestowed upon it. This is not only an act of justice, but, in our decisions upon poetry especially, may conduce, in a high degree, to the improvement of our own taste: for an *accurate* taste in poetry, and in all the other arts, as Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed, is an *acquired* talent, which can only be produced by thought and a long-continued intercourse with the best models of composition. This is mentioned, not with so ridiculous a purpose as to prevent the most inexperienced Reader from judging for himself (I have already said that I wish him to judge for himself), but merely to temper the rashness of decision, and to suggest, that, if Poetry be a subject on which much time has not been bestowed, the judgment may be erroneous; and that, in many cases, it necessarily will be so.

Nothing would, I know, have so effectually contributed to further the end which I have in view, as to have shown of what kind the pleasure is, and how that pleasure is produced, which is confessedly produced by metrical composition essentially different from that which I have here endeavored to recommend: for the Reader will say that he

has been pleased by such composition; and what more can be done for him? The power of any art is limited; and he will suspect that, if it be proposed to furnish him with new friends, that can be only upon condition of his abandoning his old friends. Besides, as I have said, the Reader is himself conscious of the pleasure which he has received from such composition, composition to which he has peculiarly attached the endearing name of Poetry; and all men feel an habitual gratitude, and something of an honorable bigotry, for the objects which have long continued to please them; we not only wish to be pleased, but to be pleased in that particular way in which we have been accustomed to be pleased. There is in these feelings enough to resist a host of arguments; and I should be the less able to combat them successfully, as I am willing to allow that, in order entirely to enjoy the Poetry which I am recommending, it would be necessary to give up much of what is ordinarily enjoyed. But would my limits have permitted me to point out how this pleasure is produced, many obstacles might have been removed, and the Reader assisted in perceiving that the powers of language are not so limited as he may suppose; and that it is possible for poetry to give other enjoyments, of a purer, more lasting, and more exquisite nature. This part of the subject has not been altogether neglected, but it has not been so much my present aim to prove, that the interest excited by some other kinds of poetry is less vivid, and less worthy of the nobler powers of the mind, as to offer reasons for presuming that if my purpose were fulfilled, a species of poetry would be produced which is genuine poetry; in its nature well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and likewise important in the multiplicity and quality of its moral relations.

From what has been said, and from a perusal of the Poems, the Reader will be able clearly to perceive the object which I had in view: he will determine how far it has been attained, and, what is a much more important question, whether it be worth attaining; and upon the decision of these two questions will rest my claim to the approbation of the Public.

## SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772–1834)

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, youngest son of the rector of Ottery St. Mary's in Devonshire, was born October 21, 1772. Left dependent by the death of his father, he was sent by his relatives to Christ's Hospital in London, where his forlorn state is described by Charles Lamb in his essay, *Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago*. Thence he went to Jesus College, Cambridge. He was in sympathy with the radical ideas of the time which found expression in the French Revolution; and with a young Oxford student, Robert Southey, who held similar views, he planned a settlement to be carried out on the banks of the Susquehanna. He and Southey married sisters, Sara and Edith Fricker, and with increasing responsibilities they gradually dropped this Utopian scheme. Coleridge became a Unitarian preacher, in which capacity he came to Wem where lived William Hazlitt, who has described their meeting in *First Acquaintance with Poets*. He went to live at Nether Stowey, a village in southern England, and Wordsworth with his sister Dorothy took a house at Alfoxden, near by. The association of the three in 1797–98 resulted in the volume *Lyrical Ballads*, to which Coleridge contributed his most famous poem, *The Ancient Mariner*. The next year they all went to Germany, where Coleridge became acquainted with German philosophy. Subsequently Coleridge settled his family at Keswick, in the Lake Country, to be near the Wordsworths, but he spent little time there, being much in London, engaged in journalism and lecturing. He became addicted to the use of opium, and his literary production thenceforth was merely a series of splendid plans with fragmentary performance. While in Keswick, in 1809, he undertook to publish a magazine of philosophy and politics, called *The Friend*. In 1816 he went to live at Highgate in the family of a physician, James Gillman, where he spent the long evening of his life. He continued to be a strong influence on young men of the time, upholding his philosophic view of a spiritual as opposed to a material or mechanistic universe. He died in 1834.

Coleridge was the scholar and philosopher among the romantic poets. He took all knowledge as his province, and expounded his ideas, with much influence, to his contemporaries, whether the subject was religion, or politics, or the arts. He brought German philosophy and literature to England. Under the influence of Goethe and especially of Lessing, he developed a philosophy of literary criticism which produced the stimulating lectures on Shakespeare and the magnificent *Biographia Literaria* (1817), chaotic though it be in execution.

Coleridge's actual achievement, in both prose and verse, seldom measured up to his capabilities. Yet his work is great enough to place him in the front rank. His prose, always weighted with

thought, is vigorous and stately. As a poet, he was the apostle of beauty, which he attained through his subtle supernaturalism and the haunting music of his lines.

The great influence of Coleridge upon his own times, however, came from his personality and from his conversation. What his informal talk was like may be gathered from the following description set down in 1817: "Standing in front of the chimney upon which he leaned back, with head erect and arms crossed, his dreamy eyes lost in abstractions, transported by the inspirations of his own genius, he seemed to be addressing not the auditors, but replying to his own thoughts. . . . Surrounded by a circle who enkindled the enthusiasm which was transmitted in full power in return, he went on with an erudite and masterly analysis of the dramatic poets of Greece. . . . Reaching Leibnitz, he followed that great philosopher over the bridge of communication which he extended from earth to heaven. Leibnitz led to Spinoza. We heard him with the ardent glow of genius refute the impalpable pantheism of Spinoza, who gave a soul to the universe without individuality, and motion to matter without a mover. In the mazes of these metaphysical speculations, the poetic genius of Coleridge would flow on, or disport in circles like the harmonious and luminous ocean. From the refutation of Spinoza, . . . he proceeded in beautiful and sublime strains to illustrate the tenets and principles of religion, till, reached to the summit, where he could advance no farther or higher, he bowed himself in humility and reverence to the earth." (Chasles)

The standard edition of Coleridge's works is that of W. G. T. Shedd, 1884. The *Biographia Literaria* is edited by J. Shawcross, Clarendon Press, 1907. A convenient edition is that in Everyman's Library. There are biographies by J. D. Campbell, 1894, and H. D. Traill in the English Men of Letters. A recent study of Coleridge by Hugh d'Anson Fausset is especially recommended.

## KUBLA KHAN; OR, A VISION IN A DREAM

A FRAGMENT

The following fragment is here published at the request of a poet of great and deserved celebrity,[1] and, as far as the Author's own opinions are concerned, rather as a psychological curiosity, than on the ground of any supposed *poetic* merits.

In the summer of the year 1797, the Author, then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farmhouse between Porlock and Linton, on the Exmoor confines of Somerset and Devonshire. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effects of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in *Purchas's Pilgrimage:* — "Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto: and thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall." The Author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he has the most vivid confidence that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as *things*, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort. On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business from Porlock, and detained by him above an hour, and on his return to his room, found, to his no small surprise and mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone had been cast, but, alas! without the after restoration of the latter.

Then all the charm
Is broken — all that phantom-world so fair
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,
And each mis-shape the other. Stay awhile,
Poor youth! who scarcely dar'st lift up thine eyes —
The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon
The visions will return! And lo! he stays,
And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
Come trembling back, unite, and now once more
The pool becomes a mirror.[1]

Yet from the still surviving recollections in his mind, the Author has frequently purposed to finish for himself what had been originally, as it were, given to him. Ἄῤῥιον ἄδιον ᾄσω· but the to-morrow is yet to come. . . . — (Coleridge.)

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan[2]
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

1 Presumably Byron.

1 From Coleridge's *The Picture; or, The Lover's Resolution.*

2 For remarkable word-music and imagery this poem stands in the very first rank.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing
A mighty fountain momently was forced;
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!
A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me,
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

1797. Pub. 1816.

## THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

*The Ancient Mariner* is Coleridge's masterpiece, a skillfully constructed, unified poem, all the more striking when viewed against the background of his splendid poetic fragments. It is a vivid story, told with such concealment of art that we are amazed at the startling effects which he has produced, to all appearances so simply. Note the use of the ballad stanza, the direct and concrete manner in which the complex, psychological story is unfolded, the realistic use of supernatural elements, and the technical devices that Coleridge employs to produce emotional and musical effects. The running commentary in the margin is, as Pater points out, a guide to the philosophy of the poem, yet a unit by itself.

For a detailed account of the genesis of the poem, see J. L. Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu* (Houghton Mifflin Company).

### IN SEVEN PARTS

#### ARGUMENT

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell: and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.

#### PART I

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
"By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

An ancient Mariner meeteth three Gallants bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one.

"The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide
And I am next of kin,
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand;
"There was a ship," quoth he.
"Hold off! unhand me, gray-beard loon!"
Eftsoons[1] his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye —
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child.
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The Wedding-Guest is spellbound by the eye of the old seafaring man and constrained to hear his tale.

"The ship was cheered, the harbor cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the light-house top.

1 immediately.

"The sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the Line.

"Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon —"
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The Wedding-Guest heareth the bridal music; but the Mariner continueth his tale.

"And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

The ship driven by a storm toward the south pole.

"With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

"And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

"And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken —
The ice was all between.

The land of ice, and of fearful sounds where no living thing was to be seen.

"The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound!

"At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

Till a great sea-bird, called the Albatross, came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality.

"It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through!

"And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!

"In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,[1]
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine."

And lo! the Albatross proveth a bird of good omen, and followeth the ship as it returned northward through fog and floating ice.

"God save thee, ancient Mariner!
From the fiends, that plague thee thus! —
Why look'st thou so?" — "With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross!"

The ancient Mariner inhospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen.

PART II

"The Sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

"And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo!

"And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!

His shipmates cry out against the ancient Mariner, for killing the bird of good luck.

"Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

But when the fog cleared off they justify the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the crime.

[1] rope running to the masthead.

"The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

The fair breeze continues; the ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward, even till it reaches the Line.

"Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

"All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

"Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

"Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

And the Albatross begins to be avenged.

"The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

"About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue and white.

A Spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

"And some in dreams assured were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

"And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

The shipmates, in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner: in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

"Ah! well-a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III

"There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

The ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.

"At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.[1]

"A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

"With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, A sail! a sail!

At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship; and at a dear ransom he freeth his speech from the bonds of thirst.

"With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call:
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

A flash of joy;

"See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal, —
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!

And horror follows. For can it be a *ship* that comes onward without wind or tide?

"The western wave was all aflame.
The day was well nigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

"And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

[1] *ywis*, certainly.

"Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres?

"Are those her ribs through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that woman's mate?

And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting Sun.

The Spectre-Woman and her Death-mate, and no other on board the skeleton-ship.

"Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

Like vessel, like crew!

"The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;
'The game is done! I've won! I've won!'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.[1]

Death and Life-in-Death have diced for the ship's crew, and she (the latter) winneth the ancient Mariner.

"The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

No twilight within the courts of the Sun.

"We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white;
From the sails the dew did drip —
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

At the rising of the Moon,

"One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

One after another,

"Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

His shipmates drop down dead.

[1] A popular number in the old ballads and in folk-tales.

"The souls did from their bodies fly, —
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!"

But Life-in-Death begins her work on the ancient Mariner.

PART IV

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

The Wedding-Guest feareth that a Spirit is talking to him;

"I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown." —
"Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
This body dropt not down.

But the ancient Mariner assureth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance.

"Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

"The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

He despiseth the creatures of the calm.

"I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

And envieth that they should live, and so many lie dead.

"I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

"I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

"The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men.

"An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is a curse in a dead man's eye!

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journey-

Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

"The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside —

"Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmèd water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

"Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

"Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

"O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware;
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

"The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea."

PART V

"Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

"The silly[1] buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,

[1] empty.

I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained.

"My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

"I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light — almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

"And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

"The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

"And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;
The Moon was at its edge.

"The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side:
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

"The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan.

"They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

"The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools —
We were a ghastly crew.

ing Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm.

Their beauty and their happiness.

He blesseth them in his heart.

The spell begins to break.

By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain.

He heareth sounds and seeth strange sights and commotions in the sky and the elements.

The bodies of the ship's crew are inspired, and the ship moves on;

"The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:
The body and I pulled at one rope,
But he said nought to me."

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!"
"Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

But not by the souls of the men, nor by demons of earth or middle air, but by a blessed troop of angelic spirits, sent down by the invocation of the guardian saint.

"For when it dawned — they dropped their arms,
And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

"Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

"Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the skylark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

"And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

"It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

"Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

"Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The Spirit slid: and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The lonesome Spirit from the south-pole carries on the ship as far as the Line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

"The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean:
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion —
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

"Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

"How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard, and in my soul discerned,
Two voices in the air.

The Polar Spirit's fellow demons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong; and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

"'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

"'The Spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

"The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'"

PART VI

FIRST VOICE

"'But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing —
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the ocean doing?'

SECOND VOICE

"'Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast —

"'If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.'

FIRST VOICE

"'But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?'

SECOND VOICE

"'The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.'

The Mariner hath been cast into a trance; for the angelic power causeth the vessel to drive northward faster than human life could endure.

"'Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

"I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

The supernatural motion is retarded; the Mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew.

"All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

"The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

"And now this spell was snapt: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen —

The curse is finally expiated.

"Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round, walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

"But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

"It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring —
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

"Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze —
On me alone it blew.

"Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The light-house top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

And the ancient Mariner beholdeth his native country.

"We drifted o'er the harbor-bar,
And I with sobs did pray —
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.

"The harbor-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

"The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

"And the bay was white with silent light
Till, rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colors came.

The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies,

"A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:
I turned my eyes upon the deck —
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

"Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

And appear in their own forms of light.

"This seraph-band, each waved his hand:
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

"This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart —
No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

"But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

"The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

"I saw a third — I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!

He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART VII

"This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree. The Hermit of the wood,

"He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve —
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

"The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,
'Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now?'

"'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit said —
'And they answered not our cheer!
The planks looked warped! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were Approacheth the ship with wonder.

"'Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

"'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look —
(The Pilot made reply)
I am a-feared' — 'Push on, push on!'
Said the Hermit cheerily.

"The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

"Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead. The ship suddenly sinketh.

"Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote, The ancient Mariner is saved in the Pilot's boat.

Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

"Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

"I moved my lips — the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

"I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

"And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

"'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!'
The Hermit crossed his brow.
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say —
What manner of man art thou?' The ancient Mariner earnestly entreateth the Hermit to shrieve him; and the penance of life falls on him.

"Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

"Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns;
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns. And ever and anon throughout his future life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land,

"I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

"What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

'O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

"Oh sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company! —

"To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

"Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

"He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

And to teach by his own example love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

1798

## FROST AT MIDNIGHT

The Frost performs its secret ministry,
Unhelped by any wind. The owlet's cry
Came loud — and hark, again! loud as before.
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,
Have left me to that solitude, which suits
Abstruser musings: save that at my side
My cradled infant[1] slumbers peacefully.
'Tis calm indeed! so calm, that it disturbs
And vexes meditation with its strange
And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and wood,
This populous village! Sea, and hill, and wood,
With all the numberless goings-on of life,
Inaudible as dreams! the thin blue flame
Lies on my low burnt fire, and quivers not;
Only that film, which fluttered on the grate,
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.
Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature
Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,
Making it a companionable form,
Whose puny flaps and freaks, the idling Spirit
By its own mood interprets, every where
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
And makes a toy of Thought.

But O! how oft,
How oft, at school,[1] with most believing mind,
Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars,
To watch that fluttering *stranger!* and as oft
With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt
Of my sweet birth-place, and the old church-tower,
Whose bells, the poor man's only music, rang
From morn to evening, all the hot Fair-day,
So sweetly, that they stirred and haunted me
With a wild pleasure, falling on mine ear
Most like articulate sounds of things to come!
So gazed I, till the soothing things I dreamt,
Lulled me to sleep, and sleep prolonged my dreams!
And so I brooded all the following morn,
Awed by the stern preceptor's face, mine eye
Fixed with mock study on my swimming book:
Save if the door half opened, and I snatched
A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped up,
For still I hoped to see the *stranger's* face,
Townsman, or aunt, or sister more beloved,
My play-mate when we both were clothed alike!

Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,
Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm,
Fill up the interspersed vacancies
And momentary pauses of the thought!
My babe so beautiful! it thrills my heart
With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,
And think that thou shalt learn far other lore
And in far other scenes! For I was reared
In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,
And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
But thou, my babe! shalt wander like a breeze
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags

1 His son Hartley, born in 1796.

1 Christ's Hospital.

Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds
Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores
And mountain crags: so shalt thou see and hear
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
Of that eternal language, which thy God
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in Himself.
Great universal Teacher! He shall mould
Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch
Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the eave-drops fall,
Heard only in the trances of the blast,
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.

1798.

## CHRISTABEL

### PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION. 1816

'The first part of the following poem was written in the year 1797, at Stowey, in the county of Somerset. The second part after my return from Germany, in the year 1800, at Keswick, Cumberland. Since the latter date my poetic powers have been, till very lately, in a state of suspended animation. But as, in my very first conception of the tale, I had the whole present to my mind, with the wholeness, no less than with the liveliness of a vision; I trust that I shall be able to embody in verse the three parts yet to come, in the course of the present year.[1]

'It is probable, that if the poem had been finished at either of the former periods, or if even the first and second part had been published in the year 1800, the impression of its originality would have been much greater than I dare at present expect. But for this, I have only my own indolence to blame. . . .

'I have only to add, that the metre of the Christabel is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from its being founded on a new principle: namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables. Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found to be only four. Nevertheless this occasional variation in number of syllables is not introduced wantonly, or for the mere ends of convenience, but in correspondence with some transition, in the nature of the imagery or passion.'

[1] This was never done.

*Christabel* is essentially a tale of witchery — a story suggested by the music of the poem rather than told definitely in words. Coleridge remarked once that the poem was "partly founded on the notion that the virtuous of the world save the wicked." Perhaps the famous lines 408–26 contain something of a clue. Geraldine, of course, is a supernatural spirit of evil.

#### PART I

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock,
Tu — whit! —— Tu — whoo!
And hark, again! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew.

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff bitch.
From her kennel beneath the rock
She maketh answer to the clock,
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour;
Ever and aye, by shine and shower,
Sixteen short howls, not over loud;
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark?
The night is chilly, but not dark.
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full;
And yet she looks both small and dull.
The night is chill, the cloud is gray:
'Tis a month before the month of May,
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,
Whom her father loves so well,
What makes her in the wood so late,
A furlong from the castle gate?
She had dreams all yesternight
Of her own betrothèd knight;
And she in the midnight wood will pray
For the weal of her lover that's far away.

She stole along, she nothing spoke,
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,
And naught was green upon the oak
But moss and rarest mistletoe:
She kneels beneath the huge oak
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,
The lovely lady, Christabel!
It moaned as near, as near can be,
But what it is she cannot tell. —
On the other side it seems to be,
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill; the forest bare;
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?
There is not wind enough in the air
To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek —
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel!
Jesu Maria, shield her well!
She folded her arms beneath her cloak,
And stole to the other side of the oak.
What sees she there?

There she sees a damsel bright,
Drest in a silken robe of white,
That shadowy in the moonlight shone:
The neck that made that white robe wan,
Her stately neck, and arms were bare;
Her blue-veined feet unsandalled were,
And wildly glittered here and there
The gems entangled in her hair.
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see
A lady so richly clad as she —
Beautiful exceedingly!

"Mary mother, save me now!"
(Said Christabel,) "And who art thou?"

The lady strange made answer meet,
And her voice was faint and sweet: —
"Have pity on my sore distress,
I scarce can speak for weariness:
Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear!"
Said Christabel, "How camest thou here?"
And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,
Did thus pursue her answer meet: —

"My sire is of a noble line,
And my name is Geraldine:
Five warriors seized me yestermorn.
Me, even me, a maid forlorn:
They choked my cries with force and fright,
And tied me on a palfrey white.
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,
And they rode furiously behind.
They spurred amain, their steeds were white:
And once we crossed the shade of night.
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,
I have no thought what men they be;
Nor do I know how long it is
(For I have lain entranced, I wis)
Since one, the tallest of the five,
Took me from the palfrey's back,
A weary woman, scarce alive.
Some muttered words his comrades spoke:
He placed me underneath this oak;
He swore they would return with haste;
Whither they went I cannot tell —
I thought I heard, some minutes past,
Sounds as of a castle bell.
Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),
And help a wretched maid to flee."

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand,
And comforted fair Geraldine:
"Oh well, bright dame! may you command
The service of Sir Leoline:
And gladly our stout chivalry
Will he send forth, and friends withal,
To guide and guard you safe and free
Home to your noble father's hall."

She rose: and forth with steps they passed
That strove to be, and were not, fast.
Her gracious stars the lady blest,
And thus spake on sweet Christabel:
"All our household are at rest,
The hall as silent as the cell;
Sir Leoline is weak in health,
And may not well awakened be,
But we will move as if in stealth,
And I beseech your courtesy,
This night, to share your couch with me."

They crossed the moat, and Christabel
Took the key that fitted well;
A little door she opened straight,
All in the middle of the gate;
The gate that was ironed within and without,
Where an army in battle array had marched out.
The lady sank, belike through pain,
And Christabel with might and main
Lifted her up, a weary weight,
Over the threshold of the gate:
Then the lady rose again,
And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court: right glad they were.
And Christabel devoutly cried
To the lady by her side:
"Praise we the Virgin all divine
Who hath rescued thee from thy distress!"
"Alas, alas!" said Geraldine,
"I cannot speak for weariness."
So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court: right glad they were.

Outside her kennel the mastiff old
Lay fast asleep in moonshine cold.
The mastiff old did not awake,
Yet she an angry moan did make!
And what can ail the mastiff bitch?
Never till now she uttered yell
Beneath the eye of Christabel.
Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch:
For what can ail the mastiff bitch?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,
Pass as lightly as you will!
The brands were flat, the brands were dying,
Amid their own white ashes lying;
But when the lady passed, there came
A tongue of light, a fit of flame;
And Christabel saw the lady's eye,
And nothing else saw she thereby,
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.
"Oh softly tread," said Christabel,
"My father seldom sleepeth well."

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,
And jealous of the listening air,
They steal their way from stair to stair,
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,
And now they pass the Baron's room,
As still as death, with stifled breath!
And now have reached her chamber door;
And now doth Geraldine press down
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,
And not a moonbeam enters here.
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,
Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain,
For a lady's chamber meet:
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fastened to an angel's feet.

The silver lamp burns dead and dim;
But Christabel the lamp will trim.
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,
And left it swinging to and fro,
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,
Sank down upon the floor below.

"O weary lady, Geraldine,
I pray you, drink this cordial wine!
It is a wine of virtuous powers;
My mother made it of wild flowers."

"And will your mother pity me,
Who am a maiden most forlorn?"
Christabel answered — "Woe is me!
She died the hour that I was born.
I have heard the gray-haired friar tell,
How on her death-bed she did say,
That she should hear the castle-bell
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.
O mother dear! that thou wert here!"
"I would," said Geraldine, "she were!"

But soon with altered voice, said she —
"Off, wandering mother! Peak and pine!
I have power to bid thee flee."
Alas! what ails poor Geraldine?
Why stares she with unsettled eye?
Can she the bodiless dead espy?
And why with hollow voice cries she.
"Off, woman, off! this hour is mine —
Though thou her guardian spirit be,
Off, woman, off! 'tis given to me."

Then Christabel knelt by the lady's side,
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue —
"Alas!" said she, "this ghastly ride —
Dear lady! it hath wildered you!"
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,
And faintly said, "'tis over now!"

Again the wild-flower wine she drank:
Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,
And from the floor whereon she sank,
The lofty lady stood upright;
She was most beautiful to see,
Like a lady of a far countrée.

And thus the lofty lady spake —
"All they, who live in the upper sky,
Do love you, holy Christabel!
And you love them, and for their sake
And for the good which me befell,
Even I in my degree will try,
Fair maiden, to requite you well.
But now unrobe yourself; for I
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie."

Quoth Christabel, "So let it be!"
And as the lady bade, did she.
Her gentle limbs did she undress,
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe
So many thoughts moved to and fro,
That vain it were her lids to close:
So half-way from the bed she rose,
And on her elbow did recline
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,
And slowly rolled her eyes around;
Then drawing in her breath aloud,

Like one that shuddered, she unbound
The cincture from beneath her breast:
Her silken robe, and inner vest,
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,
Behold! her bosom and half her side —
A sight to dream of, not to tell!
Oh shield her! shield sweet Christabel!

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs;
Ah! what a stricken look was hers!
Deep from within she seems half-way
To lift some weight with sick assay,
And eyes the maid and seeks delay;
Then suddenly, as one defied,
Collects herself in scorn and pride,
And lay down by the maiden's side! —
And in her arms the maid she took,
Ah well-a-day!
And with low voice and doleful look
These words did say:
"In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell,
Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel!
Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-morrow,
This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow:
But vainly thou warrest,
For this is alone in
Thy power to declare,
That in the dim forest
Thou heard'st a low moaning,
And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair:
And didst bring her home with thee in love and in charity,
To shield her and shelter her from the damp air."

THE CONCLUSION TO PART I

It was a lovely sight to see
The lady Christabel, when she
Was praying at the old oak tree.
Amid the jagged shadows
Of mossy leafless boughs,
Kneeling in the moonlight,
To make her gentle vows;
Her slender palms together prest,
Heaving sometimes on her breast;
Her face resigned to bliss or bale —
Her face, oh call it fair not pale,
And both blue eyes more bright than clear,
Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah woe is me!)
Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,
Fearfully dreaming, yet, I wis,
Dreaming that alone, which is —
O sorrow and shame! Can this be she,
The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree?
And lo! the worker of these harms,
That holds the maiden in her arms,
Seems to slumber still and mild,
As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,
O Geraldine! since arms of thine
Have been the lovely lady's prison.
O Geraldine! one hour was thine —
Thou'st had thy will! By tairn and rill,
The night-birds all that hour were still.
But now they are jubilant anew,
From cliff and tower, tu — whoo! tu — whoo!
Tu — whoo! tu — whoo! from wood and fell!

And see! the lady Christabel
Gathers herself from out her trance;
Her limbs relax, her countenance
Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids
Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds —
Large tears that leave the lashes bright!
And oft the while she seems to smile
As infants at a sudden light!

Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,
Like a youthful hermitess,
Beauteous in a wilderness,
Who, praying always, prays in sleep.
And, if she move unquietly,
Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free
Comes back and tingles in her feet.
No doubt she hath a vision sweet.
What if her guardian spirit 'twere?
What if she knew her mother near?
But this she knows, in joys and woes,
That saints will aid if men will call:
For the blue sky bends over all!

PART II

Each matin bell, the Baron saith,
Knells us back to a world of death.
These words Sir Leoline first said,
When he rose and found his lady dead:
These words Sir Leoline will say,
Many a morn to his dying day!

And hence the custom and law began,
That still at dawn the sacristan,
Who duly pulls the heavy bell,
Five and forty beads must tell
Between each stroke — a warning knell,
Which not a soul can choose but hear
From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, "So let it knell!
And let the drowsy sacristan
Still count as slowly as he can!
There is no lack of such, I ween,
As well fill up the space between."
In Langdale Pike and Witch's lair,
And Dungeon-ghyll so foully rent,
With ropes of rock and bells of air
Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,
Who all give back, one after t' other,
The death-note to their living brother;
And oft too, by the knell offended,
Just as their one! two! three! is ended,
The devil mocks the doleful tale
With a merry peal from Borrowdale.

The air is still! through mist and cloud
That merry peal comes ringing loud;
And Geraldine shakes off her dread,
And rises lightly from the bed;
Puts on her silken vestments white,
And tricks her hair in lovely plight,
And nothing doubting of her spell
Awakens the lady Christabel.
"Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel?
I trust that you have rested well."

And Christabel awoke and spied
The same who lay down by her side —
Oh rather say, the same whom she
Raised up beneath the old oak tree!
Nay, fairer yet; and yet more fair!
For she belike hath drunken deep
Of all the blessedness of sleep!
And while she spake, her looks, her air,
Such gentle thankfulness declare,
That (so it seemed) her girded vests
Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts.
"Sure I have sinned!" said Christabel,
"Now heaven be praised if all be well!"
And in low faltering tones, yet sweet,
Did she the lofty lady greet,
With such perplexity of mind
As dreams too lively leave behind.

So quickly she rose, and quickly arrayed
Her maiden limbs, and having prayed
That He, who on the cross did groan,
Might wash away her sins unknown,
She forthwith led fair Geraldine
To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.

The lovely maid and lady tall
Are pacing both into the hall,
And pacing on through page and groom,
Enter the Baron's presence-room.

The Baron rose, and while he prest
His gentle daughter to his breast,
With cheerful wonder in his eyes
The lady Geraldine espies,
And gave such welcome to the same,
As might beseem so bright a dame!

But when he heard the lady's tale,
And when she told her father's name,
Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale,
Murmuring o'er the name again,
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine?

Alas! they had been friends in youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above;
And life is thorny; and youth is vain;
And to be wroth with one we love
Doth work like madness in the brain.
And thus it chanced, as I divine,
With Roland and Sir Leoline.
Each spake words of high disdain
And insult to his heart's best brother:
They parted — ne'er to meet again!
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining —
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between: —
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.

Sir Leoline, a moment's space,
Stood gazing on the damsel's face:
And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine
Came back upon his heart again.

Oh then the Baron forgot his age,
His noble heart swelled high with rage;
He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side,
He would proclaim it far and wide,
With trump and solemn heraldry,
That they who thus had wronged the dame,
Were base as spotted infamy!
"And if they dare deny the same,
My herald shall appoint a week,
And let the recreant traitors seek
My tourney court — that there and then
I may dislodge their reptile souls
From the bodies and forms of men!"
He spake: his eye in lightning rolls!
For the lady was ruthlessly seized; and he kenned
In the beautiful lady the child of his friend!

And now the tears were on his face,
And fondly in his arms he took

Fair Geraldine, who met the embrace,
Prolonging it with joyous look.
Which when she viewed, a vision fell
Upon the soul of Christabel,
The vision of fear, the touch and pain!
She shrunk and shuddered, and saw again—
(Ah, woe is me! Was it for thee,
Thou gentle maid! such sights to see?)

Again she saw that bosom old,
Again she felt that bosom cold,
And drew in her breath with a hissing sound:
Whereat the Knight turned wildly round,
And nothing saw but his own sweet maid
With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,
And in its stead that vision blest,
Which comforted her after-rest
While in the lady's arms she lay,
Had put a rapture in her breast,
And on her lips and o'er her eyes
Spread smiles like light!
With new surprise,
"What ails then my beloved child?"
The Baron said — His daughter mild
Made answer, "All will yet be well!"
I ween, she had no power to tell
Aught else: so mighty was the spell.

Yet he, who saw this Geraldine,
Had deemed her sure a thing divine.
Such sorrow with such grace she blended,
As if she feared she had offended
Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid!
And with such lowly tones she prayed,
She might be sent without delay
Home to her father's mansion.

"Nay!
Nay, by my soul!" said Leoline.
"Ho! Bracy, the bard, the charge be thine!
Go thou, with music sweet and loud,
And take two steeds with trappings proud,
And take the youth whom thou lov'st best
To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,
And clothe you both in solemn vest,
And over the mountains haste along,
Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,
Detain you on the valley road.
And when he has crossed the Irthing flood,
My merry bard! he hastes, he hastes
Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth Wood,
And reaches soon that castle good
Which stands and threatens Scotland's wastes.

"Bard Bracy! bard Bracy! your horses are fleet
Ye must ride up the hall, your music so sweet
More loud than your horses' echoing feet!
And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,
Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall!
Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free —
Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.
He bids thee come without delay
With all thy numerous array;
And take thy lovely daughter home:
And he will meet thee on the way
With all his numerous array
White with their panting palfreys' foam:
And by mine honor! I will say,
That I repent me of the day
When I spake words of fierce disdain
To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine! —
— For since that evil hour hath flown,
Many a summer's sun hath shone;
Yet ne'er found I a friend again
Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine."

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,
Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing;
And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,
His gracious hail on all bestowing! —
"Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,
Are sweeter than my harp can tell;
Yet might I gain a boon of thee,
This day my journey should not be,
So strange a dream hath come to me;
That I had vowed with music loud
To clear yon wood from thing unblest,
Warned by a vision in my rest!
For in my sleep I saw that dove,
That gentle bird, whom thou dost love,
And call'st by thy own daughter's name —
Sir Leoline! I saw the same
Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan,
Among the green herbs in the forest alone.
Which when I saw and when I heard,
I wondered what might ail the bird;
For nothing near it could I see,
Save the grass and green herbs underneath the old tree.

"And in my dream methought I went
To search out what might there be found;
And what the sweet bird's trouble meant,
That thus lay fluttering on the ground.
I went and peered, and could descry
No cause for her distressful cry;
But yet for her dear lady's sake
I stooped, methought, the dove to take,
When lo! I saw a bright green snake
Coiled around its wings and neck.
Green as the herbs on which it couched,

Close by the dove's its head it crouched;
And with the dove it heaves and stirs,
Swelling its neck as she swelled hers!
I woke; it was the midnight hour,
The clock was echoing in the tower;
But though my slumber was gone by,
This dream it would not pass away —
It seems to live upon my eye!
And thence I vowed this self-same day,
With music strong and saintly song
To wander through the forest bare,
Lest aught unholy loiter there."

Thus Bracy said: the Baron, the while,
Half-listening heard him with a smile;
Then turned to Lady Geraldine,
His eyes made up of wonder and love;
And said in courtly accents fine,
"Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous dove,
With arms more strong than harp or song,
Thy sire and I will crush the snake!"
He kissed her forehead as he spake,
And Geraldine, in maiden wise,
Casting down her large bright eyes,
With blushing cheek and courtesy fine
She turned her from Sir Leoline;
Softly gathering up her train,
That o'er her right arm fell again;
And folded her arms across her chest,
And couched her head upon her breast,
And looked askance at Christabel —
Jesu Maria, shield her well!

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,
And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head,
Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,
And with somewhat of malice, and more of dread,
At Christabel she looked askance! —
One moment — and the sight was fled!
But Christabel in dizzy trance
Stumbling on the unsteady ground
Shuddered aloud, with a hissing sound;
And Geraldine again turned round,
And like a thing that sought relief,
Full of wonder and full of grief,
She rolled her large bright eyes divine
Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas! her thoughts are gone,
She nothing sees — no sight but one!
The maid, devoid of guile and sin,
I know not how, in fearful wise
So deeply had she drunken in
That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,
That all her features were resigned
To this sole image in her mind;
And passively did imitate
That look of dull and treacherous hate!
And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,
Still picturing that look askance
With forced unconscious sympathy
Full before her father's view —
As far as such a look could be
In eyes so innocent and blue!

And when the trance was o'er, the maid
Paused awhile, and inly prayed:
Then falling at the Baron's feet,
"By my mother's soul do I entreat
That thou this woman send away!"
She said: and more she could not say:
For what she knew she could not tell,
O'ermastered by the mighty spell.

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,
Sir Leoline? Thy only child
Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,
So fair, so innocent, so mild;
The same, for whom thy lady died!
O, by the pangs of her dear mother
Think thou no evil of thy child!
For her, and thee, and for no other,
She prayed the moment ere she died:
Prayed that the babe for whom she died,
Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride!
That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,
Sir Leoline!
And wouldst thou wrong thy only child,
Her child and thine?

Within the Baron's heart and brain
If thoughts, like these, had any share,
They only swelled his rage and pain,
And did but work confusion there.
His heart was cleft with pain and rage,
His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild,
Dishonored thus in his old age;
Dishonored by his only child,
And all his hospitality
To the insulted daughter of his friend
By more than woman's jealousy
Brought thus to a disgraceful end —
He rolled his eye with stern regard
Upon the gentle minstrel bard,
And said in tones abrupt, austere —
"Why, Bracy! dost thou loiter here?
I bade thee hence!" The bard obeyed;
And turning from his own sweet maid,
The aged knight, Sir Leoline,
Led forth the lady Geraldine!

THE CONCLUSION TO PART II

A little child, a limber elf,
Singing, dancing to itself,
A fairy thing with red round cheeks,

That always finds, and never seeks,
Makes such a vision to the sight
As fills a father's eyes with light;
And pleasures flow in so thick and fast
Upon his heart, that he at last
Must needs express his love's excess
With words of unmeant bitterness.
Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
Thoughts so all unlike each other;
To mutter and mock a broken charm,
To dally with wrong that does no harm.
Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty
At each wild word to feel within
A sweet recoil of love and pity.
And what, if in a world of sin
(O sorrow and shame should this be true!)
Such giddiness of heart and brain
Comes seldom save from rage and pain,
So talks as it's most used to do.

1797–1800.

## DEJECTION: AN ODE

This poem, according to Coleridge, was written during a fit of dejection and addressed to Wordsworth. When Coleridge printed the poem, he disguised the references to Wordsworth, using Otway's name in stanza 7 and "Dear Lady" in stanza 8.

WRITTEN APRIL 4, 1802

Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,
With the old Moon in her arms;
And I fear, I fear, my Master dear!
We shall have a deadly storm.
*Ballad of* SIR PATRICK SPENCE

1

Well! If the Bard was weather-wise, who made
The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,
This night, so tranquil now, will not go hence
Unroused by winds, that ply a busier trade
Than those which mold yon cloud in lazy flakes,
Or the dull sobbing draft, that moans and rakes
Upon the strings of this Æolian lute
Which better far were mute.
For lo! the New-moon winter-bright!
And overspread with phantom light,
(With swimming phantom light o'erspread
But rimmed and circled by a silver thread)
I see the old Moon in her lap, foretelling
The coming-on of rain and squally blast.
And oh! that even now the gust were swelling,
And the slant night-shower driving loud and fast!
Those sounds which oft have raised me, whilst they awed,
And sent my soul abroad,
Might now perhaps their wonted impulse give,
Might startle this dull pain, and make it move and live!

2

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,
Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
In word, or sigh, or tear —
O Lady! in this wan and heartless mood,
To other thoughts by yonder throstle wooed,
All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
Have I been gazing on the western sky,
And its peculiar tint of yellow green:
And still I gaze — and with how blank an eye!
And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
That give away their motion to the stars;
Those stars, that glide behind them or between,
Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always seen:
Yon crescent Moon, as fixed as if it grew
In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue;
I see them all so excellently fair,
I see, not feel, how beautiful they are!

3

My genial spirits fail;
And what can these avail
To lift the smothering weight from off my breast?
It were a vain endeavor,
Though I should gaze for ever
On that green light that lingers in the west:
I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.

4

O Lady! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does Nature live:
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!
And would we aught behold, of higher worth,
Than that inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
Enveloping the Earth —
And from the soul itself must there be sent

A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

5

O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me
What this strong music in the soul may be!
What, and wherein it doth exist,
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
This beautiful and beauty-making power.
Joy, virtuous Lady! Joy that ne'er was given,
Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,
Life, and Life's effluence, cloud at once and shower,
Joy, Lady! is the spirit and the power,
Which, wedding Nature to us, gives in dower
A new Earth and new Heaven,
Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud —
Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud —
We in ourselves rejoice!
And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,
All melodies the echoes of that voice,
All colors a suffusion from that light.

6

There was a time when, though my path was rough,
This joy within me dallied with distress,
And all misfortunes were but as the stuff
Whence Fancy made me dreams of happiness:
For Hope grew round me, like the twining vine,
And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed mine.
But now afflictions bow me down to earth:
Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth;
But oh! each visitation
Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,
My shaping spirit of Imagination.
For not to think of what I needs must feel,
But to be still and patient, all I can;
And haply by abstruse research to steal
From my own nature all the natural man —
This was my sole resource, my only plan:
Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

7

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind,
Reality's dark dream!
I turn from you, and listen to the wind,
Which long has raved unnoticed.
What a scream
Of agony by torture lengthened out
That lute sent forth! Thou Wind, that rav'st without,
Bare crag, or mountain-tairn, or blasted tree,
Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb,
Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,
Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,
Mad Lutanist! who in this month of showers,
Of dark-brown gardens, and of peeping flowers,
Mak'st Devil's yule, with worse than wintry song,
The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves among.
Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic sounds!
Thou mighty Poet, even to frenzy bold!
What tell'st thou now about?
'Tis of the rushing of an host in rout,
With groans of trampled men, with smarting wounds —
At once they groan with pain, and shudder with the cold!
But hush! there is a pause of deepest silence!
And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd,
With groans, and tremulous shudderings — all is over —
It tells another tale, with sounds less deep and loud!
A tale of less affright,
And tempered with delight,
As Otway's[1] self had framed the tender lay,
'Tis of a little child[2]
Upon a lonesome wild,
Not far from home, but she hath lost her way:
And now moans low in bitter grief and fear,
And now screams loud, and hopes to make her mother hear.

8

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of sleep:
Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep!
Visit her, gentle Sleep! with wings of healing,
And may this storm be but a mountain-birth,
May all the stars hang bright above her dwelling,

1 Thomas Otway, "tender" Otway, the English dramatist, 1652–85, author of *Venice Preserved*.

2 The tale that Coleridge refers to here is, of course, Wordsworth's *Lucy Gray*.

Silent as though they watched the sleeping
Earth!
With light heart may she rise,
Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice;
To her may all things live, from pole to
pole,
Their life the eddying of her living soul!
O simple spirit, guided from above,
Dear Lady! friend devoutest of my choice,
Thus mayest thou ever, evermore rejoice.

1802.

## YOUTH AND AGE

Verse, a breeze amid blossoms straying,
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee —
Both were mine! Life went a-maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young!
*When* I was young? — Ah, woeful When!
Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands,
How lightly *then* it flashed along: —
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide!
Nought cared this body for wind or weather
When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
O! the joys, that came down shower-like,
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old!

*Ere* I was old? Ah woeful Ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!
O Youth! for years so many and sweet,
'Tis known, that Thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit —
It cannot be that Thou art gone!
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet tolled: —
And thou wert aye a masker bold!
What strange disguise hast now put on,
To *make believe*, that thou art gone?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this altered size:
But Spring-tide blossoms on thy lips,
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
Life is but thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve!
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve,
When we are old:
That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave,
Like some poor nigh-related guest,
That may not rudely be dismissed;
Yet hath outstayed his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

1823–32.

## WORK WITHOUT HOPE

LINES COMPOSED 21ST FEBRUARY, 1827

All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their
lair —
The bees are stirring — birds are on the
wing —
And Winter slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!
And I the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor
sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths
blow,
Have traced the fount whence streams of
nectar flow.
Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom ye
may,
For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams,
away!
With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I
stroll:
And would you learn the spells that drowse
my soul?
Work without Hope draws nectar in a sieve,
And Hope without an object cannot live.

1827.

## BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA
### 1817

*Biographia Literaria* contains the best example of Coleridge's criticism in his discussion of Wordsworth's theory of poetry and its application in *Lyrical Ballads*. Chapters 14, 17, and 18 embody this discussion. Chapter 10 is interesting as autobiography, and as an account of the life of Coleridge and Wordsworth at Stowey, and of their situation when, because of their sympathy with the French Revolution, they were objects of suspicion and espionage. In regard to the financial history of *The Watchman*, Coleridge's memory was inaccurate. Coleridge's friend and patron, Joseph Cottle, wrote: "The fact is Biggs the printer (a worthy man) never threatened nor even importuned for the money."

## CHAPTER X

. . . Toward the close of the first year from the time, that in an inauspicious hour I left the friendly cloisters, and the happy grove of quiet, ever honored Jesus College, Cambridge, I was persuaded by sundry philanthropists and Anti-polemists [1] to set on foot a periodical work, entitled *The Watchman*, that, according to the general motto of the work, *all might know the truth, and that the truth might make us free!* In order to exempt it from the stamp-tax, and likewise to contribute as little as possible to the supposed guilt of a war against freedom, it was to be published on every eighth day, thirty-two pages, large octavo, closely printed, and price only four-pence. Accordingly with a flaming prospectus, — "*Knowledge is Power*," "To cry the state of the political atmosphere," — and so forth, I set off on a tour to the North, from Bristol to Sheffield, for the purpose of procuring customers, preaching by the way in most of the great towns, as an hireless volunteer, in a blue coat and white waistcoat, that not a rag of the woman of Babylon [2] might be seen on me. For I was at that time and long after, though a Trinitarian (that is *ad normam Platonis*) [3] in philosophy, yet a zealous Unitarian in religion; more accurately, I was a Psilanthropist,[4] one of those who believe our Lord to have been the real son of Joseph, and who lay the main stress on the resurrection rather than on the crucifixion. O! never can I remember those days with either shame or regret. For I was most sincere, most disinterested. My opinions were indeed in many and most important points erroneous; but my heart was single. Wealth, rank, life itself then seemed cheap to me, compared with the interests of what I believed to be the truth, and the will of my Maker. I cannot even accuse myself of having been actuated by vanity; for in the expansion of my enthusiasm I did not think of myself at all.

My campaign commenced at Birmingham; and my first attack was on a rigid Calvinist, a tallow-chandler by trade. He was a tall dingy man, in whom length was so predominant over breadth, that he might almost have been borrowed for a foundery poker. O that face! a face *κατ' ἐμφασιν*![5] I have it before me at this moment. The lank, black, twine-like hair, *pingui-nitescent*,[1] cut in a straight line along the black stubble of his thin gunpowder eye-brows, that looked like a scorched after-math from a last week's shaving. His coat collar behind in perfect unison, both of color and lustre, with the coarse yet glib cordage, which I suppose he called his hair, and which with a bend inward at the nape of the neck, — the only approach to flexure in his whole figure, — slunk in behind his waistcoat; while the countenance lank, dark, very hard, and with strong perpendicular furrows, gave me a dim notion of some one looking at me through a used gridiron, all soot, grease, and iron! But he was one of the thorough-bred, a true lover of liberty, and, as I was informed, had proved to the satisfaction of many, that Mr. Pitt was one of the horns of the second beast in The Revelation, that *spoke as a dragon*. A person, to whom one of my letters of recommendation had been addressed, was my introducer. It was a new event in my life, my first stroke in the new business I had undertaken of an author, yea, and of an author trading on his own account. My companion after some imperfect sentences and a multitude of hums and has, abandoned the cause to his client; and I commenced an harangue of half an hour to Phileleutheros,[2] the tallow-chandler, varying my notes, through the whole gamut of eloquence, from the ratiocinative to the declamatory, and in the latter from the pathetic to the indignant. I argued, I described, I promised, I prophesied; and beginning with the captivity of nations I ended with the near approach of the millennium, finishing the whole with some of my own verses describing that glorious state out of the Religious Musings:

> ——————— Such delights
> As float to earth, permitted visitants!
> When in some hour of solemn jubilee
> The massive gates of Paradise are thrown
> Wide open, and forth come in fragments wild
> Sweet echoes of unearthly melodies,
> And odors snatched from beds of amaranth,
> And they, that from the crystal river of life
> Spring up on freshened wing, ambrosial gales!

My taper man of lights listened with perseverant and praiseworthy patience, though, as I was afterwards told, on complaining of certain gales that were not altogether ambrosial, it was a melting day with him. "And what, Sir," he said, after a short pause, "might be the cost?" "Only four-pence," — (O! how I felt the anti-climax, the abysmal

1 opponents of war. 2 Roman Church.
3 By rule of Plato which included the good, the true, and the beautiful.
4 Coleridge's coinage from the Greek words ψιλὸς and ἄνθρωπος, merely man.
5 according to appearance.

1 shining with oil. 2 lover of freedom.

bathos of that four-pence!) — "only four-pence, Sir, each number, to be published on every eighth day." — "That comes to a deal of money at the end of a year. And how much, did you say, there was to be for the money?" — "Thirty-two pages, Sir, large octavo, closely printed." — "Thirty and two pages? Bless me! why except what I does in a family way on the Sabbath, that's more than I ever reads, Sir! all the year round. I am as great a one, as any man in Brummagem, Sir! for liberty and truth and all them sort of things, but as to this, — no offence, I hope, Sir, — I must beg to be excused."

So ended my first canvass: from causes that I shall presently mention, I made but one other application in person. This took place at Manchester to a stately and opulent wholesale dealer in cottons. He took my letter of introduction, and, having perused it, measured me from head to foot and again from foot to head, and then asked if I had any bill or invoice of the thing. I presented my prospectus to him. He rapidly skimmed and hummed over the first side, and still more rapidly the second and concluding page; crushed it within his fingers and the palm of his hand; then most deliberately and significantly rubbed and smoothed one part against the other; and lastly putting it into his pocket turned his back on me with an "*over-run* with these articles!" and so without another syllable retired into his counting-house. And, I can truly say, to my unspeakable amusement.

This, I have said, was my second and last attempt. On returning baffled from the first, in which I had vainly essayed to repeat the miracle of Orpheus with the Brummagem patriot, I dined with the tradesman who had introduced me to him. After dinner he importuned me to smoke a pipe with him, and two or three other *illuminati* of the same rank. I objected, both because I was engaged to spend the evening with a minister and his friends, and because I had never smoked except once or twice in my lifetime, and then it was herb tobacco mixed with Oronooko. On the assurance, however, that the tobacco was equally mild, and seeing too that it was of a yellow color; — not forgetting the lamentable difficulty, I have always experienced, in saying, "No," and in abstaining from what the people about me were doing, — I took half a pipe, filling the lower half of the bowl with salt. I was soon however compelled to resign it, in consequence of a giddiness and distressful feeling in my eyes, which, as I had drunk but a single glass of ale, must, I knew, have been the effect of the tobacco. Soon after, deeming myself recovered, I sallied forth to my engagement; but the walk and the fresh air brought on all the symptoms again, and, I had scarcely entered the minister's drawing-room, and opened a small pacquet of letters, which he had received from Bristol for me; ere I sank back on the sofa in a sort of swoon rather than sleep. Fortunately I had found just time enough to inform him of the confused state of my feelings, and of the occasion. For here and thus I lay, my face like a wall that is white-washing, deathly pale and with the cold drops of perspiration running down it from my forehead, while one after another there dropped in the different gentlemen, who had been invited to meet, and spend the evening with me, to the number of from fifteen to twenty. As the poison of tobacco acts but for a short time, I at length awoke from insensibility, and looked round on the party, my eyes dazzled by the candles which had been lighted in the interim. By way of relieving my embarrassment one of the gentlemen began the conversation, with "Have you seen a paper to-day, Mr. Coleridge?" "Sir!" I replied, rubbing my eyes, "I am far from convinced, that a Christian is permitted to read either newspapers or any other works of merely political and temporary interest." This remark, so ludicrously inapposite to, or rather, incongruous with, the purpose, for which I was known to have visited Birmingham, and to assist me in which they were all then met, produced in an voluntary and general burst of laughter; and seldom indeed have I passed so many delightful hours, as I enjoyed in that room from the moment of that laugh till an early hour the next morning. Never, perhaps, in so mixed and numerous a party have I since heard conversation sustained with such animation, enriched with such variety of information and enlivened with such a flow of anecdote. Both then and afterwards they all joined in dissuading me from proceeding with my scheme; assured me in the most friendly and yet most flattering expressions, that neither was the employment fit for me, nor I fit for the employment. Yet, if I determined on persevering in it, they promised to exert themselves to the utmost to procure subscribers, and insisted that I should make no more applications in person, but carry on the canvass by proxy. The same hospitable reception, the same dissuasion, and, that fail-

ing, the same kind exertions in my behalf, I met with at Manchester, Derby, Nottingham, Sheffield, — indeed, at every place in which I took up my sojourn. I often recall with affectionate pleasure the many respectable men who interested themselves for me, a perfect stranger to them, not a few of whom I can still name among my friends. They will bear witness for me how opposite even then my principles were to those of Jacobinism [1] or even of democracy, and can attest the strict accuracy of the statement which I have left on record in the tenth and eleventh numbers of *The Friend*.

From this rememberable tour I returned with nearly a thousand names on the subscription list of *The Watchman;* yet more than half convinced, that prudence dictated the abandonment of the scheme. But for this very reason I persevered in it; for I was at that period of my life so completely hagridden by the fear of being influenced by selfish motives, that to know a mode of conduct to be the dictate of prudence was a sort of presumptive proof to my feelings, that the contrary was the dictate of duty. Accordingly, I commenced the work, which was announced in London by long bills in letters larger than had ever been seen before, and which, I have been informed, for I did not see them myself, eclipsed the glories even of the lottery puffs. But alas! the publication of the very first number was delayed beyond the day announced for its appearance. In the second number an essay against fast days, with a most censurable application of a text from Isaiah [2] for its motto, lost me near five hundred of my subscribers at one blow. In the two following numbers I made enemies of all my Jacobin and democratic patrons; for, disgusted by their infidelity, and their adoption of French morals with French *psilosophy;* [3] and perhaps thinking, that charity ought to begin nearest home; instead of abusing the government and the Aristocrats chiefly or entirely, as had been expected of me, I levelled my attacks at "modern patriotism," and even ventured to declare my belief, that whatever the motives of ministers might have been for the sedition, or as it was then the fashion to call them, the *gagging* bills,[4] yet the bills themselves would produce an effect to be desired by all the true friends of freedom, as far as they should contribute to deter men from openly declaiming on subjects, the principles of which they had never bottomed and from "pleading *to* the poor and ignorant, instead of pleading *for* them." At the same time I avowed my conviction, that national education and a concurring spread of the Gospel were the indispensable condition of any true political melioration. Thus by the time the seventh number was published, I had the mortification — (but why should I say this, when in truth I cared too little for any thing that concerned my worldly interests to be at all mortified about it?) — of seeing the preceding numbers exposed in sundry old iron shops for a penny a piece. At the ninth number I dropt the work. But from the London publisher I could not obtain a shilling; he was a ——— and set me at defiance. From other places I procured but little, and after such delays as rendered that little worth nothing; and I should have been inevitably thrown into jail by my Bristol printer, who refused to wait even for a month, for a sum between eighty and ninety pounds, if the money had not been paid for me by a man by no means affluent, a dear friend,[1] who attached himself to me from my first arrival at Bristol, who has continued my friend with a fidelity unconquered by time or even by my own apparent neglect; a friend from whom I never received an advice that was not wise, nor a remonstrance that was not gentle and affectionate.

Conscientiously an opponent of the first revolutionary war, yet with my eyes thoroughly opened to the true character and impotence of the favorers of revolutionary principles in England, principles which I held in abhorrence, — (for it was part of my political creed, that whoever ceased to act as an individual by making himself a member of any society not sanctioned by his Government, forfeited the rights of a citizen) — a vehement Anti-Ministerialist, but after the invasion of Switzerland,[2] a more vehement Anti-Gallican, and still more intensely an Anti-Jacobin, I retired to a cottage at Stowey, and provided for my scanty maintenance by writing verses for a London Morning Paper. I saw plainly, that literature was not a profession, by which I could expect to live; for I could not disguise from myself, that, whatever my talents might or might not be in

1 The extremists of the French Revolution were known as Jacobins.

2 "Wherefore my bowels shall sound like an harp." Isaiah XVI, 11.

3 Coleridge puns by substituting ψιλός for φίλος — "mere wisdom" instead of "love of wisdom."

4 Laws passed in 1793 restricting liberty of speech and assembly.

1 Josiah Wade.

2 The French attacked Switzerland in 1798. Coleridge had retired to Stowey in 1796.

other respects, yet they were not of the sort that could enable me to become a popular writer; and that whatever my opinions might be in themselves, they were almost equi-distant from all the three prominent parties, the Pittites, the Foxites, and the Democrats. Of the unsaleable nature of my writings I had an amusing memento one morning from our own servant girl. For happening to rise at an earlier hour than usual, I observed her putting an extravagant quantity of paper into the grate in order to light the fire, and mildly checked her for her wastefulness; "La, Sir!" (replied poor Nanny) "why, it is only Watchmen."

I now devoted myself to poetry and to the study of ethics and psychology; and so profound was my admiration at this time of Hartley's *Essay on Man*,[1] that I gave his name to my first-born. In addition to the gentleman, my neighbor,[2] whose garden joined on to my little orchard, and the cultivation of whose friendship had been my sole motive in choosing Stowey for my residence, I was so fortunate as to acquire, shortly after my settlement there, an invaluable blessing in the society and neighborhood of one, to whom I could look up with equal reverence, whether I regarded him as a poet, a philosopher, or a man.[3] His conversation extended to almost all subjects, except physics and politics; with the latter he never troubled himself. Yet neither my retirement nor my utter abstraction from all the disputes of the day could secure me in those jealous times from suspicion and obloquy, which did not stop at me, but extended to my excellent friend, whose perfect innocence was even adduced as a proof of his guilt. One of the many busy sycophants[4] of that day, — (I here use the word sycophant in its original sense, as a wretch who *flatters* the prevailing party by *informing* against his neighbors, under pretence that they are exporters of prohibited *figs* or fancies, — for the moral application of the term it matters not which) — one of these sycophantic law-mongrels, discoursing on the politics of the neighborhood, uttered the following deep remark: "As to Coleridge, there is not so much harm in *him*, for he is a whirl-brain that talks whatever comes uppermost: but that ——! he is the *dark* traitor. *You never hear* HIM *say a syllable on the subject.*"

1 *Observations on Man*, etc., 1748.
2 Thomas Poole. 3 Wordsworth.
4 *σύκους φαίνειν*, to show or detect figs, the exportation of which from Athens was forbidden. (Coleridge's note.)

Now that the hand of Providence has disciplined all Europe into sobriety, as men tame wild elephants, by alternate blows and caresses; now that Englishmen of all classes are restored to their old English notions and feelings; it will with difficulty be credited, how great an influence was at that time possessed and exerted by the spirit of secret defamation, — (the too constant attendant on party-zeal) — during the restless interim from 1793 to the commencement of the Addington[1] administration, or the year before the truce of Amiens. For by the latter period the minds of the partizans, exhausted by excess of stimulation and humbled by mutual disappointment, had become languid. The same causes, that inclined the nation to peace, disposed the individuals to reconciliation. Both parties had found themselves in the wrong. The one had confessedly mistaken the moral character of the revolution, and the other had miscalculated both its moral and its physical resources. The experiment was made at the price of great, almost, we may say, of humiliating sacrifices; and wise men foresaw that it would fail, at least in its direct and ostensible object. Yet it was purchased cheaply, and realized an object of equal value, and, if possible, of still more vital importance. For it brought about a national unanimity unexampled in our history since the reign of Elizabeth; and Providence, never wanting to a good work when men have done their parts, soon provided a common *focus* in the cause of Spain, which made us all once more Englishmen by at once gratifying and correcting the predilections of both parties. The sincere reverers of the throne felt the cause of loyalty ennobled by its alliance with that of freedom; while the *honest* zealots of the people could not but admit, that freedom itself assumed a more winning form, humanized by loyalty and consecrated by religious principle. The youthful enthusiasts who, flattered by the morning rainbow of the French revolution, had made a boast of *expatriating* their hopes and fears, now, disciplined by the succeeding storms and sobered by increase of years, had been taught to prize and honor the spirit of nationality as the best safeguard of national independence, and this again as the absolute pre-requisite and necessary basis of popular rights.

If in Spain[2] too disappointment has nipped

1 Henry Addington (1757–1844), afterwards Lord Sidmouth, became Premier in 1801. The Peace of Amiens between France and England was signed in October of that year.
2 Ferdinand VII, restored to the throne of Spain in

our too forward expectations, yet all is not destroyed that is checked. The crop was perhaps springing up too rank in the stalk to *kern* well; and there were, doubtless, symptoms of the Gallican blight on it. If superstition and despotism have been suffered to let in their wolvish sheep to trample and eat it down even to the surface, yet the roots remain alive, and the second growth may prove the stronger and healthier for the temporary interruption. At all events, to *us* heaven has been just and gracious. The *people* of England did their best, and have received their rewards. Long may we continue to deserve it! Causes, which it had been too generally the habit of former statesmen to regard as belonging to another world, are now admitted by all ranks to have been the main agents of our success. "*We fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.*" [1] If then unanimity grounded on moral feelings has been among the least equivocal sources of our national glory, that man deserves the esteem of his countrymen, even as patriots, who devotes his life and the utmost efforts of his intellect to the preservation and continuance of that unanimity by the disclosure and establishment of principles. For by these all opinions must be ultimately tried; and, (as the feelings of men are worthy of regard only as far as they are the representatives of their fixed opinions,) on the knowledge of these all unanimity, not accidental and fleeting, must be grounded. Let the scholar, who doubts this assertion, refer only to the speeches and writings of Edmund Burke at the commencement of the American war and compare them with his speeches and writings at the commencement of the French revolution. He will find the principles exactly the same and the deductions the same; but the practical inferences almost opposite in the one case from those drawn in the other; yet in both equally legitimate and in both equally confirmed by the results. Whence gained he the superiority of foresight? Whence arose the striking difference, and in most instances even, the discrepancy between the grounds assigned by him and by those who voted with him, on the same questions? How are we to explain the notorious fact, that the speeches and writings of Edmund Burke are more interesting at the present day than they were found at the time of their first publication; while those of his illustrious confederates are either forgotten, or exist only to furnish proofs, that the same conclusion, which one man had deduced scientifically, *may* be brought out by another in consequence of errors that luckily chanced to neutralize each other. It would be unhandsome as a conjecture, even were it not, as it actually is, false in point of fact to attribute this difference to the deficiency of talent on the part of Burke's friends, or of experience, or of historical knowledge. The satisfactory solution is, that Edmund Burke possessed and had sedulously sharpened that eye, which sees all things, actions, and events, in relation to the laws that determine their existence and circumscribe their possibility. He referred habitually to principles. He was a scientific statesman; and therefore a seer. For every principle contains in itself the germs of a prophecy; and, as the prophetic power is the essential privilege of science, so the fulfilment of its oracles supplies the outward and, (to men in general,) the only test of its claim to the title. Wearisome as Burke's refinements appeared to his parliamentary auditors, yet the cultivated classes throughout Europe have reason to be thankful, that he

—— went on refining,
And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining.

Our very sign-boards (said an illustrious friend to me) give evidence, that there has been a Titian in the world. In like manner, not only the debates in parliament, not only our proclamations and state papers, but the essays and leading paragraphs of our journals are so many remembrancers of Edmund Burke. Of this the reader may easily convince himself, if either by recollection or reference he will compare the opposition newspapers at the commencement and during the five or six following years of the French revolution with the sentiments, and grounds of argument assumed in the same class of journals at present, and for some years past.

Whether the spirit of Jacobinism, which the writings of Burke exorcised from the higher and from the literary classes, may not, like the ghost in Hamlet, be heard moving and mining in the underground chambers with an activity the more dangerous because less noisy, may admit of a question. I have given my opinions on this point, and the grounds of them, in my letters to Judge Fletcher occasioned by his charge to the Wexford grand jury,[1] and published in the

1814, proved thoroughly reactionary, and the enemy of all reform.

1 Judges IV, 18–22.

1 November and December, 1814. (Coleridge's note.)

Courier. Be this as it may, the evil spirit of jealousy, and with it the Cerberean whelps of feud and slander, no longer walk their rounds, in cultivated society.

Far different were the days to which these anecdotes have carried me back. The dark guesses of some zealous *Quidnunc* met with so congenial a soil in the grave alarm of a titled Dogberry of our neighborhood, that a spy was actually sent down from the government *pour surveillance* of myself and friend. There must have been not only abundance, but variety of these "honorable men" at the disposal of Ministers: for this proved a very honest fellow. After three weeks' truly Indian perseverance in tracking us, (for we were commonly together,) during all which time seldom were we out of doors, but he contrived to be within hearing, — and all the while utterly unsuspected; how indeed *could* such a suspicion enter our fancies?) — he not only rejected Sir Dogberry's request that he would try yet a little longer, but declared to him his belief, that both my friend and myself were as good subjects, for aught he could discover to the contrary, as any in His Majesty's dominions. He had repeatedly hid himself, he said, for hours together behind a bank at the sea-side, (our favorite seat,) and overheard our conversation. At first he fancied, that we were aware of our danger; for he often heard me talk of one *Spy Nozy*, which he was inclined to interpret of himself, and of a remarkable feature belonging to him; but he was speedily convinced that it was the name of a man who had made a book and lived long ago. Our talk ran most upon books, and we were perpetually desiring each other to look at *this*, and to listen to *that;* but he could not catch a word about politics. Once he had joined me on the road; (this occurred, as I was returning home alone from my friend's house, which was about three miles from my own cottage,) and, passing himself off as a traveller, he had entered into conversation with me, and talked of purpose in a democrat way in order to draw me out. The result, it appears, not only convinced him that I was no friend of Jacobinism; but, (he added,) I had "plainly made it out to be such a silly as well as wicked thing, that he felt ashamed though he had only *put it on*." I distinctly remembered the occurrence, and had mentioned it immediately on my return, repeating what the traveller with his Bardolph nose had said, with my own answer; and so little did I suspect the true object of my "tempter ere accuser," that I expressed with no small pleasure my hope and belief, that the conversation had been of some service to the poor misled malcontent. This incident therefore prevented all doubt as to the truth of the report, which through a friendly medium came to me from the master of the village inn, who had been ordered to entertain the Government gentleman in his best manner, but above all to be silent concerning such a person being in his house. At length he received Sir Dogberry's commands to accompany his guest at the final interview; and, after the absolving suffrage of the *gentleman honored with the confidence of Ministers*, answered, as follows, to the following queries: D. Well, landlord! and what do you know of the person in question? L. I see him often pass by with maister ——, my landlord, (*that is, the owner of the house,*) and sometimes with the new-comers at Holford;[1] but I never said a word to him or he to me. D. But do you not know, that he has distributed papers and hand-bills of a seditious nature among the common people? L. No, your Honor! I never heard of such a thing. D. Have you not seen this Mr. Coleridge, or heard of, his haranguing and talking to knots and clusters of the inhabitants? — What are you grinning at, Sir? L. Beg your Honor's pardon! but I was only thinking, how they'd have stared at him. If what I have heard be true, your Honor! they would not have understood a word he said. When our Vicar was here, Dr. L.[2] the master of the great school and Canon of Windsor, there was a great dinner party at maister ———'s; and one of the farmers, that was there, told us that he and the Doctor talked real Hebrew Greek at each other for an hour together after dinner. D. Answer the question, Sir! does he ever harangue the people? L. I hope your Honor an't angry with me. I can say no more than I know. I never saw him talking with any one, but my landlord, and our curate, and the strange gentleman. D. Has he not been seen wandering on the hills towards the Channel, and along the shore, with books and papers in his hand, taking charts and maps of the country? L. Why, as to that, your Honor! I own, I have heard; I am sure, I would not wish to say ill of any body; but it is certain, that I have heard — D. Speak out, man! don't be afraid, you are doing your duty to your King and Govern-

1 The village where Wordsworth and Miss Wordsworth resided. (Coleridge's note.)
2 Dr. Langford. (Coleridge's note.)

ment. What have you heard? L. Why, folks do say, your Honor! as how that he is a *Poet*, and that he is going to put Quantock and all about here in print; and as they be so much together, I suppose that the strange gentleman has some *consarn* in the business." — So ended this formidable inquisition, the latter part of which alone requires explanation, and at the same time entitles the anecdote to a place in my literary life. I had considered it as a defect in the admirable poem of *The Task*, that the subject, which gives the title to the work, was not, and indeed could not be, carried on beyond the three or four first pages, and that, throughout the poem, the connections are frequently awkward, and the transitions abrupt and arbitrary. I sought for a subject, that should give equal room and freedom for description, incident, and impassioned reflections on men, nature, and society, yet supply in itself a natural connection to the parts, and unity to the whole. Such a subject I conceived myself to have found in a stream, traced from its source in the hills among the yellow-red moss and conical glass-shaped tufts of bent, to the first break or fall, where its drops become audible, and it begins to form a channel; thence to the peat and turf barn, itself built of the same dark squares as it sheltered; to the sheepfold; to the first cultivated plot of ground; to the lonely cottage and its bleak garden won from the heath; to the hamlet, the villages, the market-town, the manufactories, and the seaport. My walks therefore were almost daily on the top of Quantock, and among its sloping coombes. With my pencil and memorandum-book in my hand, I was *making studies*, as the artists call them, and often moulding my thoughts into verse, with the objects and imagery immediately before my senses. Many circumstances, evil and good, intervened to prevent the completion of the poem, which was to have been entitled *The Brook*. Had I finished the work, it was my purpose in the heat of the moment to have dedicated it to our then committee of public safety as containing the charts and maps, with which I was to have supplied the French Government in aid of their plans of invasion. And these too for a tract of coast that, from Clevedon to Minehead, scarcely permits the approach of a fishing-boat!

## CHAPTER XIV

Occasion of the *Lyrical Ballads*, and the objects originally proposed — Preface to the second edition — The ensuing controversy, its causes and acrimony — Philosophic definitions of a Poem and Poetry with scholia.

During the first year that Mr. Wordsworth and I were neighbors, our conversations turned frequently on the two cardinal points of poetry, the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colors of imagination. The sudden charm, which accidents of light and shade, which moonlight or sunset diffused over a known and familiar landscape, appeared to represent the practicability of combining both. These are the poetry of nature. The thought suggested itself — (to which of us I do not recollect) — that a series of poems might be composed of two sorts. In the one, the incidents and agents were to be, in part at least, supernatural; and the excellence aimed at was to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions, as would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. And real in this sense they have been to every human being who, from whatever source of delusion, has at any time believed himself under supernatural agency. For the second class, subjects were to be chosen from ordinary life; the characters and incidents were to be such as will be found in every village and its vicinity, where there is a meditative and feeling mind to seek after them, or to notice them, when they present themselves.

In this idea originated the plan of the *Lyrical Ballads;* in which it was agreed, that my endeavors should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith. Mr. Wordsworth, on the other hand, was to propose to himself as his object, to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention to the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude, we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand.

With this view I wrote *The Ancient Mariner*, and was preparing among other poems, *The Dark Ladie*, and the *Christabel*, in which

I should have more nearly realized my ideal, than I had done in my first attempt. But Mr. Wordsworth's industry had proved so much more successful, and the number of his poems so much greater, that my compositions, instead of forming a balance, appeared rather an interpolation of heterogeneous matter. Mr. Wordsworth added two or three poems written in his own character, in the impassioned, lofty, and sustained diction, which is characteristic of his genius. In this form the *Lyrical Ballads* were published; and were presented by him, as an experiment, whether subjects, which from their nature rejected the usual ornaments and extra-colloquial style of poems in general, might not be so managed in the language of ordinary life as to produce the pleasurable interest, which it is the peculiar business of poetry to impart. To the second edition he added a preface of considerable length; in which, notwithstanding some passages of apparently a contrary import, he was understood to contend for the extension of this style to poetry of all kinds, and to reject as vicious and indefensible all phrases and forms of speech that were not included in what he (unfortunately, I think, adopting an equivocal expression) called the language of real life. From this preface, prefixed to poems in which it was impossible to deny the presence of original genius, however mistaken its direction might be deemed, arose the whole long-continued controversy. For from the conjunction of perceived power with supposed heresy I explain the inveteracy and in some instances, I grieve to say, the acrimonious passions, with which the controversy has been conducted by the assailants.

Had Mr. Wordsworth's poems been the silly, the childish things, which they were for a long time described as being: had they been really distinguished from the compositions of other poets merely by meanness of language and inanity of thought; had they indeed contained nothing more than what is found in the parodies and pretended imitations of them; they must have sunk at once, a dead weight, into the slough of oblivion, and have dragged the preface along with them. But year after year increased the number of Mr. Wordsworth's admirers. They were found too not in the lower classes of the reading public, but chiefly among young men of strong sensibility and meditative minds; and their admiration (inflamed perhaps in some degree by opposition) was distinguished by its intensity, I might almost say, by its religious fervor. These facts, and the intellectual energy of the author, which was more or less consciously felt, where it was outwardly and even boisterously denied, meeting with sentiments of aversion to his opinions, and of alarm at their consequences, produced an eddy of criticism, which would of itself have borne up the poems by the violence with which it whirled them round and round. With many parts of this preface in the sense attributed to them and which the words undoubtedly seem to authorize, I never concurred; but on the contrary objected to them as erroneous in principle, and as contradictory (in appearance at least) both to other parts of the same preface, and to the author's own practice in the greater part of the poems themselves. Mr. Wordsworth in his recent collection has, I find, degraded this prefatory disquisition to the end of his second volume, to be read or not at the reader's choice. But he has not, as far as I can discover, announced any change in his poetic creed. At all events, considering it as the source of a controversy, in which I have been honored more than I deserve by the frequent conjunction of my name with his, I think it expedient to declare once for all, in what points I coincide with the opinions supported in that preface, and in what points I altogether differ. But in order to render myself intelligible I must previously, in as few words as possible, explain my views, first, of a Poem; and secondly, of Poetry itself, in kind, and in essence.

The office of philosophical disquisition consists in just distinction; while it is the privilege of the philosopher to preserve himself constantly aware, that distinction is not division. In order to obtain adequate notions of any truth, we must intellectually separate its distinguishable parts; and this is the technical process of philosophy. But having so done, we must then restore them in our conceptions to the unity, in which they actually co-exist; and this is the result of philosophy. A poem contains the same elements as a prose composition; the difference therefore must consist in a different combination of them, in consequence of a different object being proposed. According to the difference of the object will be the difference of the combination. It is possible, that the object may be merely to facilitate the recollection of any given facts or observations by artificial arrangement; and the composition will be a poem, merely because it is distinguished from prose by metre, or by

rhyme, or by both conjointly. In this, the lowest sense, a man might attribute the name of a poem to the well-known enumeration of the days in the several months;

"Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November," &c.

and others of the same class and purpose. And as a particular pleasure is found in anticipating the recurrence of sounds and quantities, all compositions that have this charm super-added, whatever be their contents, *may* be entitled poems.

So much for the superficial form. A difference of object and contents supplies an additional ground of distinction. The immediate purpose may be the communication of truths; either of truth absolute and demonstrable, as in works of science; or of facts experienced and recorded, as in history. Pleasure, and that of the highest and most permanent kind, may result from the attainment of the end; but it is not itself the immediate end. In other works the communication of pleasure may be the immediate purpose; and though truth, either moral or intellectual, ought to be the ultimate end, yet this will distinguish the character of the author, not the class to which the work belongs. Blest indeed is that state of society, in which the immediate purpose would be baffled by the perversion of the proper ultimate end; in which no charm of diction or imagery could exempt the *Bathyllus* even of an Anacreon, or the *Alexis* of Virgil, from disgust and aversion!

But the communication of pleasure may be the immediate object of a work not metrically composed; and that object may have been in a high degree attained, as in novels and romances. Would then the mere superaddition of metre, with or without rhyme, entitle these to the name of poems? The answer is, that nothing can permanently please, which does not contain in itself the reason why it is so, and not otherwise. If metre be superadded, all other parts must be made consonant with it. They must be such, as to justify the perpetual and distinct attention to each part, which an exact correspondent recurrence of accent and sound are calculated to excite. The final definition then, so deduced, may be thus worded. A poem is that species of composition, which is opposed to works of science, by proposing for its *immediate* object pleasure, not truth; and from all other species — (having *this* object in common with it) — it is discriminated by proposing to itself such delight from the *whole*, as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component *part*.

Controversy is not seldom excited in consequence of the disputants attaching each a different meaning to the same word; and in few instances has this been more striking, than in disputes concerning the present subject. If a man chooses to call every composition a poem, which is rhyme, or measure, or both, I must leave his opinion uncontroverted. The distinction is at least competent to characterize the writer's intention. If it were subjoined, that the whole is likewise entertaining or affecting, as a tale, or as a series of interesting reflections, I of course admit this as another fit ingredient of a poem, and an additional merit. But if the definition sought for be that of a *legitimate* poem, I answer, it must be one, the parts of which mutually support and explain each other; all in their proportion harmonizing with, and supporting the purpose and known influences of metrical arrangement. The philosophic critics of all ages coincide with the ultimate judgment of all countries, in equally denying the praises of a just poem, on the one hand, to a series of striking lines or distiches, each of which, absorbing the whole attention of the reader to itself, becomes disjoined from its context, and forms a separate whole, instead of a harmonizing part; and on the other hand, to an unsustained composition, from which the reader collects rapidly the general result unattracted by the component parts. The reader should be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, or by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution; but by the pleasureable activity of mind excited by the attractions of the journey itself. Like the motion of a serpent, which the Egyptians made the emblem of intellectual power; or like the path of sound through the air; — at every step he pauses and half recedes, and from the retrogressive movement collects the force which again carries him onward. *Præcipitandus est liber spiritus*,[1] says Petronius most happily. The epithet, *liber*, here balances the preceding verb; and it is not easy to conceive more meaning condensed in fewer words.

But if this should be admitted as a satisfactory character of a poem, we have still to seek for a definition of poetry. The writings of Plato, and Jeremy Taylor, and Burnet's[2]

1 A free spirit should be thrown forward.
2 Bishop Thomas Burnet, whose *Telluris Theoria Sacra* was a fanciful account of the structure of the earth.

*Theory of the Earth*, furnish undeniable proofs that poetry of the highest kind may exist without metre, and even without the contradistinguishing objects of a poem. The first chapter of Isaiah — (indeed a very large portion of the whole book) — is poetry in the most emphatic sense; yet it would be not less irrational than strange to assert, that pleasure, and not truth was the immediate object of the prophet. In short, whatever specific import we attach to the word, Poetry, there will be found involved in it, as a necessary consequence, that a poem of any length neither can be, nor ought to be, all poetry. Yet if an harmonious whole is to be produced, the remaining parts must be preserved in keeping with the poetry; and this can be no otherwise effected than by such a studied selection and artificial arrangement, as will partake of one, though not a peculiar property of poetry. And this again can be no other than the property of exciting a more continuous and equal attention than the language of prose aims at, whether colloquial or written.

My own conclusions on the nature of poetry, in the strictest use of the word, have been in part anticipated in some of the remarks on the Fancy and Imagination in the early part of this work. What is poetry? — is so nearly the same question with, what is a poet? — that the answer to the one is involved in the solution of the other. For it is a distinction resulting from the poetic genius itself, which sustains and modifies the images, thoughts, and emotions of the poet's own mind.

The poet, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) *fuses*, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which I would exclusively appropriate the name of Imagination. This power, first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, control, *laxis effertur habenis*,[1] reveals itself in the balance or reconcilement of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general with the concrete; the idea with the image; the individual with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order; judgment ever awake and steady self-possession with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement; and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry. Doubtless, as Sir John Davies observes of the soul — (and his words may with slight alteration be applied, and even more appropriately, to the poetic Imagination) —

> Doubtless this could not be, but that she turns
> Bodies to *spirit* by sublimation strange,
> As fire converts to fire the things it burns,
> As we our food into our nature change.
>
> From their gross matter she abstracts *their* forms,
> And draws a kind of quintessence from things;
> Which to her proper nature she transforms
> To bear them light on her celestial wings.
>
> *Thus* does she, when from *individual states*
> She doth abstract the universal kinds;
> *Which then re-clothed in divers names and fates*
> *Steal access through the senses to our minds.*[1]

Finally, Good Sense is the Body of poetic genius, Fancy its Drapery, Motion its Life, and Imagination the Soul that is everywhere, and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent whole.

## CHAPTER XVII

Examination of the tenets peculiar to Mr. Wordsworth — Rustic life (above all, low and rustic life) especially unfavorable to the formation of a human diction — The best parts of language the product of philosophers, not of clowns or shepherds — Poetry essentially ideal and generic — The language of Milton as much the language of real life, yea, incomparably more so than that of the cottager.

As far then as Mr. Wordsworth in his preface contended, and most ably contended, for a reformation in our poetic diction, as far as he has evinced the truth of passion, and the dramatic propriety of those figures and metaphors in the original poets, which, stripped of their justifying reasons, and converted into mere artifices of connection or ornament, constitute the characteristic falsity in the poetic style of the moderns; and as far as he has, with equal acuteness and clearness, pointed out the process by which this change was effected, and the resemblances between that state into which the reader's mind is thrown by the pleasurable confusion of

1 Is borne along with loosened reins.

1 Quoted with alterations from Sir John Davies' poem *On the Soul of Man*, sect. IV.

thought from an unaccustomed train of words and images; and that state which is induced by the natural language of impassioned feeling; he undertook a useful task, and deserves all praise, both for the attempt and for the execution. The provocations to this remonstrance in behalf of truth and nature were still of perpetual recurrence before and after the publication of this preface. I cannot likewise but add, that the comparison of such poems of merit, as have been given to the public within the last ten or twelve years, with the majority of those produced previously to the appearance of that preface, leave no doubt on my mind, that Mr. Wordsworth is fully justified in believing his efforts to have been by no means ineffectual. Not only in the verses of those who have professed their admiration of his genius, but even of those who have distinguished themselves by hostility to his theory, and depreciation of his writings, are the impressions of his principles plainly visible. It is possible, that with these principles others may have been blended, which are not equally evident; and some which are unsteady and subvertible from the narrowness or imperfection of their basis. But it is more than possible, that these errors of defect or exaggeration, by kindling and feeding the controversy, may have conduced not only to the wider propagation of the accompanying truths, but that, by their frequent presentation to the mind in an excited state, they may have won for them a more permanent and practical result. A man will borrow a part from his opponent the more easily, if he feels himself justified in continuing to reject a part. While there remain important points in which he can still feel himself in the right, in which he still finds firm footing for continued resistance, he will gradually adopt those opinions, which were the least remote from his own convictions, as not less congruous with his own theory than with that which he reprobates. In like manner with a kind of instinctive prudence, he will abandon by little and little his weakest posts, till at length he seems to forget that they had ever belonged to him, or affects to consider them at most as accidental and "petty annexments," the removal of which leaves the citadel unhurt and unendangered.

My own differences from certain supposed parts of Mr. Wordsworth's theory ground themselves on the assumption, that his words had been rightly interpreted, as purporting that the proper diction for poetry in general consists altogether in a language taken, with due exceptions, from the mouths of men in real life, a language which actually constitutes the natural conversation of men under the influence of natural feelings. My objection is, first, that in any sense this rule is applicable only to certain classes of poetry; secondly, that even to these classes it is not applicable, except in such a sense, as hath never by any one (as far as I know or have read,) been denied or doubted; and lastly, that as far as, and in that degree in which it is practicable, it is yet as a rule useless, if not injurious, and therefore either need not, or ought not to be practised. The poet informs his reader, that he had generally chosen low and rustic life; but not as low and rustic, or in order to repeat that pleasure of doubtful moral effect, which persons of elevated rank and of superior refinement oftentimes derive from a happy imitation of the rude unpolished manners and discourse of their inferiors. For the pleasure so derived may be traced to three exciting causes. The first is the naturalness, in fact, of the things represented. The second is the apparent naturalness of the representation, as raised and qualified by an imperceptible infusion of the author's own knowledge and talent, which infusion does, indeed, constitute it an imitation as distinguished from a mere copy. The third cause may be found in the reader's conscious feeling of his superiority awakened by the contrast presented to him; even as for the same purpose the kings and great barons of yore retained, sometimes actual clowns and fools, but more frequently shrewd and witty fellows in that character. These, however, were not Mr. Wordsworth's objects. *He* chose low and rustic life, "because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil, in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings coexist in a state of greater simplicity, and consequently may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings; and from the necessary character of rural occupations are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature." [1]

Now it is clear to me, that in the most

[1] From Wordsworth's Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*.

interesting of the poems, in which the author is more or less dramatic, as *The Brothers*, *Michael*, *Ruth*, *The Mad Mother*, and others, the persons introduced are by no means taken from low or rustic life in the common acceptation of those words! and it is not less clear, that the sentiments and language, as far as they can be conceived to have been really transferred from the minds and conversation of such persons, are attributable to causes and circumstances not necessarily connected with "their occupations and abode." The thoughts, feelings, language, and manners of the shepherd-farmers in the vales of Cumberland and Westmoreland, as far as they are actually adopted in those poems, may be accounted for from causes, which will and do produce the same results in every state of life, whether in town or country. As the two principal I rank that independence, which raises a man above servitude, or daily toil for the profit of others, yet not above the necessity of industry and a frugal simplicity of domestic life; and the accompanying unambitious, but solid and religious, education, which has rendered few books familiar, but the Bible, and the Liturgy or Hymn book. To this latter cause, indeed, which is so far accidental, that it is the blessing of particular countries and a particular age, not the product of particular places or employments, the poet owes the show of probability, that his personages might really feel, think, and talk with any tolerable resemblance to his representation. It is an excellent remark of Dr. Henry More's, that "a man of confined education, but of good parts, by constant reading of the Bible will naturally form a more winning and commanding rhetoric than those that are learned: the intermixture of tongues and of artificial phrases debasing *their* style."

It is, moreover, to be considered that to the formation of healthy feelings, and a reflecting mind, negations involve impediments not less formidable than sophistication and vicious intermixture. I am convinced, that for the human soul to prosper in rustic life a certain vantage-ground is prerequisite. It is not every man that is likely to be improved by a country life or by country labors. Education, or original sensibility, or both, must pre-exist, if the changes, forms, and incidents of nature are to prove a sufficient stimulant. And where these are not sufficient, the mind contracts and hardens by want of stimulants: and the man becomes selfish, sensual, gross, and hard-hearted. Let the management of the Poor Laws in Liverpool, Manchester, or Bristol be compared with the ordinary dispensation of the poor rates in agricultural villages, where the farmers are the overseers and guardians of the poor. If my own experience have not been particularly unfortunate, as well as that of the many respectable country clergymen with whom I have conversed on the subject, the result would engender more than scepticism concerning the desirable influences of low and rustic life in and for itself. Whatever may be concluded on the other side, from the stronger local attachments and enterprising spirit of the Swiss, and other mountaineers, applies to a particular mode of pastoral life, under forms of property that permit and beget manners truly republican, not to rustic life in general, or to the absence of artificial cultivation. On the contrary the mountaineers, whose manners have been so often eulogized, are in general better educated and greater readers than men of equal rank elsewhere. But where this is not the case, as among the peasantry of North Wales, the ancient mountains, with all their terrors and all their glories, are pictures to the blind, and music to the deaf.

I should not have entered so much into detail upon this passage, but here seems to be the point, to which all the lines of difference converge as to their source and centre; — I mean, as far as, and in whatever respect, my poetic creed *does* differ from the doctrines promulgated in this preface. I adopt with full faith, the principle of Aristotle, that poetry, as poetry, is essentially ideal, that it avoids and excludes all accident; that its apparent individualities of rank, character, or occupation must be representative of a class; and that the persons of poetry must be clothed with generic attributes, with the common attributes of the class: not with such as one gifted individual might possibly possess, but such as from his situation it is most probable before-hand that he would possess. If my premises are right and my deductions legitimate, it follows that there can be no poetic medium between the swains of Theocritus and those of an imaginary golden age.

The characters of the vicar and the shepherd-mariner in the poem of *The Brothers*, and that of the shepherd of Green-head Ghyll in the *Michael*, have all the verisimilitude and representative quality, that the purposes of poetry can require. They are persons of a known and abiding class, and their manners and sentiments the natural

product of circumstances common to the class. Take Michael, for instance:

An old man stout of heart, and strong of limb.
His bodily frame had been from youth to age
Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen,
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
And watchful more than ordinary men.
Hence he had learned the meaning of all winds,
Of blasts of every tone; and oftentimes
When others heeded not, He heard the South
Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
"The winds are now devising work for me!"
And truly, at all times, the storm, that drives
The traveller to a shelter, summoned him
Up to the mountains: he had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him and left him on the heights.
So lived he, until his eightieth year was past.
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,
Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.
Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed
The common air; the hills, which he so oft
Had climbed with vigorous steps; which had impressed
So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;
Which, like a book, preserved the memory
Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts,
So grateful in themselves, the certainty
Of honorable gain; these fields, these hills
Which were his living Being, even more
Than his own blood — what could they less? had laid
Strong hold on his affections, were to him
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

On the other hand, in the poems which are pitched in a lower key, as the *Harry Gill*, and *The Idiot Boy*, the feelings are those of human nature in general; though the poet has judiciously laid the scene in the country, in order to place himself in the vicinity of interesting images, without the necessity of ascribing a sentimental perception of their beauty to the persons of his drama. In *The Idiot Boy*, indeed, the mother's character is not so much the real and native product of a "situation where the essential passions of the heart find a better soil, in which they can attain their maturity and speak a plainer and more emphatic language," as it is an impersonation of an instinct abandoned by judgment. Hence the two following charges seem to me not wholly groundless: at least, they are the only plausible objections, which I have heard to that fine poem. The one is, that the author has not, in the poem itself, taken sufficient care to preclude from the reader's fancy the disgusting images of ordinary morbid idiocy, which yet it was by no means his intention to represent. He was even by the "burr, burr, burr," uncounteracted by any preceding description of the boy's beauty, assisted in recalling them. The other is, that the idiocy of the boy is so evenly balanced by the folly of the mother, as to present to the general reader rather a laughable burlesque on the blindness of anile dotage, than an analytic display of maternal affection in its ordinary workings.

In *The Thorn*, the poet himself acknowledges in a note the necessity of an introductory poem, in which he should have portrayed the character of the person from whom the words of the poem are supposed to proceed: a superstitious man moderately imaginative, of slow faculties and deep feelings, "a captain of a small trading vessel, for example, who, being past the middle age of life, had retired upon an annuity, or small independent income, to some village or country town of which he was not a native, or in which he had not been accustomed to live. Such men having nothing to do become credulous and talkative from indolence." But in a poem, still more in a lyric poem — and the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet* alone prevents me from extending the remark even to dramatic poetry, if indeed even the Nurse can be deemed altogether a case in point — it is not possible to imitate truly a dull and garrulous discourser, without repeating the effects of dullness and garrulity. However this may be, I dare assert, that the parts — (and these form the far larger portion of the whole) — which might as well or still better have proceeded from the poet's own imagination, and have been spoken in his own character, are those which have given, and which will continue to give, universal delight; and that the passages exclusively appropriate to the supposed narrator, such as the last couplet of the third stanza;[1] the seven last lines of the tenth;[2] and the five following

1 I've measured it from side to side;
'Tis three feet long, and two feet wide.

2 Nay, rack your brain — 'tis all in vain,
I'll tell you every thing I know;
But to the Thorn, and to the Pond
Which is a little step beyond,
I wish that you would go:
Perhaps, when you are at the place,
You something of her tale may trace.

stanzas, with the exception of the four admirable lines at the commencement of the fourteenth, are felt by many unprejudiced and unsophisticated hearts, as sudden and unpleasant sinkings from the height to which the poet had previously lifted them, and to which he again re-elevates both himself and his reader.

If then I am compelled to doubt the theory, by which the choice of characters was to be directed, not only *a priori*, from grounds of reason, but both from the few instances in which the poet himself need be supposed to have been governed by it, and from the comparative inferiority of those instances; still more must I hesitate in my assent to the sentence which immediately follows the former citation; and which I can neither admit as particular fact, nor as general rule. "The language, too, of these men has been adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the action of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions." To this I reply; that a rustic's language, purified from all provincialism and grossness, and so far reconstructed as to be made consistent with the rules of grammar — (which are in essence no other than the laws of universal logic, applied to psychological materials) — will not differ from the language of any other man of common sense, however learned or refined he may be, except as far as the notions, which the rustic has to convey, are fewer and more indiscriminate. This will become still clearer, if we add the consideration — (equally important though less obvious) — that the rustic, from the more imperfect development of his faculties, and from the lower state of their cultivation, aims almost solely to convey insulated facts, either those of his scanty experience or his traditional belief; while the educated man chiefly seeks to discover and express those connections of things, or those relative bearings of fact to fact, from which some more or less general law is deducible. For facts are valuable to a wise man, chiefly as they lead to the discovery of the indwelling law, which is the true being of things, the sole solution of their modes of existence, and in the knowledge of which consists our dignity and our power.

As little can I agree with the assertion, that from the objects with which the rustic hourly communicates the best part of language is formed. For first, if to communicate with an object implies such an acquaintance with it, as renders it capable of being discriminately reflected on, the distinct knowledge of an uneducated rustic would furnish a very scanty vocabulary. The few things and modes of action requisite for his bodily conveniences would alone be individualized, while all the rest of nature would be expressed by a small number of confused general terms. Secondly, I deny that the words and combinations of words derived from the objects, with which the rustic is familiar, whether with distinct or confused knowledge, can be justly

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I'll give you the best help I can:
Before you up the mountain go,
Up to the dreary mountain-top,
I'll tell you all I know.
'Tis now some two-and-twenty years
Since she (her name is Martha Ray)
Gave, with a maiden's true good will,
Her company to Stephen Hill;
And she was blithe and gay,
And she was happy, happy still
Whene'er she thought of Stephen Hill.

And they had fixed the wedding-day,
The morning that must wed them both;
But Stephen to another maid
Had sworn another oath;
And, with this other maid, to church
Unthinking Stephen went —
Poor Martha! on that woeful day
A pang of pitiless dismay
Into her soul was sent;
A fire was kindled in her breast,
Which might not burn itself to rest.

They say, full six months after this,
While yet the summer leaves were green,
She to the mountain-top would go,
And there was often seen;
'Tis said a child was in her womb,
As now to any eye was plain;
She was with child, and she was mad;
Yet often she was sober sad
From her exceeding pain.
Oh me! ten thousand times I'd rather
That he had died, that cruel father!
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .

Last Christmas when they talked of this,
Old Farmer Simpson did maintain,
That in her womb the infant wrought
About its mother's heart, and brought
Her senses back again:
And, when at last her time drew near,
Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

No more I know, I wish I did,
And I would tell it all to you:
For what became of this poor child
There's none that ever knew:
And if a child was born or no,
There's no one that could ever tell;
And if 'twas born alive or dead,
There's no one knows, as I have said;
But some remember well,
That Martha Ray about this time
Would up the mountain often climb.

said to form the best part of language. It is more than probable, that many classes of the brute creation possess discriminating sounds, by which they can convey to each other notices of such objects as concern their food, shelter, or safety. Yet we hesitate to call the aggregate of such sounds a language, otherwise than metaphorically. The best part of human language, properly so called, is derived from reflection on the acts of the mind itself. It is formed by a voluntary appropriation of fixed symbols to internal acts, to processes and results of imagination, the greater part of which have no place in the consciousness of uneducated man; though in civilized society, by imitation and passive remembrance of what they hear from their religious instructors and other superiors, the most uneducated share in the harvest which they neither sowed, nor reaped. If the history of the phrases in hourly currency among our peasants were traced, a person not previously aware of the fact would be surprised at finding so large a number, which three or four centuries ago were the exclusive property of the universities and the schools; and, at the commencement of the Reformation, had been transferred from the school to the pulpit, and thus gradually passed into common life. The extreme difficulty, and often the impossibility, of finding words for the simplest moral and intellectual processes of the languages of uncivilized tribes has proved perhaps the weightiest obstacle to the progress of our most zealous and adroit missionaries. Yet these tribes are surrounded by the same nature as our peasants are; but in still more impressive forms; and they are, moreover, obliged to particularize many more of them. When, therefore, Mr. Wordsworth adds, "accordingly, such a language" — (meaning, as before, the language of rustic life purified from provincialism) — "arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honor upon themselves and their art in proportion as they indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression;" it may be answered, that the language, which he has in view, can be attributed to rustics with no greater right, than the style of Hooker or Bacon to Tom Brown or Sir Roger L'Estrange.[1] Doubtless, if what is peculiar to each were omitted in each, the result must needs be the same. Further, that the poet, who uses an illogical diction, or a style fitted to excite only the low and changeable pleasure of wonder by means of groundless novelty, substitutes a language of folly and vanity, not for that of the rustic, but for that of good sense and natural feeling.

Here let me be permitted to remind the reader, that the positions, which I controvert, are contained in the sentences — "a selection of the real language of men;" — "the language of these men" (that is, men in low and rustic life) "has been adopted; I have proposed to myself to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men."

"Between the language of prose and that of metrical composition, there neither is, nor can be, any *essential difference:*" it is against these exclusively that my opposition is directed.

I object, in the very first instance, to an equivocation in the use of the word "real." Every man's language varies, according to the extent of his knowledge, the activity of his faculties, and the depth or quickness of his feelings. Every man's language has, first, its individualities; secondly, the common properties of the class to which he belongs; and thirdly, words and phrases of universal use. The language of Hooker, Bacon, Bishop Taylor, and Burke differs from the common language of the learned class only by the superior number and novelty of the thoughts and relations which they had to convey. The language of Algernon Sidney differs not at all from that, which every well-educated gentleman would wish to write, and (with due allowances for the undeliberateness, and less connected train, of thinking natural and proper to conversation) such as he would wish to talk. Neither one nor the other differ half as much from the general language of cultivated society, as the language of Mr. Wordsworth's homeliest composition differs from that of a common peasant. For "real" therefore, we must substitute ordinary, or *lingua communis.* And this, we have proved, is no more to be found in the phraseology of low and rustic life than in that of any other class. Omit the peculiarities of each and the result of course must be common to all. And assuredly the omissions and changes to be made in the language of rustics, before it could be transferred to any species of poem, except the drama or other professed imitation, are at least as numerous and weighty, as would be required in adapting to the same

[1] Obscure writers of the seventeenth century.

purpose the ordinary language of tradesmen and manufacturers. Not to mention, that the language so highly extolled by Mr. Wordsworth varies in every county, nay in every village, according to the accidental character of the clergyman, the existence or non-existence of schools; or even, perhaps, as the exciseman, publican, and barber happen to be, or not to be, zealous politicians, and readers of the weekly newspaper *pro bono publico*. Anterior to cultivation the *lingua communis* of every country, as Dante has well observed, exists every where in parts, and no where as a whole.

Neither is the case rendered at all more tenable by the addition of the words, "in a state of excitement." For the nature of a man's words, where he is strongly affected by joy, grief, or anger, must necessarily depend on the number and quality of the general truths, conceptions and images, and of the words expressing them, with which his mind had been previously stored. For the property of passion is not to create; but to set in increased activity. At least, whatever new connections of thoughts or images, or — (which is equally, if not more than equally, the appropriate effect of strong excitement) — whatever generalizations of truth or experience the heat of passion may produce; yet the terms of their conveyance must have pre-existed in his former conversations, and are only collected and crowded together by the unusual stimulation. It is indeed very possible to adopt in a poem the unmeaning repetitions, habitual phrases, and other blank counters, which an unfurnished or confused understanding interposes at short intervals, in order to keep hold of his subject, which is still slipping from him, and to give him time for recollection; or, in mere aid of vacancy, as in the scanty companies of a country stage the same player pops backwards and forwards, in order to prevent the appearance of empty spaces, in the procession of Macbeth, or Henry VIII. But what assistance to the poet, or ornament to the poem, these can supply, I am at a loss to conjecture. Nothing assuredly can differ either in origin or in mode more widely from the apparent tautologies of intense and turbulent feeling, in which the passion is greater and of longer endurance than to be exhausted or satisfied by a single representation of the image or incident exciting it. Such repetitions I admit to be a beauty of the highest kind; as illustrated by Mr. Wordsworth himself from the song of Deborah. *At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead.* (Judges v, 27.)

## CHAPTER XVIII

Language of metrical composition, why and wherein essentially different from that of prose — Origin and elements of metre — Its necessary consequences, and the conditions thereby imposed on the metrical writer in the choice of his diction.

I conclude, therefore, that the attempt is impracticable; and that, were it not impracticable, it would still be useless. For the very power of making the selection implies the previous possession of the language selected. Or where can the poet have lived? And by what rules could he direct his choice, which would not have enabled him to select and arrange his words by the light of his own judgment? We do not adopt the language of a class by the mere adoption of such words exclusively, as that class would use, or at least understand; but likewise by following the order, in which the words of such men are wont to succeed each other. Now this order, in the intercourse of uneducated men, is distinguished from the diction of their superiors in knowledge and power, by the greater disjunction and separation in the component parts of that, whatever it be, which they wish to communicate. There is a want of that prospectiveness of mind, that surview, which enables a man to foresee the whole of what he is to convey, appertaining to any one point; and by this means so to subordinate and arrange the different parts according to their relative importance, as to convey it at once, and as an organized whole.

Now I will take the first stanza, on which I have chanced to open, in the *Lyrical Ballads*. It is one the most simple and the least peculiar in its language.

> In distant countries have I been,
> And yet I have not often seen
> A healthy man, a man full grown,
> Weep in the public roads, alone.
> But such a one, on English ground,
> And in the broad highway, I met;
> Along the broad highway he came,
> His cheeks with tears were wet:
> Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad;
> And in his arms a lamb he had.

The words here are doubtless such as are current in all ranks of life; and of course not less so in the hamlet and cottage than in the shop, manufactory, college, or palace. But is this the *order*, in which the rustic would have placed the words? I am grievously de-

ceived, if the following less compact mode of commencing the same tale be not a far more faithful copy. "I have been in a many parts, far and near, and I don't know that I ever saw before a man crying by himself in the public road; a grown man I mean, that was neither sick nor hurt," etc., etc. But when I turn to the following stanza in *The Thorn:*

> At all times of the day and night
> This wretched woman thither goes;
> And she is known to every star,
> And every wind that blows:
> And there, beside the Thorn, she sits,
> When the blue day-light's in the skies,
> And when the whirlwind's on the hill,
> Or frosty air is keen and still,
> And to herself she cries,
> Oh misery! Oh misery!
> Oh woe is me! Oh misery!

and compare this with the language of ordinary men; or with that which I can conceive at all likely to proceed, in real life, from such a narrator, as is supposed in the note to the poem; compare it either in the succession of the images or of the sentences; I am reminded of the sublime prayer and hymn of praise, which Milton, in opposition to an established liturgy, presents as a fair specimen of common extemporary devotion, and such as we might expect to hear from every self-inspired minister of a conventicle! And I reflect with delight, how little a mere theory, though of his own workmanship, interferes with the processes of genuine imagination in a man of true poetic genius, who possesses, as Mr. Wordsworth, if ever man did, most assuredly does possess,

> The Vision and the Faculty divine.

## SIR WALTER SCOTT (1771–1832)

Scott began his literary career as an antiquary and as a poet. While engaged in Edinburgh in various legal positions (he was a member of the Bar), he translated German ballads and Goethe's romantic play, *Götz von Berlichingen;* collected popular ballads, which he published in three volumes under the title *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, 1802, 1803; and edited the mediæval romance, *Sir Tristrem.* In 1805, his literary career really began with *The Lay of the Last Minstrel.* Then followed the other well-known narrative poems, *Marmion*, 1808, and *The Lady of the Lake*, 1810. Two years later he built Abbotsford, near Melrose, which became his home for the rest of his life. In 1814, *Waverley*, his first novel, appeared anonymously. From that time on, partly because of Byron's growing popularity as a narrative poet, partly because of Scott's own inclination, his literary work is almost entirely in the field of the novel. These novels, too well known to be listed here, took all Britain by storm. In their blending of realistic and romantic elements, their originality of treatment, and their range of subject-matter, they were a revelation to Scott's contemporaries. Scott also edited the works of Dryden and Swift, wrote a life of Napoleon in nine volumes, and a history of Scotland. In spite of his high achievement and large output in these fields, and his great influence in the development of the novel, Scott, to many readers, is preëminently the writer of lyrics. Most of these are scattered through his novels and longer poems.

As a man, Scott was particularly lovable. His life was the embodiment of nineteenth-century romanticism in a sensible way. Anything old thrilled him. Old castles, old books delighted him. The supernatural lured him. Though lame, he reveled in the out-of-doors, especially wild landscapes. Family pride, his estate at Abbotsford, his baronetcy, were to him romantic ideals. Loyalty to a lost, but glorious, cause, like Bonnie Prince Charlie's, inspired him. Chivalry, with its code of honor, was a religion to him. In 1826 he assumed a debt of £130,000, not legally his (the result of the failure of the publishing house of Ballantyne, of which he was a silent partner), and worked prodigiously during his remaining years to pay it off. Yet, with all his aristocratic leanings, Scott had the sympathy of a Burns for the common man, and the admiration of a Byron for the sincere iconoclast.

Scott's works are easily available in various editions. The best biography is by J. G. Lockhart, his son-in-law. It is unsurpassed in its detail and its vividness. A slightly abridged version may be obtained in the Everyman's Library.

### LOCHINVAR

*From* MARMION, CANTO V

LADY HERON'S SONG

O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best,
And save his good broadsword, he weapons had none;
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He staid not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none;
But, ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late:
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all:
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword,
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word,)
"O, come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"

"I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied; —
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide, —
And now I am come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet; the knight took it up,
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar, —
"Now tread we a measure," said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard [1] did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bridemaidens whispered, "'Twere better by far
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

1 lively dance.

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall-door, and the charger stood near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung!
"She is won! we are gone! over bank, bush, and scaur; [1]
They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran:
There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

Pub. 1808.

## *Prologue to* THE LADY OF THE LAKE

Harp of the North! that moldering long hast hung
On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,
Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every string —
Oh minstrel Harp! still must thine accents sleep?
Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep?

Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon,
Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,
When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,
Aroused the fearful, or subdued the proud.
At each according pause, was heard aloud
Thine ardent symphony sublime and high!
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bowed;
For still the burthen of thy minstrelsy
Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's matchless eye.

1 steep bank

Oh wake once more! how rude soe'er the hand
That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray;
Oh wake once more! though scarce my skill command
Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay;
Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,
And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,
Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway,
The wizard note has not been touched in vain.
Then silent be no more! Enchantress, wake again!

Pub. 1810.

## SOLDIER, REST! THY WARFARE O'ER

*From* THE LADY OF THE LAKE

CANTO I

Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking:
Dream of battled fields no more,
Days of danger, nights of waking.
In our isle's enchanted hall,
Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy strains of music fall,
Every sense in slumber dewing.
Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more:
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
Armor's clang, or war-steed champing,
Trump nor pibroch [1] summon here
Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come
At the daybreak from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
Booming from the sedgy shallow.
Ruder sounds shall none be near,
Guards nor warders challenge here;
Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
Shouting clans, or squadrons stamping.

Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
Dream not, with the rising sun,
Bugles here shall sound reveille.
Sleep! the deer is in his den;
Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying;
Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen
How thy gallant steed lay dying.

1 wild music of the bagpipe.

Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done;
Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning to assail ye,
Here no bugles sound reveille.

Pub. 1810.

## BOAT SONG

*From* THE LADY OF THE LAKE

CANTO II

Hail to the chief who in triumph advances!
Honored and blest be the evergreen pine!
Long may the Tree in his banner that glances,
Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!
Heaven send it happy dew,
Earth lend it sap anew,
Gayly to bourgeon, and broadly to grow,
While every highland glen
Sends our shout back agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu,[1] ho! ieroe!"

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;
When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf on the mountain,
The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.
Moored in the rifted rock,
Proof to the tempest's shock,
Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;
Menteith and Breadalbane, then,
Echo his praises again,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen Fruin,
And Banachar's groans to our slogan replied;
Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,
And the best of Loch-Lomond lie dead on her side.
Widow and Saxon maid
Long shall lament our raid,
Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe;
Lennox and Leven-glen
Shake when they hear again,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!
Stretch to your oars, for the evergreen Pine!

1 "Black Roderick, the descendant of Alpine."

Oh! that the rose-bud that graces yon islands,
Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine!
Oh! that some seedling gem,
Worthy such noble stem,
Honored and blessed in their shadow might grow!
Loud should Clan-Alpine then
Ring from her deepmost glen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Pub. 1810.

## CORONACH[1]

*From* THE LADY OF THE LAKE

CANTO III

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest,
The font, re-appearing,
From the rain-drops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory;
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing,
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,[2]
Sage counsel in cumber,[3]
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and for ever!

Pub. 1810.

## BRIGNALL BANKS

*From* ROKEBY

CANTO III

O, Brignall banks are wild and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer queen.
And as I rode by Dalton-hall,
Beneath the turrets high,
A maiden on the castle wall
Was singing merrily:

"O, Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
Than reign our English queen."

"If, maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead we,
That dwell by dale and down.
And if thou canst that riddle read,
As read full well you may,
Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed,
As blithe as Queen of May."

Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
Than reign our English queen.

"I read[1] you, by your bugle-horn,
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn
To keep the king's greenwood."
"A ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And 'tis at peep of light;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night."

Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay;
I would I were with Edmund there,
To reign his Queen of May!

"With burnished brand and musketoon[2]
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold dragoon,
That lists the tuck of drum."
"I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear;
But when the beetle sounds his hum,
My comrades take the spear.

And O, though Brignall banks be fair,
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare,
Would reign my Queen of May!

"Maiden! a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I'll die;
The fiend whose lantern lights the mead
Were better mate than I!
And when I'm with my comrades met,
Beneath the greenwood bough,
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now.

Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green,

1 Highland funeral lament.
2 a hillside good for hunting. 3 trouble.

1 think, guess. 2 short musket.

And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer queen."
Pub. 1813.

## JOCK OF HAZELDEAN

The first stanza is ancient. The others were written by Scott.

"Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?
Why weep ye by the tide?
I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
And ye sall be his bride;
And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
Sae comely to be seen" —
But aye she loot [1] the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

"Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
And dry that cheek so pale;
Young Frank is chief of Errington,
And lord of Langley-dale;
His step is first in peaceful ha',
His sword in battle keen" —
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

"A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
Nor braid to bind your hair;
Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,
Nor palfrey fresh and fair;
And you, the foremost o' them a',
Shall ride our forest queen." —
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

The kirk was decked at morning-tide,
The tapers glimmered fair;
The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,
And dame and knight are there.
They sought her baith by bower and ha';
The lady was not seen!
She's o'er the Border, and awa'
Wi' Jock of Hazeldean.
Pub. 1816.

## PIBROCH OF DONALD DHU

Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,[2]
Pibroch of Donuil,
Wake thy wild voice anew,
Summon Clan Conuil.
Come away, come away,
Hark to the summons!
Come in your war array,
Gentles and commons.

1 let. 2 i.e. Donald the Black.

Come from deep glen, and
From mountain so rocky,
The war-pipe and pennon
Are at Inverlochy.
Come every hill-plaid and
True heart that wears one,
Come every steel blade and
Strong hand that bears one.

Leave untended the herd,
The flock without shelter;
Leave the corpse uninterred,
The bride at the altar;
Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges:
Come with your fighting gear,
Broadswords and targes.

Come as the winds come, when
Forests are rended;
Come as the waves come, when
Navies are stranded:
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster,
Chief, vassal, page and groom,
Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come;
See how they gather!
Wide waves the eagle plume,
Blended with heather.
Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
Forward each man set!
Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Knell for the onset!
Pub. 1816.

## CLARION

*From* OLD MORTALITY

Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife!
To all the sensual world proclaim,
One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name.
Pub. 1816.

## LULLABY OF AN INFANT CHIEF

O hush thee, my babie, thy sire was a knight,
Thy mother a lady, both lovely and bright;
The woods and the glens, from the towers which we see,
They are all belonging, dear babie, to thee.
O ho ro, i ri ri, cadul gu lo,[1]
O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

1 The last three words, meaning "Sleep on till day," are the title of old air upon which this song is based.

O fear not the bugle, though loudly it blows,
It calls but the warders that guard thy repose;
Their bows would be bended, their blades would be red,
Ere the step of a foeman drew near to thy bed.
O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

O hush thee, my babie, the time soon will come,
When thy sleep shall be broken by trumpet and drum;
Then hush thee, my darling, take rest while you may,
For strife comes with manhood, and waking with day.
O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

1815.

## PROUD MAISIE

*From* THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN

Proud Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

"Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me?" —
"When six braw [1] gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye."

"Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?" —
"The gray-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

"The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady.
The owl from the steeple sing,
'Welcome, proud lady.'"

Pub. 1818.

## COUNTY GUY

*From* QUENTIN DURWARD

Ah! County [2] Guy, the hour is nigh,
The sun has left the lea,
The orange-flower perfumes the bower,
The breeze is on the sea.
The lark, his lay who trilled all day,
Sits hushed his partner nigh;
Breeze, bird, and flower, confess the hour,
But where is County Guy?

The village maid steals through the shade,
Her shepherd's suit to hear;
To beauty shy, by lattice high,
Sings high-born Cavalier.
The star of Love, all stars above,
Now reigns o'er earth and sky;
And high and low the influence know —
But where is County Guy?

Pub. 1823.

## BONNY DUNDEE

John Graham of Claverhouse (Claver'se), Viscount Dundee, refused, before the Scottish Parliament (the Convention), to recognize the new king, William of Orange. He gathered a band of Jacobites and won a victory for James II at Killiecrankie, but died of wounds received in the battle.

To the Lords of Convention 'twas Claver'se who spoke:
"Ere the King's crown shall fall there are crowns to be broke;
So let each Cavalier who loves honor and me,
Come follow the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle your horses and call up your men;
Come open the West Port and let me gang free,
And it's room for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee!"

Dundee he is mounted, he rides up the street,
The bells are rung backward,[1] the drums they are beat;
But the Provost,[2] douce [3] man, said, "Just e'en let him be,
The Gude Town is weel quit of that Deil of Dundee."
Come fill up my cup, etc.

As he rode down the sanctified bends of the Bow,[4]
Ilk carline [5] was flyting [6] and shaking her pow; [7]
But the young plants of grace [8] they looked couthie [9] and slee,[10]
Thinking luck to thy bonnet, thou Bonny Dundee!
Come fill up my cup, etc.

1 fine. 2 earl.

1 The chimes played backward was an alarm signal.
2 chief magistrate.
3 calm.
4 Bow Street in Edinburgh.
5 every old woman.
6 quarreling, scolding.
7 head.
8 i.e. the young girls.
9 sympathetic.
10 sly.

With sour-featured Whigs the Grass market [1] was crammed,
As if half the West had set tryst to be hanged!
There was spite in each look, there was fear in each e'e,
As they watched for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

These cowls [2] of Kilmarnock had spits and had spears,
And lang-hafted gullies [3] to kill cavaliers;
But they shrunk to close-heads [4] and the causeway was free,
At the toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

He spurred to the foot of the proud Castle rock,[5]
And with the gay Gordon he gallantly spoke:
"Let Mons Meg [6] and her marrows [7] speak twa words or three,
For the love of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee."
Come fill up my cup, etc.

The Gordon demands of him which way he goes —
"Where'er shall direct me the shade of Montrose! [8]
Your Grace in short space shall hear tidings of me,
Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonny Dundee."
Come fill up my cup, etc

"There are hills beyond Pentland and lands beyond Forth;
If there's lords in the Lowlands, there's chiefs in the North;
There are wild Duniewassals [9] three thousand times three,
Will cry *hoigh!* for the bonnet of Bonny Dundee."
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"There's brass on the target of barkened [10] bull-hide;
There's steel in the scabbard that dangles beside;
The brass shall be burnished, the steel shall flash free,
At a toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dundee."
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"Away to the hills, to the caves, to the rocks —
Ere I own an usurper, I'll couch with the fox!
And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst of your glee,
You have not seen the last of my bonnet and me!"
Come fill up my cup, etc.

He waved his proud hand and the trumpets were blown,
The kettle-drums clashed and the horsemen rode on,
Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on Clermiston's lee
Died away the wild war-notes of Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle the horses and call up the men,
Come open your gates and let me gae free,
For it's up with the bonnets of Bonny Dundee!

December, 1825.

1 A square in Edinburgh, formerly the place for executions. See *The Heart of Midlothian*, especially the beginning of chapter 2.
2 Presbyterian hoods; i.e. those opposed to the Stuarts.
3 knives. 4 blind alleys.
5 Edinburgh Castle is on a rock towering over the city. At this time it was in the hands of the Duke of Gordon.
6 The nickname of a big cannon. 7 companions.
8 A Cavalier executed in 1650.
9 Highlanders of lower rank. 10 tanned.

## HERE'S A HEALTH TO KING CHARLES

*From* WOODSTOCK

Bring the bowl which you boast,
Fill it up to the brim;
'Tis to him we love most,
And to all who love him.
Brave gallants, stand up,
And avaunt ye, base carles! [1]
Were there death in the cup,
Here's a health to King Charles.

Though he wanders through dangers,
Unaided, unknown,
Dependent on strangers,
Estranged from his own;
Though 'tis under our breath,
Amidst forfeits and perils,
Here's to honor and faith,
And a health to King Charles!

1 fellows.

Let such honors abound
As the time can afford,
The knee on the ground,
And the hand on the sword;
But the time shall come round
When, 'mid Lords, Dukes, and Earls,
The loud trumpet shall sound,
Here's a health to King Charles!

Pub. 1826.

# GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON (1788–1824)

George Gordon Byron was born in London, January 22, 1788, the son of "Mad Jack" Byron, who had already squandered his wife's fortune and three years later died, leaving her only a small annuity. The poet's childhood was spent in Aberdeen, where he received erratic attention from his mother, religious instruction from his nurse, and four years' training at the local grammar school. Coming into a barony unexpectedly in 1798, he was given private instruction, and in 1801 was sent to Harrow, where he spent his time at cricket and boxing, and reading prodigiously. In 1805, he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, from which he received his M.A., as a peer, in 1808. Here he added swimming to his diversions, and, in general, led a care-free, jovial life, publishing, however, through the help of Hobhouse, his best friend at college and later his executor, *Fugitive Pieces* in 1806. This volume, revised and republished in 1807 under the title *Hours of Idleness*, provoked the famous attack of the *Edinburgh Review* in January, 1808. The next year Byron took his seat in the House of Lords, won instantaneous popularity with his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, and began a journey with Hobhouse which took him from Portugal to Turkey. It was on this trip that he swam the Hellespont, and became enamored of Greece. Back in London by the end of 1811, he wrote steadily, and threw himself with customary vigor and abandon into Bohemian life with new friends, chief among whom was Tom Moore. In 1812, he published the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*. "I awoke one morning," he said later, "and found myself famous." There followed during the next year *The Waltz*, *The Giaour*, and *The Bride of Abydos;* in 1814, *The Corsair* and *Lara*. On January 2, 1815, after having been rejected several times, he married Annabella, daughter of Sir Ralph Milbanke; on January 15, 1816, less than a month after the birth of their daughter, Augusta Ada, she left the poet; and on April 25, a week after articles of separation were signed, Byron sailed, with a retinue of servants, for the Continent, never to return to England during his lifetime. That summer he spent in Switzerland with the Shelleys and Jane Clairmont, Mrs. Shelley's stepsister, writing the third canto of *Childe Harold*, *The Prisoner of Chillon*, and much of *Manfred*. In the fall he went to Venice, where a child, Allegra, was born to him and Jane Clairmont. In 1819, he fell in love with the Countess Guiccioli, with whom he lived intermittently at Venice, Pisa, and Genoa until 1823. During these years he was visited by Tom Moore, Leigh Hunt, Shelley, and other Englishmen; and during these years he composed the bulk of his poetry: many lyrics, *Beppo*, *Mazeppa*, *The Vision of Judgment*, the poetic dramas, *Cain*, *Werner*, and the famous *Don Juan*.

In the summer of 1823, Byron left Italy, eager to help the Greeks in their fight for independence. While at Missolonghi, attempting to raise a regiment, he contracted a fever, and died on April 19, 1824. His body was taken to England and buried in the village church at Hucknall Torkard.

Byron, like the younger Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats in his way, and especially Shelley, was a poet of revolt. His life and his writings were a glorification of the proud hero who, in a grand, romantic manner, defied everything that confined the spirit. The strong individual had the right to wrest happiness for himself from a glorious world that was peopled with timid, unadventurous souls, cabined and confined by petty conventions.

Like Marlowe, Byron is the poet of grandeur. For energetic narrative verse he surpasses Scott (who, in the face of Byron's popularity, turned to the novel). In satire and humor and sentiment he excels all of his contemporaries. To the young Englishmen of his day, chafing against "middle-class respectability," hypocrisy, and emotional suppression, and to nearly all foreign critics, Byron, with his lusty, defiant life, and the vigorous originality of his writings, was a poet of the very first rank.

Others place him lower because of his moral tone, or because he seems at times insincere, or because less often than his contemporaries, Keats and Shelley, does he achieve the line or passage which strikes us with the inevitability of expression that results from genius. His chief faults arise from his too great facility and his tendency toward oratory. To him might be applied Yeats's statement: "We make out of the quarrel with others, rhetoric, but of the quarrel with ourselves, poetry."

The best one-volume editions of Byron are the Cambridge (Houghton Mifflin Company) and Murray's (London, 1905), with notes and a full introductory memoir by E. H. Coleridge. The official biography is by Tom Moore. There are other lives by K. Elze, Nichol, Noel, and L. Stephen (in the *Dictionary of National Biography*). Among the many essays on Byron may

be noted those by Matthew Arnold, Swinburne, and John Morley. For recollections of Byron and his circle, see Leigh Hunt and E. J. Trelawny.

## WHEN WE TWO PARTED

When we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow —
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me —
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well: —
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met —
In silence I grieve
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee? —
With silence and tears.

1814–16.

## SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY[1]

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

June 12, 1814.

1 This poem and the next are from the *Hebrew Melodies*, lyrics written by Byron to be set to music. Most of these poems (like the second here) deal with incidents in the Old Testament.

## THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB[1]

The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:

1 See 2 Kings, XIX.

And the tents were all silent — the banners alone —
The lances unlifted — the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

February 17, 1815.

## STANZAS FOR MUSIC

There's not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay;
'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which fades so fast,
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of happiness
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess:
The magnet of their course is gone, or only points in vain
The shore to which their shivered sail shall never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself comes down;
It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not dream its own;
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our tears,
And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth distract the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more their former hope of rest;
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruined turret wreath,
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and grey beneath.

Oh, could I feel as I have felt, — or be what I have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept, o'er many a vanished scene;
As springs, in deserts found, seem sweet, all brackish though they be,
So, midst the withered waste of life, those tears would flow to me.

March, 1815.

## CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

*Childe Harold* is a travel poem, perhaps the best in the English language. It gives the thoughts and especially the feelings aroused in the author by the places he visits, rather than a description of the scenes themselves. Byron called his hero "Childe" (an appellation given to heroes in the old ballads) "as more consonant with the old structure of versification . . . adopted." The verse-form he uses is the Spenserian stanza.

### CANTO THE THIRD

*Afin que cette application vous forçât à penser à autre chose. Il n'y a en vérité de remède que celui-là et le temps.*[1]
Lettre du Roi de Prusse à D'Alembert, Sept. 7, 1776.

1

Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child!
Ada![2] sole daughter of my house and heart?
When last I saw thy young blue eyes they smiled,
And then we parted, — not as now we part,
But with a hope. —
Awaking with a start,
The waters heave around me; and on high
The winds lift up their voices: I depart,
Whither I know not, but the hour's gone by,
When Albion's[3] lessening shores could grieve or glad mine eye.

2

Once more upon the waters! yet once more!
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
That knows his rider. Welcome to their roar!
Swift be their guidance, whersoe'er it lead!
Though the strained mast should quiver as a reed,
And the rent canvass fluttering strew the gale,
Still must I on; for I am as a weed,

1 "In order that this occupation may force you to think of something else. Truly, there is no remedy except that (i.e., a difficult task or problem) and time." The extract is from a letter of Frederick the Great of Prussia to D'Alembert, the French mathematician, upon the death of a friend of the latter's.

2 Byron's daughter. 3 England's.

Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam to sail
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail.

3

In my youth's summer I did sing of One,[1]
The wandering outlaw of his own dark mind;
Again I seize the theme, then but begun,
And bear it with me, as the rushing wind
Bears the cloud onwards: in that Tale I find
The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,
O'er which all heavily the journeying years
Plod the last sands of life, — where not a flower appears.

4

Since my young days of passion — joy or pain,
Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string —
And both may jar: it may be, that in vain
I would essay, as I have sung, to sing.
Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling;
So that it wean me from the weary dream
Of selfish grief or gladness — so it fling
Forgetfulness around me — it shall seem
To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful theme.

5

He, who grown agèd in this world of woe,
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of life,
So that no wonder waits Him — nor below
Can Love or Sorrow, Fame, Ambition, Strife,
Cut to his heart again with the keen knife
Of silent, sharp endurance — he can tell
Why Thought seeks refuge in lone caves, yet rife
With airy images, and shapes which dwell
Still unimpaired, though old, in the Soul's haunted cell.

6

'Tis to create, and in creating live
A being more intense, that we endow
With form our fancy, gaining as we give
The life we image, even as I do now —
What am I? Nothing: but not so art thou,
Soul of my thought! with whom I traverse earth,
Invisible but gazing, as I glow
Mixed with thy spirit, blended with thy birth,
And feeling still with thee in my crushed feelings' dearth.

7

Yet must I think less wildly: — I *have* thought
Too long and darkly, till my brain became,
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame:
And thus, untaught in youth my heart to tame,
My springs of life were poisoned. 'Tis too late!
Yet am I changed; though still enough the same
In strength to bear what Time cannot abate,
And feed on bitter fruits without accusing Fate.

8

Something too much of this: — but now 'tis past,
And the spell closes with its silent seal:
Long absent HAROLD re-appears at last —
He of the breast which fain no more would feel,
Wrung with the wounds which kill not, but ne'er heal;
Yet Time, who changes all, had altered him
In soul and aspect as in age: years steal
Fire from the mind as vigor from the limb;
And Life's enchanted cup but sparkles near the brim.

9

His had been quaffed too quickly, and he found
The dregs were wormwood; but he filled again,
And from a purer fount, on holier ground,
And deemed its spring perpetual — but in vain!
Still round him clung invisibly a chain
Which galled for ever, fettering though unseen,
And heavy though it clanked not; worn with pain,

[1] i.e., Childe Harold; the first two cantos of the poem had been published four years before.

Which pined although it spoke not, and grew keen,
Entering with every step he took through many a scene.

10

Secure in guarded coldness, he had mixed
Again in fancied safety with his kind,
And deemed his spirit now so firmly fixed
And sheathed with an invulnerable mind,
That, if no joy, no sorrow lurked behind;
And he, as one, might 'midst the many stand
Unheeded, searching through the crowd to find
Fit speculation; such as in strange land
He found in wonder-works of God and Nature's hand.

11

But who can view the ripened rose, nor seek
To wear it? who can curiously behold
The smoothness and the sheen of Beauty's cheek,
Nor feel the heart can never all grow old?
Who can contemplate Fame through clouds unfold
The star which rises o'er her steep, nor climb?
Harold, once more within the vortex, rolled
On with the giddy circle, chasing Time,
Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's fond prime.

12

But soon he knew himself the most unfit
Of men to herd with Man, with whom he held
Little in common; untaught to submit
His thoughts to others, though his soul was quelled
In youth by his own thoughts; still uncompelled,
He would not yield dominion of his mind
To Spirits against whom his own rebelled,
Proud though in desolation — which could find
A life within itself, to breathe without mankind.

13

Where rose the mountains, there to him were friends;
Where rolled the ocean, thereon was his home;
Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, extends,
He had the passion and the power to roam;
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
Were unto him companionship; they spake
A mutual language, clearer than the tome
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake
For Nature's pages glassed by sunbeams on the lake.

14

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars,
Till he had peopled them with beings bright
As their own beams; and earth, and earth-born jars,
And human frailties, were forgotten quite:
Could he have kept his spirit to that flight
He had been happy; but this clay will sink
Its spark immortal, envying it the light
To which it mounts, as if to break the link
That keeps us from yon heaven which woos us to its brink.

15

But in Man's dwellings he became a thing
Restless and worn, and stern and wearisome,
Drooped as a wild-born falcon with clipped wing,
To whom the boundless air alone were home:
Then came his fit again, which to o'ercome,
As eagerly the barred-up bird will beat
His breast and beak against his wiry dome
Till the blood tinge his plumage — so the heat
Of his impeded Soul would through his bosom eat.

16

Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,
With nought of Hope left, but with less of gloom;
The very knowledge that he lived in vain,
That all was over on this side the tomb,
Had made Despair a smilingness assume,
Which, though 'twere wild, — as on the plundered wreck
When mariners would madly meet their doom

With draughts intemperate on the sinking deck, —
Did yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore to check.

17

Stop! — for thy tread is on an Empire's dust!
An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchered below!
Is the spot marked with no colossal bust?
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
None;[1] but *the moral's truth* tells simpler so.
As the ground was before, thus let it be; —
How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!
And is this all the world has gained by thee,
Thou first and last of Fields! king-making Victory?

18

And Harold stands upon this place of skulls,
The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo!
How in an hour the Power which gave annuls
Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting too!
In "pride of place"[2] here last the eagle[3] flew,
Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,
Pierced by the shaft of banded nations through;
Ambition's life and labors all were vain;
He wears[4] the shattered links of the world's broken chain.

19

Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the bit
And foam in fetters; — but is Earth more free?
Did nations combat to make *One* submit?
Or league to teach all Kings true Sovereignty?
What! shall reviving Thraldom again be
The patched-up Idol of enlightened days?
Shall we, who struck the Lion down, shall we
Pay the Wolf homage? proffering lowly gaze
And servile knees to Thrones? No; *prove* before ye praise!

1 The monument on the field of Waterloo was erected later.
2 The highest point in flight, — a term in falconry.
3 Napoleon.
4 Napoleon was then en route to St. Helena.

20

If not, o'er one fallen Despot boast no more!
In vain fair cheeks were furrowed with hot tears
For Europe's flowers long rooted up before
The trampler of her vineyards; in vain, years
Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,
Have all been borne, and broken by the accord
Of roused-up millions; all that most endears
Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes a sword
Such as Harmodius[1] drew on Athens' tyrant lord.

21

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;[2]
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

22

Did ye not hear it? — No; 'twas but the Wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet —
But hark! — that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer — clearer — deadlier than before!
Arm! Arm! it is — it is — the cannon's opening roar!

23

Within a windowed niche of that high hall
Sat Brunswick's fated chieftain;[3] he did hear

1 He killed the tyrant Hipparchus with a sword hidden in myrtle leaves.
2 At the Duchess of Richmond's ball.
3 The Duke of Brunswick, nephew of George III, who fell in the very beginning of the battle.

That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deemed it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretched his father[1] on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell;
He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

24

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise![2]

25

And there was mounting in hot haste — the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war —
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the Morning Star;
While thronged the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips — "The foe! they come! they come!"

26

And wild and high the "Cameron's gathering"[3] rose!
The war-note of Lochiel,[4] which Albyn's[5] hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes: —
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's — Donald's — fame rings in each clansman's ears!

27

And Ardennes[1] waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with Nature's tear-drops as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave, — alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but *above* shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living Valor, rolling on the foe
And burning with high Hope shall molder cold and low.

28

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
The Midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
The Morn the marshaling in arms, — the Day
Battle's magnificently-stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
The earth is covered thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heaped and pent,
Rider and horse, — friend, — foe, — in one red burial blent!

29

Their praise is hymned by loftier harps than mine;
Yet one I would select from that proud throng,
Partly because they blend me with his line,
And partly that I did his Sire some wrong,
And partly that bright names will hallow song;
And his was of the bravest, and when showered

1 Killed at Auerbach in 1806.
2 Compare Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, chapters 29 ff.
3 The war-song of Clan Cameron.
4 The chief of the clan. 5 Scotland's.

1 Woods near the battlefield, supposed to be the forest of Arden of Shakespeare.

The death-bolts deadliest the thinned files along,
Even where the thickest of War's tempest lowered,
They reached no nobler breast than thine, young gallant Howard![1]

30

There have been tears and breaking hearts for thee,
And mine were nothing had I such to give;
But when I stood beneath the fresh green tree,
Which living waves where thou didst cease to live,
And saw around me the wide field revive
With fruits and fertile promise, and the Spring
Came forth her work of gladness to contrive,
With all her reckless birds upon the wing,
I turned from all she brought to those she could not bring.

31

I turned to thee, to thousands, of whom each
And one as all a ghastly gap did make
In his own kind and kindred, whom to teach
Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake;
The Archangel's trump, not Glory's, must awake
Those whom they thirst for; though the sound of Fame
May for a moment soothe, it cannot slake
The fever of vain longing, and the name
So honored but assumes a stronger, bitterer claim.

32

They mourn, but smile at length — and, smiling, mourn:
The tree will wither long before it fall;
The hull drives on, though mast and sail be torn;
The roof-tree sinks, but molders on the hall
In massy hoariness; the ruined wall
Stands when its wind-worn battlements are gone;
The bars survive the captive they enthrall;
The day drags through, though storms keep out the sun;
And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on:

33

Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
In every fragment multiplies — and makes
A thousand images of one that was
The same — and still the more, the more it breaks;
And thus the heart will do which not forsakes,
Living in shattered guise; and still, and cold,
And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow aches,
Yet withers on till all without is old,
Showing no visible sign, for such things are untold.

34

There is a very life in our despair,
Vitality of poison, — a quick root
Which feeds these deadly branches; for it were
As nothing did we die; but Life will suit
Itself to Sorrow's most detested fruit,
Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's shore,
All ashes to the taste: Did man compute
Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er
Such hours 'gainst years of life, — say, would he name threescore?

35

The Psalmist numbered out the years of man:
They are enough; and if thy tale be *true*,
Thou, who didst grudge him even that fleeting span,
More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo!
Millions of tongues record thee, and anew
Their children's lips shall echo them, and say —
"Here, where the sword united nations drew,
Our countrymen were warring on that day!"
And this is much — and all — which will not pass away.

36

There sunk the greatest,[1] nor the worst of men,
Whose Spirit, antithetically mixed,
One moment of the mightiest, and again
On little objects with like firmness fixed;
Extreme in all things! hadst thou been betwixt,
Thy throne had still been thine, or never been;

1 The third son of Byron's guardian, the Earl of Carlisle, a distant relative. For the wrong Byron did the Earl, see *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.

1 Napoleon.

For daring made thy rise as fall: thou seek'st
Even now to re-assume the imperial mien,
And shake again the world, the Thunderer of the scene!

37

Conqueror and Captive of the Earth art thou!
She trembles at thee still, and thy wild name
Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds than now
That thou art nothing, save the jest of Fame,
Who wooed thee once, thy Vassal, and became
The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou wert
A god unto thyself; nor less the same
To the astounded kingdoms all inert,
Who deemed thee for a time whate'er thou didst assert.

38

Oh, more or less than man — in high or low —
Battling with nations, flying from the field;
Now making monarchs' necks thy foot-stool, now
More than thy meanest soldier taught to yield;
An Empire thou couldst crush, command, rebuild,
But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,
However deeply in men's spirits skilled,
Look through thine own, nor curb the lust of War,
Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the loftiest Star.

39

Yet well thy soul hath brooked the turning tide
With that untaught innate philosophy,
Which, be it Wisdom, Coldness, or deep Pride,
Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.
When the whole host of hatred stood hard by,
To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou hast smiled
With a sedate and all-enduring eye; —
When Fortune fled her spoiled and favorite child,
He stood unbowed beneath the ills upon him piled.

40

Sager than in thy fortunes; for in them
Ambition steeled thee on too far to show
That just habitual scorn, which could contemn
Men and their thoughts; 'twas wise to feel, not so
To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,
And spurn the instruments thou wert to use
Till they were turned unto thine overthrow:
'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose;
So hath it proved to thee, and all such lot who choose.

41

If, like a tower upon a headland rock,
Thou hadst been made to stand or fall alone,
Such scorn of man had helped to brave the shock;
But men's thoughts were the steps which paved thy throne,
*Their* admiration thy best weapon shone;
The part of Philip's son[1] was thine, not then
(Unless aside thy Purple had been thrown)
Like stern Diogenes to mock at men;
For sceptered Cynics Earth were far too wide a den.

42

But Quiet to quick bosoms is a Hell,
And *there* hath been thy bane; there is a fire
And motion of the Soul which will not dwell
In its own narrow being, but aspire
Beyond the fitting medium of desire;
And, but once kindled, quenchless ever more,
Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire
Of aught but rest; a fever at the core,
Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore

43

This makes the madmen who have made men mad
By their contagion; Conquerors and Kings,
Founders of sects and systems, to whom add
Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet things
Which stir too strongly the soul's secret springs,
And are themselves the fools to those they fool;

1 Alexander the Great, son of Philip of Macedon.

Envied, yet how unenviable! what stings
Are theirs! One breast laid open were a school
Which would unteach Mankind the lust to shine or rule:

44

Their breath is agitation, and their life
A storm whereon they ride, to sink at last,
And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife,
That should their days, surviving perils past,
Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast
With sorrow and supineness, and so die;
Even as a flame unfed, which runs to waste
With its own flickering, or a sword laid by,
Which eats into itself, and rusts ingloriously.

45

He who ascends to mountain tops, shall find
The loftiest peaks most wrapped in clouds and snow;
He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
Must look down on the hate of those below.
Though high *above* the Sun of Glory glow,
And far *beneath* the Earth and Ocean spread,
*Round* him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head,
And thus reward the toils which to those summits led.

46

Away with these! true Wisdom's world will be
Within its own creation, or in thine,
Maternal Nature! for who teems like thee,
Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine?
There Harold gazes on a work divine,
A blending of all beauties; streams and dells,
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, mountain, vine,
And chiefless castles breathing stern farewells
From gray but leafy walls, where Ruin greenly dwells.

47

And there they stand, as stands a lofty mind,
Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,
All tenantless, save to the crannying Wind,
Or holding dark communion with the Cloud.
There was a day when they were young and proud;
Banners on high, and battles passed below;
But they who fought are in a bloody shroud,
And those which waved are shredless dust ere now,
And the bleak battlements shall bear no future blow.

48

Beneath those battlements, within those walls,
Power dwelt amidst her passions; in proud state
Each robber chief upheld his arméd halls,
Doing his evil will, nor less elate
Than mightier heroes of a longer date.
What want these outlaws conquerors should have,
But History's purchased page to call them great?
A wider space — an ornamented grave?
Their hopes were not less warm, their souls were full as brave.

49

In their baronial feuds and single fields,
What deeds of prowess unrecorded died!
And Love, which lent a blazon to their shields,
With emblems well devised by amorous pride,
Through all the mail of iron hearts would glide;
But still their flame was fierceness, and drew on
Keen contest and destruction near allied,
And many a tower for some fair mischief won,
Saw the discolored Rhine beneath its ruin run.

50

But Thou, exulting and abounding river!
Making thy waves a blessing as they flow
Through banks whose beauty would endure for ever
Could man but leave thy bright creation so,
Nor its fair promise from the surface mow
With the sharp scythe of conflict, — then to see
Thy valley of sweet waters, were to know
Earth paved like Heaven — and to seem such to me,
Even now what wants thy stream? — that it should Lethe be.

51

A thousand battles have assailed thy banks,
But these and half their fame have passed away,
And Slaughter heaped on high his weltering ranks:
Their very graves are gone, and what are they?
Thy tide washed down the blood of yesterday,
And all was stainless, and on thy clear stream
Glassed, with its dancing light, the sunny ray;
But o'er the blackened Memory's blighting dream
Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweeping as they seem.

52

Thus Harold inly said, and passed along,
Yet not insensible to all which here
Awoke the jocund birds to early song
In glens which might have made even exile dear:
Though on his brow were graven lines austere,
And tranquil sternness, which had ta'en the place
Of feelings fierier far but less severe —
Joy was not always absent from his face,
But o'er it in such scenes would steal with transient trace.

53

Nor was all Love shut from him, though his days
Of Passion had consumed themselves to dust.
It is in vain that we would coldly gaze
On such as smile upon us; the heart must
Leap kindly back to kindness, though Disgust
Hath weaned it from all worldings: thus he felt,
For there was soft Remembrance, and sweet Trust
In one fond breast,[1] to which his own would melt,
And in its tenderer hour on that his bosom dwelt.

54

And he had learned to love, — I know not why,
For this in such as him seems strange of mood,—
The helpless looks of blooming Infancy,
Even in its earliest nurture; what subdued,
To change like this, a mind so far imbued
With scorn of man, it little boots to know;
But thus it was; and though in solitude
Small power the nipped affections have to grow,
In him this glowed when all beside had ceased to glow.

55

And there was one soft breast, as hath been said,
Which unto his was bound by stronger ties
Than the church links withal; and, though unwed,
*That* love was pure — and, far above disguise,
Had stood the test of mortal enmities,
Still undivided, and cemented more
By peril, dreaded most in female eyes;
But this was firm, and from a foreign shore
Well to that heart might his these absent greetings pour!

I

The castled crag of Drachenfels
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine;
And hills all rich with blossomed trees,
And fields which promise corn and wine,
And scattered cities crowning these,
Whose far white walls along them shine,
Have strewed a scene, which I should see
With double joy wert *thou* with me.

II

And peasant girls, with deep blue eyes,
And hands which offer early flowers,
Walk smiling o'er this Paradise;
Above, the frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls of gray;
And many a rock which steeply lowers,
And noble arch in proud decay,
Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers;
But one thing want these banks of Rhine, —
Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine!

III

I send the lilies given to me —
Though long before thy hand they touch,
I know that they must withered be,
But yet reject them not as such;
For I have cherished them as dear,

[1] Byron's half-sister Augusta, by his father's first marriage.

Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine even here —
When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
And know'st them gathered by the Rhine,
And offered from my heart to thine!

IV

The river nobly foams and flows —
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round:
The haughtiest breast its wish might bound
Through life to dwell delighted here;
Nor could on earth a spot be found
To Nature and to me so dear —
Could thy dear eyes in following mine
Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine!

56

By Coblentz, on a rise of gentle ground,
There is a small and simple Pyramid,
Crowning the summit of the verdant mound;
Beneath its base are Heroes' ashes hid —
Our enemy's — but let not that forbid
Honor to Marceau![1] o'er whose early tomb
Tears, big tears, gushed from the rough soldier's lid,
Lamenting and yet envying such a doom,
Falling for France, whose rights he battled to resume.

57

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young career, —
His mourners were two hosts, his friends and foes;
And fitly may the stranger lingering here
Pray for his gallant Spirit's bright repose;
For he was Freedom's Champion, one of those
The few in number, who had not o'erstepped
The charter to chastise which she bestows
On such as wield her weapons; he had kept
The whiteness of his soul — and thus men o'er him wept.

58

Here Ehrenbreitstein, with her shattered wall
Black with the miner's blast, upon her height
Yet shows of what she was, when shell and ball
Rebounding idly on her strength did light:
A Tower of Victory! from whence the flight
Of baffled foes was watched along the plain:
But Peace destroyed what War could never blight,
And laid those proud roofs bare to Summer's rain —
On which the iron shower for years had poured in vain.

59

Adieu to thee, fair Rhine! How long delighted
The stranger fain would linger on his way!
Thine is a scene alike where souls united,
Or lonely Contemplation thus might stray;
And could the ceaseless vultures cease to prey
On self-condemning bosoms, it were here,
Where Nature, nor too somber nor too gay,
Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere,
Is to the mellow Earth as Autumn to the year.

60

Adieu to thee again! a vain adieu!
There can be no farewell to scene like thine;
The mind is colored by thy every hue;
And if reluctantly the eyes resign
Their cherished gaze upon thee, lovely Rhine!
'Tis with the thankful heart of parting praise;
More mighty spots may rise — more glaring shine,
But none unite in one attaching maze,
The brilliant, fair, and soft, — the glories of old days.

61

The negligently grand, the fruitful bloom
Of coming ripeness, the white city's sheen,
The rolling stream, the precipice's gloom,
The forest's growth, and Gothic walls between, —
The wild rocks shaped, as they had turrets been,
In mockery of man's art; and these withal
A race of faces happy as the scene,
Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,
Still springing o'er thy banks, though Empires near them fall.

[1] A general of the French Revolutionary armies.

62

But these recede. Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls
Of cold Sublimity, where forms and falls
The Avalanche — the thunderbolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit, yet appalls,
Gather around these summits, as to show
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave vain man below.

63

But ere these matchless heights I dare to scan,
There is a spot should not be passed in vain, —
Morat![1] the proud, the patriot field! where man
May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,
Nor blush for those who conquered on that plain;
Here Burgundy bequeathed his tombless host,
A bony heap, through ages to remain,
Themselves their monument; — the Stygian coast
Unsepulchered they roamed, and shrieked each wandering ghost.

64

While Waterloo with Cannæ's[2] carnage vies,
Morat and Marathon[3] twin names shall stand;
They were true Glory's stainless victories,
Won by the unambitious heart and hand
Of a proud, brotherly, and civic band,
All unbought champions in no princely cause
Of vice-entailed Corruption; they no land
Doomed to bewail the blasphemy of laws
Making Kings' rights divine, by some Draconic[4] clause.

65

By a lone wall a lonelier column rears
A gray and grief-worn aspect of old days;
'Tis the last remnant of the wreck of years,
And looks as with the wild-bewildered gaze
Of one to stone converted by amaze,
Yet still with consciousness; and there it stands
Making a marvel that it not decays,
When the coeval pride of human hands,
Leveled Aventicum,[1] hath strewed her subject lands.

66

And there — oh! sweet and sacred be the name!
Julia[2] — the daughter — the devoted — gave
Her youth to Heaven; her heart, beneath a claim
Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's grave.
Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers would crave
The life she lived in — but the judge was just —
And then she died on him she could not save.
Their tomb was simple, and without a bust,
And held within their urn one mind — one heart — one dust.

67

But these are deeds which should not pass away,
And names that must not wither, though the Earth
Forgets her empires with a just decay,
The enslavers and the enslaved — their death and birth;
The high, the mountain-majesty of Worth
Should be — and shall, survivor of its woe,
And from its immortality, look forth
In the Sun's face, like yonder Alpine snow,[3]
Imperishably pure beyond all things below.

68

Lake Leman[4] woos me with its crystal face,
The mirror where the stars and mountains view
The stillness of their aspect in each trace
Its clear depth yields of their far height and hue:
There is too much of Man here, to look through
With a fit mind the might which I behold;
But soon in me shall Loneliness renew

1 The town where the Swiss defeated Charles the Bold of Burgundy in 1476.
2 Where Hannibal defeated the Romans in 216 B.C.
3 Scene of the famous victory of the Greeks over the Persians in 490 B.C.
4 The code of Draco, earliest of Athenian lawmakers, was extremely rigid and severe.

1 Capital city of Roman Switzerland.
2 A young priestess of Aventicum who died after trying in vain to save her father, condemned to death as a traitor.
3 Mount Blanc. 4 Geneva.

Thoughts hid, but not less cherished than of old,
Ere mingling with the herd had penned me in their fold.

69

To fly from, need not be to hate, mankind:
All are not fit with them to stir and toil,
Nor is it discontent to keep the mind
Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil
In the hot throng, where we become the spoil
Of our infection, till too late and long,
We may deplore and struggle with the coil,
In wretched interchange of wrong for wrong
Midst a contentious world, striving where none are strong.

70

There, in a moment, we may plunge our years
In fatal penitence, and in the blight
Of our own Soul turn all our blood to tears,
And color things to come with hues of Night;
The race of life becomes a hopeless flight
To those that walk in darkness: on the sea
The boldest steer but where their ports invite —
But there are wanderers o'er Eternity,
Whose bark drives on and on, and anchored ne'er shall be.

71

Is it not better, then, to be alone,
And love Earth only for its earthly sake?
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,
Or the pure bosom of its nursing Lake,
Which feeds it as a mother who doth make
A fair but froward infant her own care,
Kissing its cries away as these awake; —
Is it not better thus our lives to wear,
Than join the crushing crowd, doomed to inflict or bear?

72

I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me; and to me
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities torture: I can see
Nothing to loathe in Nature, save to be
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,
Classed among creatures, when the soul can flee,
And with the sky — the peak — the heaving plain
Of ocean, or the stars, mingle — and not in vain.

73

And thus I am absorbed, and this is life:
I look upon the peopled desert past,
As on a place of agony and strife,
Where, for some sin, to Sorrow I was cast,
To act and suffer, but remount at last
With a fresh pinion; which I feel to spring,
Though young, yet waxing vigorous as the Blast
Which it would cope with, on delighted wing,
Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round our being cling.

74

And when, at length, the mind shall be all free
From what it hates in this degraded form,
Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be
Existent happier in the fly and worm, —
When Elements to Elements conform,
And dust is as it should be, shall I not
Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm?
The bodiless thought? the Spirit of each spot?
Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot?

75

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part
Of me and of my Soul, as I of them?
Is not the love of these deep in my heart
With a pure passion? should I not contemn
All objects, if compared with these? and stem
A tide of suffering, rather than forgo
Such feelings for the hard and worldly phlegm
Of those whose eyes are only turned below,
Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts which dare not glow?

76

But this is not my theme; and I return
To that which is immediate, and require
Those who find contemplation in the urn,
To look on One,[1] whose dust was once all fire,
A native of the land where I respire
The clear air for a while — a passing guest,
Where he became a being, — whose desire
Was to be glorious; 'twas a foolish quest,
The which to gain and keep, he sacrificed all rest.

1 Jean Jacques Rousseau, 1712–78, native and for a long time resident of Geneva, noted champion of the return to nature, author of *Julie, or the New Héloise* and the *Confessions;* his influence upon social thought in France, Germany, and England has been extensive.

77

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau,
The apostle of Affliction, he who threw
Enchantment over Passion, and from Woe
Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew
The breath which made him wretched; yet he knew
How to make Madness beautiful, and cast
O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly hue
Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they passed
The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly and fast.

78

His love was Passion's essence — as a tree
On fire by lightning; with ethereal flame
Kindled he was, and blasted; for to be
Thus, and enamored, were in him the same.
But his was not the love of living dame,
Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,
But of ideal Beauty, which became
In him existence, and o'erflowing teems
Along his burning page, distempered though it seems.

79

*This* breathed itself to life in Julie, *this*
Invested her with all that's wild and sweet;
This hallowed, too, the memorable kiss
Which every morn his fevered lip would greet,
From hers, who but with friendship his would meet;[1]
But to that gentle touch through brain and breast
Flashed the thrilled Spirit's love-devouring heat;
In that absorbing sigh perchance more blessed
Than vulgar minds may be with all they seek possessed.

80

His life was one long war with self-sought foes,
Or friends by him self-banished; for his mind
Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary, and chose,
For its own cruel sacrifice, the kind,
'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange and blind.
But he was frenzied, — wherefore, who may know?
Since cause might be which Skill could never find;
But he was frenzied by disease or woe,
To that worst pitch of all, which wears a reasoning show.

81

For then he was inspired, and from him came,
As from the Pythian's mystic cave[1] of yore,
Those oracles which set the world in flame,
Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no more:
Did he not this for France? which lay, before,
Bowed to the inborn tyranny of years?
Broken and trembling to the yoke she bore,
Till by the voice of him and his compeers
Roused up to too much wrath, which follows o'ergrown fears?

82

They made themselves a fearful monument!
The wreck of old opinions — things which grew,
Breathed from the birth of Time: the veil they rent,
And what behind it lay, all earth shall view;
But good with ill they also overthrew,
Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild
Upon the same foundation, and renew
Dungeons and thrones, which the same hour refilled,
As heretofore, because Ambition was self-willed.

83

But this will not endure, nor be endured!
Mankind have felt their strength, and made it felt.
They might have used it better, but, allured
By their new vigor, sternly have they dealt
On one another; Pity ceased to melt
With her once natural charities. But they,
Who in Oppression's darkness caved had dwelt,

1 This refers to the account, in his *Confessions*, of his passion for the Comtesse d'Houdetot, . . . and his long walk every morning, for the sake of the single kiss which was the common salutation of French acquaintance. — Byron.

1 The Delphic oracle of Apollo; the Pythia was the priestess in charge.

They were not eagles, nourished with the day;
What marvel then, at times, if they mistook their prey?

84

What deep wounds ever closed without a scar?
The heart's bleed longest, and but heal to wear
That which disfigures it; and they who war
With their own hopes, and have been vanquished, bear
Silence, but not submission: in his lair
Fixed Passion holds his breath, until the hour
Which shall atone for years; none need despair:
It came — it cometh — and will come, — the power
To punish or forgive — in *one* we shall be slower.

85

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn Ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a Sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so moved.

86

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellowed and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darkened Jura, whose capped heights appear
Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more.

87

He is an evening reveler, who makes
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
But that is fancy, for the Starlight dews
All silently their tears of Love instill,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

88

Ye Stars! which are the poetry of Heaven!
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires, — 'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
A Beauty and a Mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That Fortune, Fame, Power, Life, have named themselves a star.

89

All Heaven and Earth are still — though not in sleep,
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep: —
All Heaven and Earth are still: From the high host
Of stars, to the lulled lake and mountain-coast,
All is concentered in a life intense,
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of Being, and a sense
Of that which is of all Creator and Defense.

90

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, where we are *least* alone;
A truth, which through our being then doth melt,
And purifies from self: it is a tone,
The soul and source of Music, which makes known
Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm
Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone;[1]
Binding all things with beauty; — 'twould disarm
The specter Death, had he substantial power to harm.

91

Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places, and the peak

1 The girdle of Venus, which was supposed to strike love in the beholder.

Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus take
A fit and unwalled temple, there to seek
The Spirit, in whose honor shrines are weak,
Upreared of human hands. Come, and compare
Columns and idol-dwellings — Goth or Greek —
With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air —
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer!

92

The sky is changed! — and such a change! Oh, Night,
And Storm, and Darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in Woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

93

And this is in the Night: — Most glorious Night!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight, —
A portion of the tempest and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 'tis black, — and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young Earthquake's birth.

94

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between
Heights which appear as lovers who have parted
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted:
Though in their souls, which thus each other thwarted,
Love was the very root of the fond rage
Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed: —
Itself expired, but leaving them an age
Of years all winters, — war within themselves to wage:

95

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his way,
The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand:
For here, not one, but many, make their play,
And fling their thunder-bolts from hand to hand,
Flashing and cast around: of all the band,
The brightest through these parted hills hath forked
His lightnings, — as if he did understand,
That in such gaps as Desolation worked,
There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein lurked.

96

Sky, Mountains, River, Winds, Lake, Lightnings! ye!
With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a Soul
To make these felt and feeling, well may be
Things that have made me watchful; the far roll
Of your departing voices, is the knoll
Of what in me is sleepless, — if I rest.
But where of ye, O tempests! is the goal?
Are ye like those within the human breast?
Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high nest?

97

Could I embody and unbosom now
That which is most within me, — could I wreak
My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak,
All that I would have sought, and all I seek,
Bear, know, feel — and yet breathe — into *one* word,
And that one word were Lightning, I would speak;
But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword.

98

The Morn is up again, the dewy Morn,
With breath all incense, and with cheek all bloom —
Laughing the clouds away with playful scorn,
And living as if earth contained no tomb, —
And glowing into day: we may resume
The march of our existence: and thus I,
Still on thy shores, fair Leman! may find room
And food for meditation, nor pass by
Much, that may give us pause, if pondered fittingly.

99

Clarens![1] sweet Clarens, birthplace of deep Love!
Thine air is the young breath of passionate Thought;
Thy trees take root in Love; the snows above,
The very Glaciers have his colors caught,
And Sun-set into rose-hues sees them wrought
By rays which sleep there lovingly: the rocks,
The permanent crags, tell here of Love, who sought
In them a refuge from the worldly shocks,
Which stir and sting the Soul with Hope that woos, then mocks.

100

Clarens! by heavenly feet thy paths are trod, —
Undying Love's, who here ascends a throne
To which the steps are mountains; where the God
Is a pervading Life and Light, — so shown
Not on those summits solely, nor alone
In the still cave and forest; o'er the flower
His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath blown,
His soft and summer breath, whose tender power
Passes the strength of storms in their most desolate hour.

101

All things are here of *him;* from the black pines,
Which are his shade on high, and the loud roar
Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the vines
Which slope his green path downward to the shore,
Where the bowed waters meet him, and adore,
Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the wood,
The covert of old trees, with trunks all hoar,
But light leaves, young as joy, stands where it stood,
Offering to him, and his, a populous solitude.

102

A populous solitude of bees and birds
And fairy-formed and many-colored things,
Who worship him with notes more sweet than words,
And innocently open their glad wings,
Fearless and full of life: the gush of springs,
And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend
Of stirring branches, and the bud which brings
The swiftest thought of Beauty, here extend
Mingling, and made by Love, unto one mighty end.

103

He who hath loved not, here would learn that lore,
And make his heart a spirit; he who knows
That tender mystery, will love the more;
For this is Love's recess, where vain men's woes,
And the world's waste, have driven him far from those,
For 'tis his nature to advance or die;
He stands not still, but or decays, or grows
Into a boundless blessing, which may vie
With the immortal lights, in its eternity!

104

'Twas not for fiction chose Rousseau[1] this spot,
Peopling it with affections; but he found
It was the scene which Passion must allot
To the Mind's purified beings; 'twas the ground
Where early Love his Psyche's zone unbound,
And hallowed it with loveliness: 'tis lone,
And wonderful, and deep, and hath a sound,

1 A town on Lake Geneva, often mentioned in Rousseau.

1 In his *Julie.*

And sense, and sight of sweetness; here the Rhone
Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps have reared a throne.

105

Lausanne! and Ferney! ye have been the abodes
Of Names [1] which unto you bequeathed a name;
Mortals, who sought and found, by dangerous roads,
A path to perpetuity of Fame:
They were gigantic minds, and their steep aim
Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile
Thoughts which should call down thunder and the flame
Of Heaven again assailed — if Heaven the while
On man and man's research could deign do more than smile.

106

The one [2] was fire and fickleness, a child
Most mutable in wishes, but in mind
A wit as various, — gay, grave, sage, or wild, —
Historian, bard, philosopher, combined;
He multiplied himself among mankind,
The Proteus [3] of their talents: But his own
Breathed most in ridicule, — which, as the wind,
Blew where it listed, laying all things prone, —
Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake a throne.

107

The other, deep and slow, exhausting thought,
And hiving wisdom with each studious year,
In meditation dwelt, with learning wrought,
And shaped his weapon with an edge severe,
Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer;
The lord of irony, — that master spell,
Which stung his foes to wrath, which grew from fear,
And doomed him to the zealot's ready Hell,
Which answers to all doubts so eloquently well.

1 Gibbon finished his *Decline and Fall* at Lausanne in 1788. See Thomas Hardy's poem, *Lausanne. In Gibbon's Old Garden*. Voltaire lived almost the entire last nine years of his life at Ferney. See page 1334.

2 Voltaire, 1694–1778.

3 Proteus, the sea god, could change himself into many shapes

108

Yet, peace be with their ashes, — for by them,
If merited, the penalty is paid;
It is not ours to judge, — far less condemn;
The hour must come when such things shall be made
Known unto all, — or hope and dread allayed
By slumber, on one pillow, in the dust,
Which, thus much we are sure, must lie decayed;
And when it shall revive, as is our trust,
'Twill be to be forgiven — or suffer what is just.

109

But let me quit Man's works, again to read
His Maker's, spread around me, and suspend
This page, which from my reveries I feed,
Until it seems prolonging without end.
The clouds above me to the white Alps tend,
And I must pierce them, and survey whate'er
May be permitted, as my steps I bend
To their most great and growing region, where
The earth to her embrace compels the powers of air.

110

Italia! too, Italia! looking on thee,
Full flashes on the Soul the light of ages,
Since the fierce Carthaginian almost won thee,
To the last halo of the Chiefs and Sages
Who glorify thy consecrated pages;
Thou wert the throne and grave of empires — still,
The fount at which the panting Mind assuages
Her thirst of knowledge, quaffing there her fill,
Flows from the eternal source of Rome's imperial hill.

111

Thus far have I proceeded in a theme
Renewed with no kind auspices: — to feel
We are not what we have been, and to deem
We are not what we should be, — and to steel
The heart against itself; and to conceal,
With a proud caution, love, or hate, or aught, —

Passion or feeling, purpose, grief, or zeal,
Which is the tyrant Spirit of our thought,
Is a stern task of soul: — No matter, — it is
taught.

112

And for these words, thus woven into
song,
It may be that they are a harmless wile, —
The coloring of the scenes which fleet
along,
Which I would seize, in passing, to beguile
My breast, or that of others, for a while.
Fame is the thirst of youth, — but I am
not
So young as to regard men's frown or
smile,
As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot; —
I stood and stand alone, — remembered or
forgot.

113

I have not loved the World, nor the World
me;
I have not flattered its rank breath, nor
bowed
To its idolatries a patient knee,
Nor coined my cheek to smiles, — nor cried
aloud
In worship of an echo: in the crowd
They could not deem me one of such — I
stood
Among them, but not of them — in a
shroud
Of thoughts which were not their thoughts,
and still could,
Had I not filed [1] my mind, which thus itself
subdued.

114

I have not loved the World, nor the World
me, —
But let us part fair foes; I do believe,
Though I have found them not, that there
may be
Words which are things, — hopes which
will not deceive,
And Virtues which are merciful, nor weave
Snares for the failing: I would also deem
O'er others' griefs that some sincerely
grieve —
That two, or one, are almost what they
seem, —
That Goodness is no name — and Happiness
no dream.

1 defiled; Byron quotes in a note, *Macbeth*, III, i:
— "If 't be so,
For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind."

115

My daughter! with thy name this song
begun!
My daughter! with thy name thus much
shall end! —
I see thee not — I hear thee not — but none
Can be so wrapped in thee; thou art the
Friend
To whom the shadows of far years extend:
Albeit my brow thou never shouldst behold,
My voice shall with thy future visions
blend,
And reach into thy heart, — when mine is
cold, —
A token and a tone, even from thy father's
mould.

116

To aid thy mind's development, to watch
Thy dawn of little joys, to sit and see
Almost thy very growth, to view thee catch
Knowledge of objects, — wonders yet to
thee!
To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee,
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's
kiss, —
This, it should seem, was not reserved for
me — [1]
Yet this was in my nature: as it is,
I know not what is there, yet something like
to this.

117

Yet, though dull Hate as duty should be
taught,[2]
I know that thou wilt love me — though
my name
Should be shut from thee, as a spell still
fraught
With desolation, and a broken claim:
Though the grave closed between us, —
'twere the same,
I know that thou wilt love me — though
to drain
*My* blood from out thy being were an aim,
And an attainment, — all would be in
vain, —
Still thou wouldst love me, still that more
than life retain.

118

The child of Love, though born in bitter-
ness,
And nurtured in Convulsion. Of thy
sire

1 Byron never saw his daughter Ada after her child-
hood. She died at thirty-seven, and was buried next to
her father.
2 Byron here is referring to his wife.

These were the elements, — and thine no less.
As yet such are around thee, — but thy fire
Shall be more tempered, and thy hope far higher.
Sweet be thy cradled slumbers! O'er the sea
And from the mountains where I now respire,
Fain would I waft such blessing upon thee,
As, with a sigh, I deem thou might'st have been to me.

May–June, 1816.

## SONNET ON CHILLON

Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art:
For there thy habitation is the heart —
The heart which love of thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consigned —
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon![1] thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar — for 't was trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard! — May none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

June, 1816.

## THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

François de Bonivard, 1496–1570, fought against the Duke of Savoy for the freedom of Geneva. He was imprisoned in Chillon from 1530 to 1536, being released when Geneva became republican. During the rest of his life he worked to make Geneva an educational centre. He is said to have done much towards founding the public library and the university.

Byron's poem, of course, is largely imaginative.

### 1

My hair is gray, but not with years,
Nor grew it white
In a single night,
As men's have grown from sudden fears.
My limbs are bowed, though not with toil,
But rusted with a vile repose,
For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
And mine has been the fate of those
To whom the goodly earth and air
Are banned, and barred — forbidden fare;
But this was for my father's faith
I suffered chains and courted death;
That father perished at the stake
For tenets he would not forsake;
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling-place;
We were seven — who now are one,
Six in youth, and one in age,
Finished as they had begun,
Proud of Persecution's rage;
One in fire, and two in field,
Their belief with blood have sealed,
Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied; —
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

### 2

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
There are seven columns, massy and gray,
Dim with a dull imprisoned ray,
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left;
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp:
And in each pillar there is a ring,
And in each ring there is a chain;
That iron is a cankering thing,
For in these limbs its teeth remain,
With marks that will not wear away,
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes,
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years — I cannot count them o'er,
I lost their long and heavy score
When my last brother drooped and died,
And I lay living by his side.

### 3

They chained us each to a column stone,
And we were three — yet, each alone;
We could not move a single pace,
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight:
And thus together — yet apart,
Fettered in hand, but joined in heart,
'T was still some solace in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,

[1] The well-known castle on the edge of Lake Geneva, just outside Montreux, owned at this time by the Duke of Savoy, who controlled the city.

To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each
With some new hope, or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon stone,
A grating sound — not full and free
As they of yore were wont to be;
It might be fancy — but to me
They never sounded like our own.

4

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest
I ought to do — and did my best —
And each did well in his degree.
The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him — with eyes as blue as heaven —
For him my soul was sorely moved:
And truly might it be distressed
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day —
(When day was beautiful to me
As to young eagles, being free) —
A polar day, which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone,
Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for naught but others' ills,
And then they flowed like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorred to view below.

5

The other was as pure of mind,
But formed to combat with his kind;
Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
And perished in the foremost rank
With joy: — but not in chains to pine:
His spirit withered with their clank,
I saw it silently decline —
And so perchance in sooth did mine:
But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.
He was a hunter of the hills,
Had followed there the deer and wolf;
To him this dungeon was a gulf,
And fettered feet the worst of ills.

6

Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls:
A thousand feet in depth below
Its massy waters meet and flow;
Thus much the fathom-line was sent
From Chillon's snow-white battlement,
Which round about the wave inthrals:
A double dungeon wall and wave
Have made — and like a living grave.
Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay:
We heard it ripple night and day;
Sounding o'er our heads it knocked;
And I have felt the winter's spray
Wash through the bars when winds were high
And wanton in the happy sky;
And then the very rock hath rocked,
And I have felt it shake, unshocked,
Because I could have smiled to see
The death that would have set me free.

7

I said my nearer brother pined,
I said his mighty heart declined,
He loathed and put away his food;
It was not that 't was coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunter's fare,
And for the like had little care:
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat,
Our bread was such as captive's tears
Have moistened many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow men
Like brutes within an iron den;
But what were these to us or him?
These wasted not his heart or limb;
My brother's soul was of that mould
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side;
But why delay the truth? — he died.
I saw, and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand — nor dead, —
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
He died — and they unlocked his chain,
And scooped for him a shallow grave
Even from the cold earth of our cave.
I begged them, as a boon, to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day
Might shine — it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his freeborn breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer —
They coldly laughed — and laid him there:
The flat and turfless earth above
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such Murder's fitting monument!

8

But he, the favorite and the flower,
Most cherished since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyred father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired —
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was withered on the stalk away.
Oh, God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood: —
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
I've seen it on the breaking ocean
Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of Sin delirious with its dread:
But these were horrors — this was woe
Unmixed with such — but sure and slow:
He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender — kind,
And grieved for those he left behind;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray;
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright;
And not a word of murmur — not
A groan o'er his untimely lot, —
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence — lost
In this last loss, of all the most;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting Nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less:
I listened, but I could not hear —
I called, for I was wild with fear;
I knew 't was hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonished;
I called, and thought I heard a sound —
I burst my chain with one strong bound,
And rushed to him: — I found him not,
I only stirred in this black spot,
I only lived — I only drew
The accursed breath of dungeon-dew;
The last — the sole — the dearest link
Between me and the eternal brink,
Which bound me to my failing race,
Was broken in this fatal place.
One on the earth, and one beneath —
My brothers — both had ceased to breathe!
I took that hand which lay so still,
Alas! my own was full as chill;
I had not strength to stir, or strive,
But felt that I was still alive —
A frantic feeling, when we know
That what we love shall ne'er be so.
I know not why
I could not die,
I had no earthly hope — but faith,
And that forbade a selfish death.

9

What next befell me then and there
I know not well — I never knew —
First came the loss of light, and air,
And then of darkness too:
I had no thought, no feeling — none —
Among the stones I stood a stone,
And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
As shrubless crags within the mist;
For all was blank, and bleak, and gray;
It was not night — it was not day,
It was not even the dungeon-light,
So hateful to my heavy sight,
But vacancy absorbing space,
And fixedness — without a place;
There were no stars — no earth — no time —
No check — no change — no good — no crime —
But silence, and a stirless breath
Which neither was of life nor death;
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless!

10

A light broke in upon my brain, —
It was the carol of a bird;
It ceased, and then it came again,
The sweetest song ear ever heard,
And mine was thankful till my eyes
Ran over with the glad surprise,
And they that moment could not see
I was the mate of misery;
But then by dull degrees came back
My senses to their wonted track;
I saw the dungeon walls and floor
Close slowly round me as before,
I saw the glimmer of the sun
Creeping as it before had done,
But through the crevice where it came
That bird was perched, as fond and tame,
And tamer than upon the tree;
A lovely bird, with azure wings,
And song that said a thousand things,
And seemed to say them all for me!
I never saw its like before,
I ne'er shall see its likeness more:
It seemed like me to want a mate,

But was not half so desolate,
And it was come to love me when
None lived to love me so again,
And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
Had brought me back to feel and think.
I know not if it late were free,
Or broke its cage to perch on mine,
But knowing well captivity,
Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!
Or if it were, in winged guise,
A visitant from Paradise;
For — Heaven forgive that thought! the while
Which made me both to weep and smile —
I sometimes deemed that it might be
My brother's soul come down to me;
But then at last away it flew,
And then 't was mortal — well I knew,
For he would never thus have flown,
And left me twice so doubly lone, —
Lone — as the corse within its shroud,
Lone — as a solitary cloud,
A single cloud on a sunny day,
While all the rest of heaven is clear,
A frown upon the atmosphere,
That hath no business to appear
When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

11

A kind of change came in my fate,
My keepers grew compassionate;
I know not what had made them so,
They were inured to sights of woe,
But so it was: — my broken chain
With links unfastened did remain,
And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crushed heart fell blind and sick.

12

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all,
Who loved me in a human shape;
And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me:
No child — no sire — no kin had I,
No partner in my misery;
I thought of this, and I was glad,
For thought of them had made me mad;
But I was curious to ascend
To my barred windows, and to bend
Once more, upon the mountains high,
The quiet of a loving eye.

13

I saw them — and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high — their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channelled rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-walled distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down;
And then there was a little isle,[1]
Which in my very face did smile,
The only one in view;
A small green isle it seemed no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing,
Of gentle breath and hue.
The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seemed joyous each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seemed to fly;
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled — and would fain
I had not left my recent chain;
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode
Fell on me as a heavy load;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save, —
And yet my glance, too much oppressed,
Had almost need of such a rest.

14

It might be months, or years, or days —
I kept no count — I took no note,
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote;
At last men came to set me free;
I asked not why, and recked not where;
It was at length the same to me,
Fettered or fetterless to be,
I learned to love despair.
And thus when they appeared at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,

1 Between the entrances of the Rhone and Villeneuve, not far from Chillon, is a very small island, the only one I could perceive in my voyage round and over the lake, within its circumference. It contains a few trees (I think not above three), and from its singleness and diminutive size has a peculiar effect upon the view.— Byron.

These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage — and all my own!
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home:
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watched them in their sullen trade,
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
And why should I feel less than they?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I, the monarch of each race,
Had power to kill — yet, strange to tell!
In quiet we had learned to dwell —
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are: — even I
Regained my freedom with a sigh.

June, 1816.

## TO THOMAS MOORE

What are you doing now,
Oh Thomas Moore? [1]
What are you doing now,
Oh Thomas Moore?
Sighing or suing now,
Rhyming or wooing now,
Billing or cooing now,
Which, Thomas Moore?

But the Carnival's coming,
Oh Thomas Moore!
The Carnival's coming,
Oh Thomas Moore!
Masking and humming,
Fifing and drumming,
Guitarring and strumming,
Oh Thomas Moore!

December 24, 1816.

## SO WE'LL GO NO MORE A ROVING

So, we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And love itself have rest.
Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a-roving
By the light of the moon.

February 28, 1817.

1 The Irish poet, 1779–1852, was one of Byron's closest friends, to whom he entrusted his autobiography.

## TO THOMAS MOORE

My boat is on the shore,
And my bark is on the sea;
But, before I go, Tom Moore,
Here's a double health to thee!

Here's a sigh to those who love me,
And a smile to those who hate;
And, whatever sky's above me,
Here's a heart for every fate.

Though the Ocean roar around me,
Yet it still shall bear me on;
Though a desert should surround me,
It hath springs that may be won.

Were't the last drop in the well,
As I gasped upon the brink,
Ere my fainting spirit fell,
'Tis to thee that I would drink.

With that water, as this wine,
That libation I would pour
Should be — peace with thine and mine,
And health to thee, Tom Moore.

July, 1817.

## MAZEPPA

The story of Mazeppa's wild ride, told in a tense but quietly-humorous manner, is a good example of Byron's narrative skill.

I

'Twas after dread Pultowa's [1] day,
When fortune left the royal Swede —
Around a slaughtered army lay,
No more to combat and to bleed.
The power and glory of the war,
Faithless as their vain votaries, men,
Had passed to the triumphant Czar,
And Moscow's walls were safe again —
Until a day more dark and drear,
And a more memorable year,[2]
Should give to slaughter and to shame
A mightier host and haughtier name;
A greater wreck, a deeper fall,
A shock to one — a thunderbolt to all.

2

Such was the hazard of the die;
The wounded Charles [3] was taught to fly
By day and night through field and flood,
Stained with his own and subjects' blood;

1 The Battle of Pultowa, July 8, 1709, in which the Russians defeated Charles XII of Sweden.
2 Reference to Napoleon's retreat from Moscow in the winter of 1812.
3 Previously wounded, Charles XII directed the battle from a stretcher.

For thousands fell that flight to aid:
And not a voice was heard to upbraid
Ambition in his humbled hour,
When Truth had naught to dread from Power.
His horse was slain, and Gieta[1] gave
His own — and died the Russians' slave.
This, too, sinks after many a league
Of well-sustained, but vain fatigue;
And in the depth of forests darkling,
The watch-fires in the distance sparkling —
The beacons of surrounding foes —
A King must lay his limbs at length.
Are these the laurels and repose
For which the nations strain their strength?
They laid him by a savage tree,
In outworn Nature's agony;
His wounds were stiff — his limbs were stark —
The heavy hour was chill and dark;
The fever in his blood forbade
A transient slumber's fitful aid:
And thus it was; but yet through all,
Kinglike the Monarch bore his fall,
And made, in this extreme of ill,
His pangs the vassals of his will:
All silent and subdued were they,
As once the nations round him lay.

3

A band of chiefs! — alas! how few,
Since but the fleeting of a day
Had thinned it; but this wreck was true
And chivalrous: upon the clay
Each sate him down, all sad and mute,
Beside his monarch and his steed;
For danger levels man and brute,
And all are fellows in their need.
Among the rest, Mazeppa made
His pillow in an old oak's shade —
Himself as rough, and scarce less old,
The Ukraine's hetman,[2] calm and bold;
But first, outspent with his long course,
The Cossack prince rubbed down his horse,
And made for him a leafy bed,
And smoothed his fetlocks and his mane,
And slacked his girth, and stripped his rein,
And joyed to see how well he fed;
For until now he had the dread
His wearied courser might refuse
To browse beneath the midnight dews:
But he was hardy as his lord,
And little cared for bed and board;
But spirited and docile too;
Whate'er was to be done, would do
Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb,
All Tartar-like he carried him;
Obeyed his voice, and came to call,
And knew him in the midst of all:
Though thousands were around, — and Night,
Without a star, pursued her flight, —
That steed from sunset until dawn
His chief would follow like a fawn.

4

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,
And laid his lance beneath his oak,
Felt if his arms in order good
The long day's march had well withstood —
If still the powder filled the pan,
And flints unloosened kept their lock —
His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,
And whether they had chafed his belt;
And next the venerable man,
From out his haversack and can,
Prepared and spread his slender stock;
And to the Monarch and his men
The whole or portion offered then
With far less of inquietude
Than courtiers at a banquet would.
And Charles of this his slender share
With smiles partook a moment there,
To force of cheer a greater show,
And seem above both wounds and woe; —
And then he said — "Of all our band,
Though firm of heart and strong of hand,
In skirmish, march, or forage, none
Can less have said or more have done
Than thee, Mazeppa! On the earth
So fit a pair had never birth,
Since Alexander's days till now,
As thy Bucephalus[1] and thou:
All Scythia's fame to thine should yield
For pricking on o'er flood and field."
Mazeppa answered — "Ill betide
The school wherein I learned to ride!"
Quoth Charles — "Old Hetman, wherefore so,
Since thou hast learned the art so well?"
Mazeppa said — "'Twere long to tell;
And we have many a league to go,
With every now and then a blow,
And ten to one at least the foe,
Before our steeds may graze at ease
Beyond the swift Borysthenes;[2]
And, Sire, your limbs have need of rest,
And I will be the sentinel
Of this your troop." — "But I request,"
Said Sweden's monarch, "thou wilt tell
This tale of thine, and I may reap,

1 Colonel Gieta, wounded, gave his own horse to King Charles.
2 viceroy.

1 The name of Alexander the Great's horse.
2 The Dnieper, chief river of the Ukraine.

Perchance, from this the boon of sleep;
For at this moment from my eyes
The hope of present slumber flies."

"Well, Sire, with such a hope, I'll track
My seventy years of memory back:
I think 'twas in my twentieth spring, —
Ay, 'twas, — when Casimir was king [1] —
John Casimir, — I was his page
Six summers, in my earlier age:
A learnéd monarch, faith! was he,
And most unlike your Majesty:
He made no wars, and did not gain
New realms to lose them back again;
And (save debates in Warsaw's diet)
He reigned in most unseemly quiet;
Not that he had no cares to vex,
He loved the muses and the Sex;
And sometimes these so froward are,
They made him wish himself at war;
But soon his wrath being o'er, he took
Another mistress — or new book:
And then he gave prodigious fêtes —
All Warsaw gathered round his gates
To gaze upon his splendid court,
And dames, and chiefs, of princely port.
He was the Polish Solomon,
So sung his poets, all but one,
Who, being unpensioned, made a satire,
And boasted that he could not flatter.
It was a court of jousts and mimes,
Where every courtier tried at rhymes;
Even I for once produced some verses,
And signed my odes 'Despairing Thyrsis.'
There was a certain Palatine,[2]
A count of far and high descent,
Rich as a salt [3] or silver mine;
And he was proud, ye may divine,
As if from Heaven he had been sent;
He had such wealth in blood and ore
As few could match beneath the throne;
And he would gaze upon his store,
And o'er his pedigree would pore,
Until by some confusion led,
Which almost looked like want of head,
He thought their merits were his own.
His wife was not of his opinion —
His junior she by thirty years —
Grew daily tired of his dominion;
And, after wishes, hopes, and fears,
To Virtue a few farewell tears,
A restless dream or two — some glances
At Warsaw's youth — some songs, and dances,
Awaited but the usual chances,
(Those happy accidents which render
The coldest dames so very tender,)
To deck her Count with titles given,
'Tis said, as passports into Heaven;
But, strange to say, they rarely boast
Of these, who have deserved them most.

5

"I was a goodly stripling then;
At seventy years I so may say,
That there were few, or boys or men,
Who, in my dawning time of day,
Of vassal or of knight's degree,
Could vie in vanities with me;
For I had strength, youth, gaiety,
A port, not like to this ye see,
But as smooth, as all is rugged now;
For Time, and Care, and War, have ploughed
My very soul from out my brow;
And thus I should be disavowed
By all my kind and kin, could they
Compare my day and yesterday.
This change was wrought, too, long ere age
Had ta'en my features for his page:
With years, ye know, have not declined
My strength, my courage, or my mind,
Or at this hour I should not be
Telling old tales beneath a tree,
With starless skies my canopy.
But let me on: Theresa's form —
Methinks it glides before me now,
Between me and yon chestnut's bough,
The memory is so quick and warm;
And yet I find no words to tell
The shape of her I loved so well:
She had the Asiatic eye,
Such as our Turkish neighborhood,
Hath mingled with our Polish blood,
Dark as above us is the sky;
But through it stole a tender light,
Like the first moonrise of midnight;
Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,
Which seemed to melt to its own beam;
All love, half languor, and half fire,
Like saints that at the stake expire,
And lift their raptured looks on high,
As though it were a joy to die.
A brow like a midsummer lake,
Transparent with the sun therein,
When waves no murmur dare to make,
And Heaven beholds her face within.
A cheek and lip — but why proceed?
I loved her then — I love her still;
And such as I am, love indeed
In fierce extremes — in good and ill.

7 Casimir V, King of Poland.
8 A count who, as chief of a palatinate or province, has certain royal privileges.
9 The reference is natural here, for much of the wealth of Poland was in salt mines.

But still we love even in our rage,
And haunted to our very age
With the vain shadow of the past —
As is Mazeppa to the last.

6

"We met — we gazed — I saw, and sighed;
She did not speak, and yet replied;
There are ten thousand tones and signs
We hear and see, but none defines —
Involuntary sparks of thought,
Which strike from out the heart o'erwrought,
And form a strange intelligence,
Alike mysterious and intense,
Which link the burning chain that binds,
Without their will, young hearts and minds;
Conveying, as the electric wire,
We know not how, the absorbing fire.
I saw, and sighed — in silence wept,
And still reluctant distance kept,
Until I was made known to her,
And we might then and there confer
Without suspicion — then, even then,
I longed, and was resolved to speak;
But on my lips they died again,
The accents tremulous and weak,
Until one hour. — There is a game,
A frivolous and foolish play,
Wherewith we while away the day;
It is — I have forgot the name —
And we to this, it seems, were set,
By some strange chance, which I forget:
I reckoned not if I won or lost,
It was enough for me to be
So near to hear, and oh! to see
The being whom I loved the most.
I watched her as a sentinel,
(May ours this dark night watch as well!)
Until I saw, and thus it was,
That she was pensive, nor perceived
Her occupation, nor was grieved
Nor glad to lose or gain; but still
Played on for hours, as if her will
Yet bound her to the place, though not
That hers might be the winning lot.
Then through my brain the thought did pass,
Even as a flash of lightning there,
That there was something in her air
Which would not doom me to despair;
And on the thought my words broke forth,
All incoherent as they were;
Their eloquence was little worth,
But yet she listened — 'tis enough —
Who listens once will listen twice;
Her heart, be sure, is not of ice —
And one refusal no rebuff.

7

"I loved, and was beloved again —
They tell me, Sire, you never knew
Those gentle frailties; if 'tis true,
I shorten all my joy or pain;
To you 'twould seem absurd as vain;
But all men are not born to reign,
Or o'er their passions, or as you
Thus o'er themselves and nations too.
I am — or rather *was* — a Prince,
A chief of thousands, and could lead
Them on where each would foremost bleed;
But could not o'er myself evince
The like control. — But to resume:
I loved, and was beloved again;
In sooth, it is a happy doom,
But yet where happiest ends in pain. —
We met in secret, and the hour
Which led me to that lady's bower
Was fiery Expectation's dower.
My days and nights were nothing — all
Except that hour which doth recall,
In the long lapse from youth to age,
No other like itself — I'd give
The Ukraine back again to live
It o'er once more — and be a page,
The happy page, who was the lord
Of one soft heart, and his own sword,
And had no other gem nor wealth,
Save nature's gift of Youth and Health. —
We met in secret — doubly sweet,
Some say, they find it so to meet;
I know not that — I would have given
My life but to have called her mine
In the full view of Earth and Heaven;
For I did oft and long repine
That we could only meet by stealth.

8

"For lovers there are many eyes,
And such there were on us; — the Devil
On such occasions should be civil —
The Devil! — I'm loth to do him wrong,
It might be some untoward saint,
Who would not be at rest too long,
But to his pious bile gave vent —
But one fair night, some lurking spies
Surprised and seized us both.
The Count was something more than wroth—
I was unarmed; but if in steel,
All cap-à-pie from head to heel,
What 'gainst their numbers could I do? —
'Twas near his castle, far away
From city or from succor near,
And almost on the break of day;
I did not think to see another,
My moments seemed reduced to few;

And with one prayer to Mary Mother,
And, it may be, a saint or two,
As I resigned me to my fate,
They led me to the castle gate:
Theresa's doom I never knew,
Our lot was henceforth separate. —
An angry man, ye may opine,
Was he, the proud Count Palatine;
And he had reason good to be,
But he was most enraged lest such
An accident should chance to touch
Upon his future pedigree;
Nor less amazed, that such a blot
His noble 'scutcheon should have got,
While he was highest of his line;
Because unto himself he seemed
The first of men, nor less he deemed
In others' eyes, and most in mine.
'Sdeath! with a *page* — perchance a king
Had reconciled him to the thing;
But with a stripling of a page —
I felt — but cannot paint his rage.

9

"'Bring forth the horse!' — the horse was brought!
In truth, he was a noble steed,
A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,
Who looked as though the speed of thought
Were in his limbs; but he was wild,
Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,
With spur and bridle undefiled —
'Twas but a day he had been caught;
And snorting, with erected mane,
And struggling fiercely, but in vain,
In the full foam of wrath and dread
To me the desert-born was led:
They bound me on, that menial throng,
Upon his back with many a thong;
They loosed him with a sudden lash —
Away! — away! — and on we dash! —
Torrents less rapid and less rash.

10

"Away! — away! — My breath was gone —
I saw not where he hurried on:
'Twas scarcely yet the break of day,
And on he foamed — away! — away! —
The last of human sounds which rose,
As I was darted from my foes,
Was the wild shout of savage laughter,
Which on the wind came roaring after
A moment from that rabble rout:
With sudden wrath I wrenched my head,
And snapped the cord, which to the mane
Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,
And, writhing half my form about,
Howled back my curse; but 'midst the tread,
The thunder of my courser's speed,
Perchance they did not hear nor heed:
It vexes me — for I would fain
Have paid their insult back again.
I paid it well in after days:
There is not of that castle gate,
Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight,
Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left;
Nor of its fields a blade of grass,
Save what grows on a ridge of wall,
Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall;
And many a time ye there might pass,
Nor dream that e'er that fortress was.
I saw its turrets in a blaze,
Their crackling battlements all cleft,
And the hot lead pour down like rain
From off the scorched and blackening roof,
Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.
They little thought that day of pain,
When launched, as on the lightning's flash,
They bade me to destruction dash,
That one day I should come again,
With twice five thousand horse, to thank
The Count for his uncourteous ride.
They played me then a bitter prank,
When, with the wild horse for my guide,
They bound me to his foaming flank:
At length I played them one as frank —
For Time at last sets all things even —
And if we do but watch the hour,
There never yet was human power
Which could evade, if unforgiven,
The patient search and vigil long
Of him who treasures up a wrong.

11

"Away, away, my steed and I,
Upon the pinions of the wind!
All human dwellings left behind,
We sped like meteors through the sky,
When with its crackling sound the night
Is chequered with the Northern light.
Town — village — none were on our track,
But a wild plain of far extent,
And bounded by a forest black;
And, save the scarce seen battlement
On distant heights of some strong hold,
Against the Tartars built of old,
No trace of man. The year before
A Turkish army had marched o'er;
And where the Spahi's [1] hoof hath trod,
The verdure flies the bloody sod.
The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,
And a low breeze crept moaning by —
I could have answered with a sigh —
But fast we fled, away, away! —

1 Turkish horseman.

And I could neither sigh nor pray;
And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain
Upon the courser's bristling mane;
But, snorting still with rage and fear,
He flew upon his far career.
At times I almost thought, indeed,
He must have slackened in his speed;
But no — my bound and slender frame
Was nothing to his angry might,
And merely like a spur became:
Each motion which I made to free
My swoln limbs from their agony
Increased his fury and affright:
I tried my voice, — 'twas faint and low —
But yet he swerved as from a blow;
And, starting to each accent, sprang
As from a sudden trumpet's clang.
Meantime my cords were wet with gore,
Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er;
And in my tongue the thirst became
A something fierier far than flame.

12

"We neared the wild wood — 'twas so wide,
I saw no bounds on either side;
'Twas studded with old sturdy trees,
That bent not to the roughest breeze
Which howls down from Siberia's waste,
And strips the forest in its haste, —
But these were few and far between,
Set thick with shrubs more young and green,
Luxuriant with their annual leaves,
Ere strown by those autumnal eves
That nip the forest's foliage dead,
Discolored with a lifeless red,
Which stands thereon like stiffened gore
Upon the slain when battle's o'er;
And some long winter's night hath shed
Its frost o'er every tombless head —
So cold and stark — the raven's beak
May peck unpierced each frozen cheek.
'Twas a wild waste of underwood,
And here and there a chestnut stood,
The strong oak, and the hardy pine;
But far apart — and well it were,
Or else a different lot were mine —
The boughs gave way, and did not tear
My limbs; and I found strength to bear
My wounds, already scarred with cold;
My bonds forbade to loose my hold.
We rustled through the leaves like wind,
Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind;
By night I heard them on the track,
Their troop came hard upon our back,
With their long gallop which can tire
The hound's deep hate, and hunter's fire:
Where'er we flew they followed on,
Nor left us with the morning sun;
Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,
At day-break winding through the wood,
And through the night had heard their feet
Their stealing, rustling step repeat.
Oh! how I wished for spear or sword,
At least to die amidst the horde,
And perish — if it must be so —
At bay, destroying many a foe!
When first my courser's race begun,
I wished the goal already won;
But now I doubted strength and speed.
Vain doubt! his swift and savage breed
Had nerved him like the mountain-roe —
Nor faster falls the blinding snow
Which whelms the peasant near the door
Whose threshold he shall cross no more,
Bewildered with the dazzling blast,
Than through the forest-paths he past —
Untired, untamed, and worse than wild —
All furious as a favored child
Balked of its wish; or — fiercer still —
A woman piqued — who has her will!

13

"The wood was past; 'twas more than noon,
But chill the air, although in June;
Or it might be my veins ran cold —
Prolonged endurance tames the bold;
And I was then not what I seem,
But headlong as a wintry stream,
And wore my feelings out before
I well could count their causes o'er.
And what with fury, fear, and wrath,
The tortures which beset my path —
Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,
Thus bound in Nature's nakedness,
(Sprung from a race whose rising blood
When stirred beyond its calmer mood,
And trodden hard upon, is like
The rattle-snake's in act to strike,)
What marvel if this worn-out trunk
Beneath its woes a moment sunk?
The earth gave way, the skies rolled round,
I seemed to sink upon the ground;
But erred — for I was fastly bound.
My heart turned sick, my brain grew sore,
And throbbed awhile, then beat no more:
The skies spun like a mighty wheel;
I saw the trees like drunkards reel,
And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,
Which saw no farther. He who dies
Can die no more than then I died,
O'ertortured by that ghastly ride.
I felt the blackness come and go,
And strove to wake; but could not make
My senses climb up from below:
I felt as on a plank at sea,
When all the waves that dash o'er thee,

At the same time upheave and whelm,
And hurl thee towards a desert realm.
My undulating life was as
The fancied lights that flitting pass
Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when
Fever begins upon the brain;
But soon it passed, with little pain,
But a confusion worse than such:
I own that I should deem it much,
Dying, to feel the same again;
And yet I do suppose we must
Feel far more ere we turn to dust!
No matter! I have bared my brow
Full in Death's face — before — and now.

14

"My thoughts came back. Where was I?
Cold,
And numb, and giddy: pulse by pulse
Life reassumed its lingering hold,
And throb by throb: till grown a pang
Which for a moment would convulse,
My blood reflowed though thick and chill;
My ear with uncouth noises rang,
My heart began once more to thrill;
My sight returned, though dim, alas!
And thickened, as it were, with glass.
Methought the dash of waves was nigh;
There was a gleam too of the sky,
Studded with stars; — it is no dream;
The wild horse swims the wilder stream!
The bright broad river's gushing tide
Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,
And we are half-way, struggling o'er
To yon unknown and silent shore.
The waters broke my hollow trance,
And with a temporary strength
My stiffened limbs were rebaptized.
My courser's broad breast proudly braves
And dashes off the ascending waves,
And onward we advance!
We reach the slippery shore at length,
A haven I but little prized,
For all behind was dark and drear,
And all before was night and fear.
How many hours of night or day
In those suspended pangs I lay,
I could not tell; I scarcely knew
If this were human breath I drew.

15

"With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain
Up the repelling bank.
We gain the top: a boundless plain
Spreads through the shadow of the night,
And onward, onward, onward — seems,
Like precipices in our dreams,
To stretch beyond the sight;
And here and there a speck of white,
Or scattered spot of dusky green,
In masses broke into the light,
As rose the moon upon my right.
But nought distinctly seen
In the dim waste would indicate
The omen of a cottage gate;
No twinkling taper from afar
Stood like a hospitable star;
Not even an ignis-fatuus [1] rose
To make him merry with my woes:
That very cheat had cheered me then!
Although detected, welcome still,
Reminding me, through every ill,
Of the abodes of men.

16

"Onward we went — but slack and slow;
His savage force at length o'erspent,
The drooping courser, faint and low,
All feebly foaming went.
A sickly infant had had power
To guide him forward in that hour!
But, useless all to me.
His new-born tameness nought availed —
My limbs were bound; my force had failed,
Perchance, had they been free.
With feeble effort still I tried
To rend the bonds so starkly tied —
But still it was in vain;
My limbs were only wrung the more,
And soon the idle strife gave o'er,
Which but prolong'd their pain.
The dizzy race seemed almost done,
Although no goal was nearly won:
Some streaks announced the coming sun —
How slow, alas! he came!
Methought that mist of dawning gray
Would never dapple into day;
How heavily it rolled away —
Before the eastern flame
Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,
And called the radiance from their cars,
And filled the earth, from his deep throne,
With lonely lustre, all his own.

17

"Up rose the sun; the mists were curled
Back from the solitary world
Which lay around — behind — before.
What booted it to traverse o'er
Plain, forest, river? Man nor brute,
Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,
Lay in the wild luxuriant soil;
No sign of travel — none of toil;

1 Phosphorescent light on a marsh; will-o'-the-wisp.

The very air was mute;
And not an insect's shrill small horn,
Nor matin bird's new voice was borne
From herb nor thicket. Many a werst,[1]
Panting as if his heart would burst,
The weary brute still staggered on;
And still we were — or seemed — alone.
At length, while reeling on our way,
Methought I heard a courser neigh
From out yon tuft of blackening firs.
Is it the wind those branches stirs?
No, no! From out the forest prance
A trampling troop; I see them come!
In one vast squadron they advance!
I strove to cry — my lips were dumb!
The steeds rush on in plunging pride;
But where are they the reins to guide?
A thousand horse — and none to ride!
With flowing tail, and flying mane,
Wide nostrils — never stretched by pain,
Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,
And feet that iron never shod,
And flanks unscarred by spur or rod,
A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
Like waves that follow o'er the sea,
Came thickly thundering on,
As if our faint approach to meet!
The sight re-nerved my courser's feet,
A moment staggering, feebly fleet,
A moment, with a faint low neigh,
He answered, and then fell!
With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,
And reeking limbs immoveable;
His first and last career is done!
On came the troop — they saw him stoop,
They saw me strangely bound along
His back with many a bloody thong.
They stop — they start — they snuff the air,
Gallop a moment here and there,
Approach, retire, wheel round and round,
Then plunging back with sudden bound,
Headed by one black mighty steed,
Who seemed the patriarch of his breed,
Without a single speck or hair
Of white upon his shaggy hide.
They snort — they foam — neigh — swerve aside,
And backward to the forest fly,
By instinct, from a human eye. —
They left me there to my despair,
Linked to the dead and stiffening wretch,
Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,
Relieved from that unwonted weight,
From whence I could not extricate
Nor him nor me — and there we lay,
The dying on the dead!

[1] verst, in Russia 3500 feet.

I little deemed another day
Would see my houseless, helpless head.

"And there from morn till twilight bound,
I felt the heavy hours toil round,
With just enough of life to see
My last of suns go down on me,
In hopeless certainty of mind,
That makes us feel at length resigned
To that which our foreboding years
Presents the worst and last of fears:
Inevitable — even a boon,
Nor more unkind for coming soon;
Yet shunned and dreaded with such care,
As if it only were a snare
That Prudence might escape:
At times both wished for and implored,
At times sought with self-pointed sword,
Yet still a dark and hideous close
To even intolerable woes,
And welcome in no shape.
And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure,
They who have revelled beyond measure
In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,
Die calm, or calmer oft than he
Whose heritage was Misery:
For he who hath in turn run through
All that was beautiful and new,
Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave;
And, save the future, (which is viewed
Not quite as men are base or good,
But as their nerves may be endued,)
With nought perhaps to grieve: —
The wretch still hopes his woes must end,
And Death, whom he should deem his friend,
Appears, to his distempered eyes,
Arrived to rob him of his prize,
The tree of his new Paradise.
To-morrow would have given him all,
Repaid his pangs, repaired his fall;
To-morrow would have been the first
Of days no more deplored or curst,
But bright, and long, and beckoning years,
Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,
Guerdon of many a painful hour;
To-morrow would have given him power
To rule — to shine — to smite — to save —
And must it dawn upon his grave?

18

"The sun was sinking — still I lay
Chained to the chill and stiffening steed!
I thought to mingle there our clay;
And my dim eyes of death had need,
No hope arose of being freed.
I cast my last looks up the sky,
And there between me and the sun
I saw the expecting raven fly,

Who scarce would wait till both should die,
Ere his repast begun.
He flew, and perched, then flew once more,
And each time nearer than before;
I saw his wing through twilight flit,
And once so near me he alit
I could have smote, but lacked the strength;
But the slight motion of my hand,
And feeble scratching of the sand,
The exerted throat's faint struggling noise,
Which scarcely could be called a voice,
Together scared him off at length. —
I know no more — my latest dream
Is something of a lovely star
Which fixed my dull eyes from afar,
And went and came with wandering beam,
And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense
Sensation of recurring sense,
And then subsiding back to death,
And then again a little breath,
A little thrill, a short suspense,
An icy sickness curdling o'er
My heart, and sparks that crossed my brain —
A gasp — a throb — a start of pain,
A sigh — and nothing more.

19

"I woke — Where was I? — Do I see
A human face look down on me?
And doth a roof above me close?
Do these limbs on a couch repose?
Is this a chamber where I lie?
And is it mortal, yon bright eye
That watches me with gentle glance?
I closed my own again once more,
As doubtful that the former trance
Could not as yet be o'er.
A slender girl, long-haired, and tall,
Sate watching by the cottage wall:
The sparkle of her eye I caught,
Even with my first return of thought;
For ever and anon she threw
A prying, pitying glance on me
With her black eyes so wild and free.
I gazed, and gazed, until I knew
No vision it could be, —
But that I lived, and was released
From adding to the vulture's feast.
And when the Cossack maid beheld
My heavy eyes at length unsealed,
She smiled — and I essayed to speak,
But failed — and she approached, and made
With lip and finger signs that said,
I must not strive as yet to break
The silence, till my strength should be
Enough to leave my accents free;
And then her hand on mine she laid,
And smoothed the pillow for my head,
And stole along on tiptoe tread,
And gently oped the door, and spake
In whispers — ne'er was voice so sweet!
Even music followed her light feet; —
But those she called were not awake,
And she went forth; but, ere she passed,
Another look on me she cast,
Another sign she made, to say,
That I had naught to fear, that all
Were near, at my command or call,
And she would not delay
Her due return: — while she was gone,
Methought I felt too much alone.

20

"She came with mother and with sire —
What need of more? — I will not tire
With long recital of the rest,
Since I became the Cossack's guest.
They found me senseless on the plain —
They bore me to the nearest hut —
They brought me into life again —
Me — one day o'er their realm to reign!
Thus the vain fool who strove to glut
His rage, refining on my pain,
Sent me forth to the wilderness,
Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,
To pass the desert to a throne, —
What mortal his own doom may guess? —
Let none despond, let none despair!
To-morrow the Borysthenes
May see our coursers graze at ease
Upon his Turkish bank, — and never
Had I such welcome for a river
As I shall yield when safely there.
Comrades, good night!" — The Hetman threw
His length beneath the oak-tree shade,
With leafy couch already made,
A bed nor comfortless nor new
To him who took his rest whene'er
The hour arrived, no matter where:
His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.
And if ye marvel Charles forgot
To thank his tale, *he* wondered not, —
The king had been an hour asleep.

## DON JUAN

*Don Juan* is Byron's great humorous poem. He completed sixteen cantos, and had started a seventeenth, before his death. In letters to his publisher, Murray, he called it "a playful satire, with as little poetry as could be helped," and "a *satire* on *abuses* of the present states of society, and not an eulogy of vice."

CANTO THE THIRD, STANZAS 85–END

85

Thus, usually, when *he* was asked to sing,
He gave the different nations something national;
'Twas all the same to him — "God save the king,"
Or "*Ca ira*," according to the fashion all:
His muse made increment of any thing,
From the high lyric down to the low rational:
If Pindar [1] sang horse-races, what should hinder
Himself from being as pliable as Pindar?

86

In France, for instance, he would write a chanson;
In England a six canto quarto tale;
In Spain, he'd make a ballad or romance on
The last war — much the same in Portugal;
In Germany, the Pegasus he'd prance on
Would be old Goethe's (see what says De Staël); [2]
In Italy he'd ape the "Trecentisti;" [3]
In Greece, he'd sing some sort of hymn like this t' ye:

1

The Isles of Greece, the Isles of Greece!
Where burning Sappho [4] loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace,
Where Delos [5] rose, and Phœbus sprung!
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.

2

The Scian [6] and the Teian [7] muse,
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse;
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west
Than your sires' "Islands of the Blest." [8]

3

The mountains look on Marathon — [9]
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dreamed that Greece might still be free;
For standing on the Persians' grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

4

A king [1] sate on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis; [2]
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations; — all were his!
He counted them at break of day —
And when the sun set where were they?

5

And where are they? and where art thou,
My country? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now —
The heroic bosom beats no more!
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine?

6

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,
Though linked among a fettered race,
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
For what is left the poet here?
For Greeks a blush — for Greece a tear.

7

Must *we* but weep o'er days more blest?
Must *we* but blush? — Our fathers bled.
Earth! render back from out thy breast
A remnant of our Spartan dead!
Of the three hundred grant but three,
To make a new Thermopylæ! [3]

8

What, silent still? and silent all?
Ah! no; — the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
And answer, "Let one living head,
But one arise, — we come, we come!"
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

9

In vain — in vain: strike other chords;
Fill high the cup with Samian [4] wine!
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
And shed the blood of Scio's vine!
Hark! rising to the ignoble call —
How answers each bold Bacchanal!

10

You have the Pyrrhic dance [5] as yet,
Where is the Pyrrhic [6] phalanx gone?
Of two such lessons, why forget
The nobler and the manlier one?
You have the letters Cadmus [7] gave —
Think ye he meant them for a slave?

1 Most of his odes, while religious in character, were written to celebrate victories in the Greek games.
2 Madame de Staël, 1766–1817, author of *De l'Allemand*.
3 Fourteenth-century Italian artists.
4 The great Greek poetess of love, who wrote about 610 B.C.
5 The island of Delos, the birthplace of Phœbus Apollo, was supposed to have risen in the Ægean Sea.
6 Homer, because the island of Scio was said to be his birthplace.
7 Anacreon, born in Teos in Asia Minor.
8 The *Μακάρων νῆσοι* of the Greek poets were supposed to have been the Cape de Verd Islands, or the Canaries. — Byron.
9 Where the Greeks defeated the Persians, 490 B.C.

1 Xerxes, King of Persia.
2 The island near which the Greek navy defeated Xerxes, 480 B.C.
3 The pass which Leonidas and his small band of Spartans defended heroically, but in vain, against Xerxes in 480 B.C.
4 From the island of Samos.
5 A war dance.
6 King Pyrrhus of Epirus, third century B.C., evolved the phalanx.
7 The supposed inventor of the alphabet.

11

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
We will not think of themes like these!
It made Anacreon's [1] song divine:
He served — but served Polycrates —
A tyrant; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

12

The tyrant of the Chersonese [2]
Was freedom's best and bravest friend;
*That* tyrant was Miltiades! [3]
Oh! that the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind!
Such chains as his were sure to bind.

13

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,[4]
Exists the remnant of a line
Such as the Doric [5] mothers bore;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
The Heracleidan blood [6] might own.

14

Trust not for freedom to the Franks —
They have a king who buys and sells:
In native swords, and native ranks,
The only hope of courage dwells;
But Turkish force, and Latin fraud,
Would break your shield, however broad.

15

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
Our virgins dance beneath the shade —
I see their glorious black eyes shine;
But gazing on each glowing maid,
My own the burning tear-drop laves,
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

16

Place me on Sunium's [7] marbled steep,
Where nothing, save the waves and I,
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;
There, swan-like, let me sing and die:
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine —
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

87

Thus sung, or would, or could, or should have sung,
The modern Greek, in tolerable verse;
If not like Orpheus quite, when Greece was young,
Yet in these times he might have done much worse:
His strain displayed some feeling — right or wrong;
And feeling, in a poet, is the source
Of others' feeling; but they are such liars,
And take all colors — like the hands of dyers.

88

But words are things, and a small drop of ink,
Falling like dew, upon a thought, produces
That which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think;
'Tis strange, the shortest letter which man uses
Instead of speech, may form a lasting link
Of ages; to what straits old Time reduces
Frail man, when paper — even a rag like this,
Survives himself, his tomb, and all that's his.

89

And when his bones are dust, his grave a blank,
His station, generation, even his nation,
Become a thing, or nothing, save to rank
In chronological commemoration,
Some dull MS. Oblivion long has sank,
Or graven stone found in a barrack's station
In digging the foundation of a closet,
May turn his name up, as a rare deposit.

90

And Glory long has made the sages smile;
'Tis something, nothing, words, illusion, wind —
Depending more upon the historian's style
Than on the name a person leaves behind:
Troy owes to Homer what whist owes to Hoyle:
The present century was growing blind
To the great Marlborough's [1] skill in giving knocks,
Until his late Life by Archdeacon Coxe.

91

Milton 's the Prince of Poets — so we say;
A little heavy, but no less divine:
An independent being in his day —
Learned, pious, temperate in love and wine;
But, his life falling into Johnson's way,
We're told this great High Priest of all the Nine
Was whipt at college — a harsh sire — odd spouse,
For the first Mrs. Milton left his house.

1 The victor at Blenheim, 1704.

1 Anacreon lived in Samos for a time as court poet to the tyrant Polycrates, his patron.
2 The peninsula of Gallipoli.
3 Who commanded the Greeks at Marathon.
4 In Albania. 5 Spartan.
6 The blood of Heracles or Hercules.
7 Southernmost point of Attica, site of an old temple to Athena which faces the sea.

92

All these are, *certes*, entertaining facts,
Like Shakespeare's stealing deer, Lord Bacon's bribes;
Like Titus' youth, and Cæsar's earliest acts;
Like Burns (whom Doctor Currie well describes);
Like Cromwell's pranks; — but although Truth exacts
These amiable descriptions from the scribes,
As most essential to their hero's story,
They do not much contribute to his glory.

93

All are not moralists, like Southey, when
He prated to the world of "Pantisocracy;" [1]
Or Wordsworth unexcised, unhired, who then
Seasoned his pedlar poems with Democracy;
Or Coleridge, long before his flighty pen
Let to the *Morning Post* its aristocracy;
When he and Southey, following the same path,
Espoused two partners [2] (milliners of Bath).

94

Such names at present cut a convict figure,
The very Botany Bay [3] in moral geography;
Their loyal treason, renegado rigor,
Are good manure for their more bare biography.
Wordsworth's last quarto, by the way, is bigger
Than any since the birthday of typography;
A drowsy frowzy poem, called the "*Excursion*,"
Writ in a manner which is my aversion.

95

He there builds up a formidable dyke
Between his own and others' intellect;
But Wordsworth's poem, and his followers, like
Joanna Southcote's [4] Shiloh, and her sect,
Are things which in this century don't strike
The public mind, — so few are the elect;
And the new births of both their stale virginities
Have proved but dropsies,[1] taken for divinities.

96

But let me to my story: I must own,
If I have any fault, it is digression —
Leaving my people to proceed alone,
While I soliloquize beyond expression;
But these are my addresses from the throne,
Which put off business to the ensuing session:
Forgetting each omission is a loss to
The world, not quite so great as Ariosto.[2]

97

I know that what our neighbors call "*longueurs*" [3]
(We've not so good a *word*, but have the *thing*,
In that complete perfection which insures
An epic from Bob Southey every spring),
Form not the true temptation which allures
The reader; but 'twould not be hard to bring
Some fine examples of the *epopée*,[4]
To prove its grand ingredient is *ennui*.

98

We learn from Horace, [5] "Homer sometimes sleeps;"
We feel without him, — Wordsworth sometimes wakes, —
To show with what complacency he creeps,
With his dear "*Waggoners*," around his lakes.
He wishes for "a boat" to sail the deeps —
Of Ocean? — No, of air; and then he makes
Another outcry for "a little boat,"
And drivels seas to set it well afloat.

99

If he must fain sweep o'er the ethereal plain,
And Pegasus runs restive in his "Waggon,"
Could he not beg the loan of Charles's Wain? [6]
Or pray Medea [7] for a single dragon?
Or if, too classic for his vulgar brain,
He feared his neck to venture such a nag on,

1 The reference is to the ideal commonwealth that Coleridge and Southey planned to establish.
2 Edith and Sarah Fricker.
3 The English convict colony in New South Wales, Australia.
4 She predicted the birth to her in 1814 of a new Messiah.

1 Miss Southcote died of dropsy, instead of giving birth to a child.
2 Great romantic poet of Italy, 1474–1533, who wrote *Orlando Furioso*.
3 tediousness. 4 epic. 5 In his *Ars Poetica*.
6 wagon; here, the group of stars called "the dipper."
7 After she was forsaken by Jason, Medea killed her children, set fire to the house, and escaped in a dragon-drawn chariot.

And he must needs mount nearer to the moon,
Could not the blockhead ask for a balloon?

100

"Pedlars," and "Boats," and "Waggons!"
Oh! ye shades
Of Pope and Dryden, are we come to this?
That trash of such sort not alone evades
Contempt, but from the bathos' vast abyss
Floats scumlike uppermost, and these Jack Cades
Of sense and song above your graves may hiss —
The "little boatman" and his "Peter Bell"
Can sneer at him who drew "Achitophel"!

101

T' our tale. — The feast was over, the slaves gone,
The dwarfs and dancing girls had all retired;
The Arab lore and Poet's song were done,
And every sound of revelry expired;
The lady and her lover, left alone,
The rosy flood of Twilight's sky admired; —
Ave Maria! o'er the earth and sea,
That heavenliest hour of Heaven is worthiest thee!

102

Ave Maria! blessèd be the hour!
The time, the clime, the spot, where I so oft
Have felt that moment in its fullest power
Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft,
While swung the deep bell in the distant tower,
Or the faint dying day-hymn stole aloft,
And not a breath crept through the rosy air,
And yet the forest leaves seemed stirred with prayer.

103

Ave Maria! 'tis the hour of prayer!
Ave Maria! 'tis the hour of Love!
Ave Maria! may our spirits dare
Look up to thine and to thy Son's above!
Ave Maria! oh that face so fair!
Those downcast eyes beneath the Almighty Dove —
What though 'tis but a pictured image? — strike —
That painting is no idol, — 'tis too like.

104

Some kinder casuists are pleased to say,
In nameless print — that I have no devotion;
But set those persons down with me to pray,
And you shall see who has the properest notion
Of getting into Heaven the shortest way;
My altars are the mountains and the Ocean,
Earth, air, stars, — all that springs from the great Whole,
Who hath produced, and will receive the Soul.

105

Sweet Hour of Twilight! — in the solitude
Of the pine forest, and the silent shore
Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,
Rooted where once the Adrian wave flowed o'er,
To where the last Cæsarean fortress stood,
Evergreen forest! which Boccaccio's lore
And Dryden's lay [1] made haunted ground to me,
How have I loved the twilight hour and thee!

106

The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,
Making their summer lives one ceaseless song,
Were the sole echoes, save my steed's and mine,
And Vesper bell's that rose the boughs along;
The spectre huntsman [2] of Onesti's line,
His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the fair throng
Which learned from this example not to fly
From a true lover, — shadowed my mind's eye.

107

Oh, Hesperus! thou bringest all good things —
Home to the weary, to the hungry cheer,
To the young bird the parent's brooding wings,
The welcome stall to the o'erlabored steer; [3]
Whate'er of peace about our hearthstone clings,
Whate'er our household gods protect of dear,

1 Dryden's poem, *Theodore and Honoria*, which is based on a story in Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

2 This ghost, in Boccaccio's story, haunts the girl who spurned his love when he was alive.

3 These four lines are a paraphrase from Sappho.

Are gathered round us by thy look of rest;
Thou bring'st the child, too, to the mother's breast.

108

Soft Hour! which wakes the wish and melts the heart
Of those who sail the seas, on the first day
When they from their sweet friends are torn apart;
Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way
As the far bell of Vesper makes him start,
Seeming to weep the dying day's decay;
Is this a fancy which our reason scorns?
Ah! surely Nothing dies but Something mourns!

109

When Nero perished by the justest doom
Which ever the Destroyer yet destroyed,
Amidst the roar of liberated Rome,
Of nations freed, and the world overjoyed,
Some hands unseen strewed flowers upon his tomb:
Perhaps the weakness of a heart not void
Of feeling for some kindness done, when Power
Had left the wretch an uncorrupted hour.

110

But I'm digressing; what on earth has Nero,
Or any such like sovereign buffoons,
To do with the transactions of my hero,
More than such madmen's fellow man — the moon's?
Sure my invention must be down at zero,
And I grown one of many "wooden spoons"
Of verse (the name with which we Cantabs [1] please
To dub the last of honors in degrees).

111

I feel this tediousness will never do —
'Tis being *too* epic, and I must cut down
(In copying) this long canto into two;
They'll never find it out, unless I own
The fact, excepting some experienced few;
And then as an improvement 'twill be shown:
I'll prove that such the opinion of the critic is
From Aristotle *passim*. — See Ποιητικης.[2]

October–November, 1819.

1 Cambridge men.
2 *Poetics*, Aristotle's great discussion of literature.

## STANZAS

WRITTEN ON THE ROAD BETWEEN FLORENCE AND PISA

Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story;
The days of our Youth are the days of our glory;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow
that is wrinkled?
'Tis but as a dead flower with May-dew besprinkled.
Then away with all such from the head that is hoary!
What care I for the wreaths that can *only* give glory?

Oh FAME! — if I e'er took delight in thy praises,
'T was less for the sake of thy high sounding phrases,
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one discover,
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

*There* chiefly I sought thee, *there* only I found thee;
Her Glance was the best of the rays that surround thee;
When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my story,
I knew it was Love, and I felt it was Glory.

November, 1821.

## ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR

MISSOLONGHI, JANUARY 22, 1824

Byron's last poem, written three months before his death.

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved
Since others it hath ceased to move:
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of Love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle;

No torch is kindled at its blaze —
A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus* — and 'tis not *here* —
Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor *now*,
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece — she *is* awake!)
Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,
Unworthy manhood! — unto thee
Indifferent should the smile or frown
Of Beauty be.

If thou regret'st thy youth, *why live?*
The land of honorable death
Is here: — up to the field, and give
Away thy breath!

Seek out — less often sought than found —
A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest.

## PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792–1822)

Shelley, the eldest son of Timothy Shelley, a well-to-do country squire who later became a baronet (a title to which the poet could have been heir), was born at Field Place, near Horsham in Sussex, August 4, 1792. After six years at Eton, he entered University College, Oxford, in 1810. He was expelled in the following year for admitting and defending his authorship of a pamphlet, *The Necessity of Atheism*, published anonymously by a local bookseller. Sir Timothy was much displeased with his son's radicalism, and his displeasure increased when Shelley, in August of the same year, eloped with Harriet Westbrook, the sixteen-year-old daughter of a retired innkeeper. Nevertheless he continued his son's small allowance, which enabled the Shelleys to live in lodgings in various cities of the British Isles. During these years Shelley wrote sporadically, read much among the writings of social radicals, and urged the necessity of freedom upon everybody that he met. His only published poem was *Queen Mab*, in 1813. In 1814 he became acquainted with William Godwin, the author of the *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*. He fell in love with his daughter Mary, whose mother was Mary Wollstonecraft, author of the *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, and went with her to France. Two years later, when Harriet Westbrook Shelley drowned herself in the Serpentine in London, the poet married Mary Godwin. In 1817 the Court of Chancery refused Shelley the possession of his two children by Harriet; and in 1818 he left England, never to return.

During the previous four years Shelley had lived most of the time on the continent and had published *Alastor* in 1816 and *The Revolt of Islam* in 1817. He now went direct to Italy, living the last years of his life at Naples, Venice, Rome, and finally Pisa. Mary was his constant companion. He spent much time, too, with friends like Leigh Hunt and especially Byron, with whom he had traveled in Switzerland during the summer of 1816 and whom he saw much of in Venice. During these years Shelley produced and published, in succession, *The Cenci*, the greatest poetic tragedy since Shakespeare, *Prometheus Unbound*, *Epipsychidion*, *Adonais*, *Hellas*, and many short lyrics.

On July 8, 1823, Shelley and a friend, Mr. Williams, were caught in a squall while sailing a small boat in the Gulf of Lerici. Days later, Shelley's body was washed ashore. It was cremated, according to law, on the beach, in the presence of Trelawney, Leigh Hunt, and Byron. His ashes were taken to Rome and buried in the Protestant cemetery, near the grave of Keats.

To characterize Shelley in a few lines is difficult. A few hints, however, may be helpful to the student approaching him for the first time. To many critics, Shelley, like Spenser, is a "poet's poet," who can be appreciated best by those with a gift, or at least a love, for poetry. He is not a "popular" poet in the sense that Scott and Byron are. Unlike them, he cares less for the story than for the ideas and emotion behind the story; and often this thought and feeling are not so much expressed in concrete form as suggested. He gives us "the still, sad music of humanity," which must be felt before it is comprehended. His world is not the everyday world of Wordsworth, but it is none the less true, even though to the realistically minded it seems a strange ethereal world of clouds and winds and light and rapid motion. Less often than Keats and Coleridge, who also give us dream worlds, does he create the illusion of reality. According to Shelley (see his *Defence of*

*Poetry*), poetry is imagination, and imagination, to him, is the perception of the *value* of facts and ideas, both separately and as a whole, which logic and reason have produced.

Shelley believed in human nature, its essential goodness and its perfectibility. He looked forward to the brotherhood of man in a world of freedom, beauty, and love. In his own life he was impracticable, misunderstood, and often condemned. But he was, said Byron, "the best and least selfish man I ever knew. I never knew one who was not a beast in comparison."

Good one-volume editions of Shelley's poetry are the Cambridge (Houghton Mifflin Company) and the Globe (Macmillan). The completest studies are by E. Dowden (Lippincott) and, most recently, W. E. Peck (Houghton Mifflin Company). J. A. Symonds has written his biography for the English Men of Letters Series. A. Maurois' *Ariel* gives a vivid idea of the man, but says little of the poet. Among the numerous essays on Shelley may be mentioned those by Arnold, Browning, Leigh Hunt, and Francis Thompson.

## HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY

The theme of the poem, according to Mrs. Shelley, came to the poet during a trip on Lake Geneva with Byron. Shelley's idea of beauty is Platonic. A beautiful object does not give us true or complete beauty. It can only suggest the flawless, immaterial beauty behind it. In other words, it is not the thing, but the idea of the thing, that matters.

1

The awful shadow of some unseen Power
Floats though unseen among us, visiting
This various world with as inconstant wing
As summer winds that creep from flower to flower;
Like moonbeams that behind some piny mountain shower,
It visits with inconstant glance
Each human heart and countenance;
Like hues and harmonies of evening,
Like clouds in starlight widely spread,
Like memory of music fled,
Like aught that for its grace may be
Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.

2

Spirit of BEAUTY, that dost consecrate
With thine own hues all thou dost shine upon
Of human thought or form, where art thou gone?
Why dost thou pass away, and leave our state,
This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and desolate?
Ask why the sunlight not forever
Weaves rainbows o'er yon mountain river;
Why aught should fail and fade that once is shown;
Why fear and dream and death and birth
Cast on the daylight of this earth
Such gloom; why man has such a scope
For love and hate, despondency and hope.

3

No voice from some sublimer world hath ever
To sage or poet these responses given;
Therefore the names of Demon, Ghost, and Heaven,
Remain the records of their vain endeavor,
Frail spells, whose uttered charm might not avail to sever,
From all we hear and all we see,
Doubt, chance, and mutability.
Thy light alone, like mist o'er mountains driven,
Or music by the night wind sent
Through strings of some still instrument,
Or moonlight on a midnight stream,
Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet dream.

4

Love, Hope, and Self-esteem, like clouds, depart
And come, for some uncertain moments lent.
Man were immortal and omnipotent,
Didst thou, unknown and awful as thou art,
Keep with thy glorious train firm state within his heart.
Thou messenger of sympathies
That wax and wane in lovers' eyes!
Thou, that to human thought art nourishment,
Like darkness to a dying flame,
Depart not as thy shadow came,
Depart not, lest the grave should be,
Like life and fear, a dark reality!

5

While yet a boy I sought for ghosts, and sped
Through many a listening chamber, cave and ruin,
And starlight wood, with fearful steps pursuing
Hopes of high talk with the departed dead;
I called on poisonous names with which our youth is fed.

I was not heard — I saw them not —
When, musing deeply on the lot
Of life, at that sweet time when winds are wooing
All vital things that wake to bring
News of birds and blossoming, —
Sudden, thy shadow fell on me;
I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ecstasy!

6

I vowed that I would dedicate my powers
To thee and thine — have I not kept the vow?
With beating heart and streaming eyes, even now
I call the phantoms of a thousand hours
Each from his voiceless grave: they have in visioned bowers
Of studious zeal or love's delight
Outwatched with me the envious night —
They know that never joy illumed my brow
Unlinked with hope that thou wouldst free
This world from its dark slavery,
That thou, O awful LOVELINESS,
Wouldst give whate'er these words cannot express.

7

The day becomes more solemn and serene
When noon is past; there is a harmony
In autumn, and a luster in its sky,
Which through the summer is not heard or seen,
As if it could not be, as if it had not been!
Thus let thy power, which like the truth
Of nature on my passive youth
Descended, to my onward life supply
Its calm, — to one who worships thee,
And every form containing thee,
Whom, SPIRIT fair, thy spells did bind
To fear himself, and love all humankind.

1816.

## OZYMANDIAS

I met a traveler from an antique land
Who said: "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand[1] that mocked them, and the heart that fed:[2]
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

1817.

## STANZAS WRITTEN IN DEJECTION NEAR NAPLES

The sun is warm, the sky is clear,
The waves are dancing fast and bright,
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
The purple noon's transparent might;
The breath of the moist earth is light
Around its unexpanded buds;
Like many a voice of one delight,
The winds', the birds', the ocean-floods',
The City's voice itself is soft like Solitude's.

I see the Deep's untrampled floor
With green and purple sea-weeds strown;
I see the waves upon the shore
Like light dissolved in star-showers thrown;
I sit upon the sands alone —
The lightning of the noon-tide ocean
Is flashing round me, and a tone
Arises from its measured motion,
How sweet! did any heart now share in my emotion.

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,
Nor peace within nor calm around,
Nor that content, surpassing wealth,
The sage in meditation found,
And walked with inward glory crowned —
Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure.
Others I see whom these surround —
Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;
To me that cup has been dealt in another measure.

Yet now despair itself is mild,
Even as the winds and waters are;
I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne, and yet must bear,

1 The sculptor's.
2 The king's heart, which nursed those passions.

Till death like sleep might steal on me,
And I might feel in the warm air
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

Some might lament that I were cold,
As I, when this sweet day is gone,
Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,
Insults with this untimely moan;
They might lament — for I am one
Whom men love not, — and yet regret,
Unlike this day, which, when the sun
Shall on its stainless glory set,
Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in memory yet.

1819.

## ODE TO THE WEST WIND

"This poem was conceived and chiefly written in a wood that skirts the Arno, near Florence, and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapors which pour down the autumnal rains. They began, as I foresaw, at sunset with a violent tempest of hail and rain, attended by that magnificent thunder and lightning peculiar to the Cisalpine regions. The phenomenon alluded to at the conclusion of the third stanza is well known to naturalists. The vegetation at the bottom of the sea, of rivers, and of lakes, sympathizes with that of the land in the change of seasons, and is consequently influenced by the winds which announce it." Shelley.

The poem is remarkable for the boldness of its imagery, which is supported not so much by thought as by the intense emotion and exquisite music of the poem.

Note that Shelley uses the *terza rima* of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, with a couplet after each group of four strophes, thus: *aba bcb cdc ded ee*. The result is a stanza which looks like the sonnet-form, but is different in effect.

I

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes! O thou
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odors plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and Preserver; hear, oh hear!

2

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of heaven and ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning! there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Mænad,[1] even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapors, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst: Oh hear!

3

Thou who didst waken from his summer-dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice[2] isle in Baiae's[3] bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them!
Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean know

1 Bacchante, frenzied attendant of Bacchus.
2 soft volcanic lava.
3 A seaside town not far from Naples.

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear
And tremble and despoil themselves: Oh hear!

4

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than Thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skyey speed
Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee — tameless, and swift, and proud.

5

Make me thy lyre, ev'n as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe,
Like withered leaves, to quicken a new birth!
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

1819.

## THE INDIAN SERENADE

I arise from dreams of Thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low
And the stars are shining bright:
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Hath led me — who knows how?
To thy chamber-window, Sweet!

The wandering airs, they faint
On the dark, the silent stream —
The champak[1] odors fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart,
As I must die on thine,
O beloved as thou art!

Oh, lift me from the grass!
I die, I faint, I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast;
Oh! press it close to thine again,
Where it will break at last.

1819.

## PROMETHEUS UNBOUND

### END OF THE LAST ACT

*Prometheus Unbound* is Shelley's lyric drama on the defiant Titan who stole fire from the gods for man.

DEMOGORGON

Thou, Earth, calm empire of a happy soul,
Sphere of divinest shapes and harmonies,
Beautiful orb! gathering as thou dost roll
The love which paves thy path along the skies:

THE EARTH

I hear: I am as a drop of dew that dies.

DEMOGORGON

Thou, Moon, which gazest on the nightly Earth
With wonder, as it gazes upon thee;
Whilst each to men, and beasts, and the swift birth
Of birds, is beauty, love, calm, harmony:

THE MOON

I hear: I am a leaf shaken by thee.

DEMOGORGON

Ye Kings of suns and stars, Dæmons and Gods,
Etherial Dominations, who possess

1 Hindu for a kind of magnolia tree.

Elysian, windless, fortunate abodes
Beyond Heaven's constellated wilderness:

A VOICE FROM ABOVE

Our great Republic hears: we are blest, and bless.

DEMOGORGON

Ye happy Dead, whom beams of brightest verse
Are clouds to hide, not colors to portray,
Whether your nature is that universe
Which once ye saw and suffered —

A VOICE FROM BENEATH

Or, as they
Whom we have left, we change and pass away.

DEMOGORGON

Ye elemental Genii, who have homes
From man's high mind even to the central stone
Of sullen lead; from Heaven's star-fretted domes
To the dull weed some sea-worm battens on:

A CONFUSED VOICE

We hear: thy words waken Oblivion.

DEMOGORGON

Spirits, whose homes are flesh; ye beasts and birds,
Ye worms, and fish; ye living leaves and buds;
Lightning and wind; and ye untamable herds,
Meteors and mists, which throng air's solitudes:

A VOICE

Thy voice to us is wind among still woods.

DEMOGORGON

Man who wert once a despot and a slave;
A dupe and a deceiver; a decay;
A traveller from the cradle to the grave
Through the dim night of this immortal day:

ALL

Speak: thy strong words may never pass away.

DEMOGORGON

This is the day which down the void abysm
At the Earth-born's spell yawns for Heaven's despotism,
And Conquest is dragged captive through the deep;
Love, from its awful throne of patient power
In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour
Of dread endurance, from the slippery, steep,
And narrow verge of crag-like agony, springs
And folds over the world its healing wings.

Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endurance —
These are the seals of that most firm assurance
Which bars the pit over Destruction's strength;
And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,
Mother of many acts and hours, should free
The serpent that would clasp her with his length;
These are the spells by which to reassume
An empire o'er the disentangled doom.

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.

1818–19.

## THE CLOUD

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.

Sublime on the towers of my skyey bowers,
Lightning my pilot sits;
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,
It struggles and howls at fits;
Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea;
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,
The Spirit he loves remains;
And I all the while bask in Heaven's blue smile,
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine Sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning star shines dead;
As on the jag of a mountain crag,
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And when Sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath,
Its ardors of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of Heaven above,
With wings folded I rest, on mine airy nest,
As still as a brooding dove.

That orbed maiden with white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the Moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,
By the midnight breezes strewn;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,
The stars peep behind her and peer;
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,
Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the Sun's throne with a burning zone,
And the Moon's with a girdle of pearl;
The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and swim
When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof, —
The mountains its columns be.
The triumphal arch, through which I march,
With hurricane, fire, and snow,
When the Powers of the air are chained to my chair,
Is the million-colored bow;
The sphere-fire above its soft colors wove,
While the moist Earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of Earth and Water,
And the nursling of the Sky;
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores,
I change, but I cannot die.
For after the rain when with never a stain
The pavilion of Heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams
Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,[1]
And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,
I arise and unbuild it again.

1820.

## TO A SKYLARK

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from Heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of Heaven,
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, — but yet I hear thy shrill delight,

1 Monument to the dead, especially where the body is lost or is buried elsewhere.

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see — we feel that it is there;

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and Heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a Poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace-tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, — which overflows her bower:

Like a glowworm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet those heavy wingèd thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous and clear and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, Sprite or Bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine;
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,
Or triumphal chant,
Matched with thine, would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields or waves or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be;
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee;
Thou lovest — but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream —
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not;
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,

Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow
The world should listen then — as I am
listening now.

1820.

## TO NIGHT

I

Swiftly walk o'er the western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where all the long and lone daylight
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear, —
Swift be thy flight!

2

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day;
Kiss her until she be wearied out;
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand —
Come, long-sought!

3

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And moon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turned to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sighed for thee.

4

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
Wouldst thou me?
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmured like a noontide bee,
Shall I nestle near thy side?
Wouldst thou me? — and I replied,
No, not thee!

5

Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon;
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, beloved Night, —
Swift be thine approaching flight,
Come soon, soon!

1821.

## TIME

Unfathomable Sea! whose waves are years,
Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woe
Are brackish with the salt of human tears!
Thou shoreless flood, which in thy ebb and flow
Claspest the limits of mortality,
And sick of prey, yet howling on for more,
Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable shore;
Treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,
Who shall put forth on thee,
Unfathomable Sea?

1821.

## MUTABILITY

I

The flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow dies;
All that we wish to stay,
Tempts and then flies.
What is this world's delight?
Lightning that mocks the night,
Brief even as bright.

2

Virtue, how frail it is!
Friendship, how rare!
Love, how it sells poor bliss
For proud despair!
But we, though soon they fall,
Survive their joy and all
Which ours we call.

3

Whilst skies are blue and bright,
Whilst flowers are gay,
Whilst eyes that change ere night
Make glad the day;
Whilst yet the calm hours creep,
Dream thou — and from thy sleep
Then wake to weep.

1821.

## ADONAIS

### AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN KEATS, AUTHOR OF ENDYMION, HYPERION, ETC.

#### PREFACE[1]

It is my intention to subjoin to the London edition of this poem a criticism upon the claims of its lamented object to be classed among the writers of the highest genius who have adorned our age. My known repugnance to the narrow principles of taste on which several of his earlier compositions were modeled prove, at least, that I am an impartial judge. I consider the frag-

1 Two quotations in Greek from Plato and Moschus are omitted here from the beginning of Shelley's preface. Otherwise it is intact.

ment of *Hyperion* as second to nothing that was ever produced by a writer of the same years.

John Keats died at Rome of a consumption, in his twenty-fourth year, on the —— of ——[1] 1821; and was buried in the romantic and lonely cemetery of the Protestants in that city, under the pyramid which is the tomb of Cestius, and the massy walls and towers, now moldering and desolate, which formed the circuit of ancient Rome. The cemetery is an open space among the ruins, covered in winter with violets and daisies. It might make one in love with death, to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place.

The genius of the lamented person to whose memory I have dedicated these unworthy verses was not less delicate and fragile than it was beautiful; and where cankerworms abound, what wonder if its young flower was blighted in the bud? The savage criticism on his *Endymion*, which appeared in the *Quarterly Review*, produced the most violent effect on his susceptible mind; the agitation thus originated ended in the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs; a rapid consumption ensued, and the succeeding acknowledgments from more candid critics of the true greatness of his powers were ineffectual to heal the wound thus wantonly inflicted.

It may be well said that these wretched men know not what they do. They scatter their insults and their slanders without heed as to whether the poisoned shaft lights on a heart made callous by many blows, or one like Keats's composed of more penetrable stuff. One of their associates is, to my knowledge, a most base and unprincipled calumniator. As to *Endymion*, was it a poem, whatever might be its defects, to be treated contemptuously by those who had celebrated, with various degrees of complacency and panegyric, *Paris* and *Woman* and a *Syrian Tale* and Mrs. Lefanu and Mr. Barrett and Mr. Howard Payne and a long list of the illustrious obscure? Are these the men who in their venal good nature presumed to draw a parallel between the Rev. Mr. Milman and Lord Byron? What gnat did they strain at here, after having swallowed all those camels? Against what woman taken in adultery dares the foremost of these literary prostitutes to cast his opprobrious stone? Miserable man! you, one of the meanest, have wantonly defaced one of the noblest specimens of the workmanship of God. Nor shall it be your excuse, that, murderer as you are, you have spoken daggers, but used none.

The circumstances of the closing scene of poor Keats's life were not made known to me until the *Elegy* was ready for the press. I am given to understand that the wound which his sensitive spirit had received from the criticism of *Endymion* was exasperated by the bitter sense of unrequited benefits; the poor fellow seems to have been hooted from the stage of life, no less by those on whom he had wasted the promise of his genius, than those on whom he had lavished his fortune and his care. He was accompanied to Rome, and attended in his last illness by Mr. Severn, a young artist of the highest promise, who, I have been informed, "almost risked his own life, and sacrificed every prospect to unwearied attendance upon his dying friend." Had I known these circumstances before the completion of my poem, I should have been tempted to add my feeble tribute of applause to the more solid recompense which the virtuous man finds in the recollection of his own motives. Mr. Severn can dispense with a reward from "such stuff as dreams are made of." His conduct is a golden augury of the success of his future career — may the unextinguished Spirit of his illustrious friend animate the creations of his pencil, and plead against Oblivion for his name! — Shelley.

*Adonais*, like Milton's *Lycidas* and Matthew Arnold's *Thyrsis*, is a pastoral elegy, modelled on the Greek pastorals of Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus. It is written in Spenserian stanzas.

1

I weep for Adonais — he is dead!
Oh, weep for Adonais! though our tears
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head!
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,
And teach them thine own sorrow, say: "With me
Died Adonais; till the Future dares
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be
An echo and a light unto eternity!"

2

Where wert thou, mighty Mother, when he lay,
When thy Son lay, pierced by the shaft which flies
In darkness? where was lorn Urania[1]
When Adonais died? With veilèd eyes,
'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise
She sat, while one, with soft enamored breath,
Rekindled all the fading melodies,
With which, like flowers that mock the corse beneath,
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of Death.

3

Oh, weep for Adonais — he is dead!
Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep!

1 When he wrote this preface, Shelley did not know the day and month of Keats's death.

1 The heavenly one, Muse of Astronomy; cf. Milton in *Paradise Lost*.

Yet wherefore? Quench within their burning bed
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep;
For he is gone where all things wise and fair
Descend. — Oh, dream not that the amorous Deep
Will yet restore him to the vital air;
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our despair.

4

Most musical of mourners, weep again!
Lament anew, Urania! — He died,
Who was the sire[1] of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride,
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide
Trampled and mocked with many a loathèd rite
Of lust and blood; he went, unterrified,
Into the gulf of death; but his clear Sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth, the third[2] among the sons of light.

5

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Not all to that bright station dared to climb;
And happier they their happiness who knew,
Whose tapers yet burn through that night of time
In which suns perished; others more sublime,
Struck by the envious wrath of man or God,
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime;
And some yet live, treading the thorny road,
Which leads, through toil and hate, to Fame's serene abode.

6

But now, thy youngest, dearest one has perished,
The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew,
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished
And fed with true-love tears, instead of dew;
Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,
The bloom, whose petals, nipped before they blew,
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste;
The broken lily lies — the storm is overpast.

7

To that high Capital,[1] where kingly Death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,
He came; and bought, with price of purest breath,
A grave among the eternal. — Come away!
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof! while still
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;
Awake him not! surely he takes his fill
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

8

He will awake no more, oh, never more! —
Within the twilight chamber spreads apace
The shadow of white Death, and at the door
Invisible Corruption waits to trace
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place;
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and awe
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to deface
So fair a prey, till darkness and the law
Of change shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain draw.

9

Oh, weep for Adonais! — The quick Dreams,
The passion-wingèd ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the living streams
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he taught
The love which was its music, wander not, —
Wander no more, from kindling brain to brain,
But droop there, whence they sprung; and mourn their lot
Round the cold heart, where, after their sweet pain,
They ne'er will gather strength, or find a home again.

10

And one with trembling hands clasps his cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings, and cries;

1 Milton.
2 Who the other two poets are that Shelley had in mind is debatable.

1 Rome.

"Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead;
See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies
A tear some Dream has loosened from his brain."
Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!
She knew not 'twas her own; as with no stain
She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain.

II

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs, as if embalming them;
Another clipped her profuse locks, and threw
The wreath upon him, like an anadem,[1]
Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem;
Another in her willful grief would break
Her bow and wingèd reeds, as if to stem
A greater loss with one which was more weak;
And dull the barbèd fire against his frozen cheek.

12

Another Splendor on his mouth alit,
That mouth whence it was wont to draw the breath
Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,
And pass into the panting heart beneath
With lightning and with music; the damp death
Quenched its caress upon his icy lips;
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath
Of moonlight vapor, which the cold night clips,
It flushed through his pale limbs, and passed to its eclipse.

13

And others came — Desires and Adorations,
Wingèd Persuasions and veiled Destinies,
Splendors, and Glooms, and glimmering Incarnations
Of hopes and fears, and twilight Fantasies;
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp; — the moving pomp might seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

14

All he had loved, and molded into thought
From shape, and hue, and odor, and sweet sound,
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
Her eastern watch-tower, and her hair unbound,
Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,
Dimmed the aërial eyes that kindle day;
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

15

Lost Echo[1] sits amid the voiceless mountains,
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
Than those[2] for whose disdain she pined away
Into a shadow of all sounds: — a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen hear.

16

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw down
Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,
Or they dead leaves; since her delight is flown,
For whom should she have waked the sullen year?
To Phœbus was not Hyacinth[3] so dear
Nor to himself Narcissus,[4] as to both
Thou, Adonais; wan they stand and sere
Amid the faint companions of their youth,
With dew all turned to tears; odor, to sighing ruth.

1 crown or chaplet.

1 The forest nymph.

2 Of Narcissus, a beautiful youth, who did not return Echo's love.

3 The youth whom Phœbus Apollo fell in love with and who, when he died, was transformed into a flower.

4 Narcissus fell in love with his own image reflected in a fountain. He, too, was changed into a flower.

17

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale,
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain;
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain
Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,
As Albion wails for thee: the curse of Cain
Light on his head who[1] pierced thy innocent breast,
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest!

18

Ah, woe is me! Winter is come and gone,
But grief returns with the revolving year;
The airs and streams renew their joyous tone;
The ants, the bees, the swallows reappear;
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead Season's bier;
The amorous birds now pair in every brake,
And build their mossy homes in field and brere;[2]
And the green lizard, and the golden snake,
Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance awake.

19

Through wood and stream and field and hill and Ocean
A quickening life from the Earth's heart has burst,
As it has ever done, with change and motion,
From the great morning of the world when first
God dawned on Chaos; in its stream immersed,
The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer light;
All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst;
Diffuse themselves; and spend in love's delight
The beauty and the joy of their renewèd might.

20

The leprous corpse, touched by this spirit tender,
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;
Like incarnations of the stars, when splendor
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death
And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath.
Nought we know, dies. Shall that alone which knows
Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
By sightless lightning? — the intense atom glows
A moment, then is quenched in a most cold repose.

21

Alas! that all we loved of him should be,
But for our grief, as if it had not been,
And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!
Whence are we, and why are we? of what scene
The actors or spectators? Great and mean
Meet massed in death, who lends what life must borrow.
As long as skies are blue and fields are green,
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year to sorrow.

22

*He* will awake no more, oh, never more!
"Wake thou," cried Misery, "childless Mother, rise
Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart's core,
A wound more fierce than his with tears and sighs."
And all the Dreams that watched Urania's eyes,
And all the Echoes whom their sister's song
Had held in holy silence, cried, "Arise!"
Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory stung,
From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendor sprung.

23

She rose like an autumnal Night, that springs
Out of the East, and follows wild and drear
The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
Had left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear
So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania:

1 The author of the reviews mentioned by Shelley in his introduction.
2 briar.

So saddened round her like an atmosphere
Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way
Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

24

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,
Through camps and cities rough with stone, and steel,
And human hearts, which to her airy tread
Yielding not, wounded the invisible
Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell;
And barbèd tongues, and thoughts more sharp than they,
Rent the soft Form they never could repel,
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

25

In the death-chamber for a moment Death,
Shamed by the presence of that living Might,
Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
Revisited those lips, and life's pale light
Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear delight.
"Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,
As silent lightning leaves the starless night!
Leave me not!" cried Urania; her distress
Roused Death; Death rose and smiled, and met her vain caress.

26

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;
And in my heartless breast and burning brain
That word, that kiss, shall all thoughts else survive,
With food of saddest memory kept alive,
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part
Of thee, my Adonais! I would give
All that I am to be as thou now art!
But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart!

27

"O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men
Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart
Dare the unpastured dragon [1] in his den?
Defenceless as thou wert, oh, where was then
Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?
Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,
The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like deer.

28

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead;
The vultures to the conqueror's banner true,
Who feed where Desolation first has fed,
And whose wings rain contagion; — how they fled,
When, like Apollo, from his golden bow
The Pythian [1] of the age one arrow sped
And smiled! — The spoilers tempt no second blow,
They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low.

29

"The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn;
He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
Is gathered into death without a dawn,
And the immortal stars awake again;
So is it in the world of living men:
A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and when
It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light
Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night."

30

Thus ceased she; and the mountain shepherds came,
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent;
The Pilgrim of Eternity,[2] whose fame
Over his living head like Heaven is bent,
An early but enduring monument,
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song
In sorrow; from her wilds Ierne [3] sent
The sweetest lyrist [4] of her saddest wrong,
And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue.

1 Byron, who with his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* slew the critics with one blow, as Apollo did the python.
2 Byron, so called because of his *Childe Harold*.
3 Ireland. 4 Thomas Moore.

1 The hard world.

31

Midst others of less note, came one frail Form,[1]
A phantom among men; companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell; he, as I guess,
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,
Actæon-like,[2] and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness,
And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their prey.

32

A pardlike[3] Spirit beautiful and swift —
A Love in desolation masked; — a Power
Girt round with weakness; — it can scarce uplift
The weight of the superincumbent hour;
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,
A breaking billow; — even whilst we speak
Is it not broken? On the withering flower
The killing sun smiles brightly: on a cheek
The life can burn in blood, even while the heart may break.

33

His head was bound with pansies overblown,
And faded violets, white, and pied, and blue;
And a light spear topped with a cypress cone,
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy-tresses grew
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew,
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart
Shook the weak hand that grasped it; of that crew
He came the last, neglected and apart;
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's dart.

34

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
Smiled through their tears; well knew that gentle band
Who in another's fate now wept his own,
As in the accents of an unknown land
He sung new sorrow; sad Urania scanned
The Stranger's mien, and murmured: "Who art thou?"

He answered not, but with a sudden hand
Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow,
Which was like Cain's or Christ's — oh! that it should be so!

35

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown?
What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,
In mockery of monumental stone,
The heavy heart heaving without a moan?
If it be He,[1] who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honored the departed one,
Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs,
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

36

Our Adonais has drunk poison — oh!
What deaf and viperous murderer could crown
Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?
The nameless worm would now itself disown;
It felt, yet could escape, the magic tone
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and wrong,
But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song,
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre unstrung.

37

Live thou,[2] whose infamy is not thy fame!
Live! fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name!
But be thyself, and know thyself to be!
And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow;
Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling to thee;
Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt — as now.

38

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion kites that scream below;
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead;
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now.
Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall flow

1 Shelley.
2 Actæon, the hunter, gazed upon Diana in bathing. In punishment he was changed into a stag, and was torn to pieces by his own dogs.
3 like a leopard.

1 Leigh Hunt, who was one of Keats's closest friends.
2 i.e., the critic.

Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably the same,
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid hearth of shame.

39

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep —
He hath awakened from the dream of life —
'Tis we, who, lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance strike with our spirit's knife
Invulnerable nothings. — *We* decay
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief
Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

40

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again;
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown gray in vain;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

41

He lives, he wakes — 'tis Death is dead, not he;
Mourn not for Adonais. — Thou young Dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendor, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air,
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair!

42

He is made one with Nature: there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder to the song of night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never-wearied love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

43

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely; he doth bear
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there
All new successions to the forms they wear;
Torturing the unwilling dross that checks its flight
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear,
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's light.

44

The splendors of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb,
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life content in it for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

45

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal thought,
Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton[1]
Rose pale, — his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him; Sidney,[2] as he fought
And as he fell and as he lived and loved
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,
Arose; and Lucan,[3] by his death approved;
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reproved.

1 "The marvellous boy," 1752–1770, who at eighteen killed himself, after having written imitations of early English poetry which for a time passed as originals.

2 Sir Philip Sidney; he died at thirty-two from a wound received in the battle of Zutphen in 1586.

3 The Roman poet, author of the *Pharsalia*, who at twenty-six killed himself to escape being executed by Nero.

46

And many more, whose names on Earth are dark,
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.
"Thou art become as one of us," they cry;
"It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent alone amid an Heaven of song.
Assume thy wingèd throne, thou Vesper of our throng!"

47

Who mourns for Adonais? Oh, come forth,
Fond wretch! and know thyself and him aright.
Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous Earth;
As from a center, dart thy spirit's light
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
Satiate the void circumference; then shrink
Even to a point within our day and night;
And keep thy heart light lest it make thee sink
When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the brink.

48

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre,
Oh, not of him, but of our joy; 'tis nought
That ages, empires, and religions there
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;
For such as he can lend, — they borrow not
Glory from those who made the world their prey;
And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their time's decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

49

Go thou to Rome, — at once the Paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness;
And where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise,
And flowering weeds, and fragrant copses dress
The bones of Desolation's nakedness,
Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access,
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread;

50

And gray walls moulder round, on which dull Time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath,
A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of death,
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath.

51

Here pause: these graves are all too young as yet
To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned
Its charge to each; and if the seal is set,
Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,
Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou find
Thine own well full, if thou returnest home.
Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

52

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light for ever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments. — Die,
If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek!
Follow where all is fled! — Rome's azure sky,
Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

53

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my Heart?
Thy hopes are gone before; from all things here
They have departed; thou shouldst now depart!
A light is passed from the revolving year,
And man, and woman; and what still is dear

Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.
The soft sky smiles, — the low wind whispers near;
'Tis Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,
No more let Life divide what Death can join together.

54

That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,
That Beauty in which all things work and move,
That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love
Which through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst, now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

55

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
The massy earth and spherèd skies are riven!
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

1821.

## THE FINAL CHORUS FROM HELLAS

SEMICHORUS I

Victorious Wrong, with vulture scream,
Salutes the risen sun, pursues the flying day!
I saw her, ghastly as a tyrant's dream,
Perch on the trembling pyramid of night,
Beneath which earth and all her realms pavilioned lay
In visions of the dawning undelight.
Who shall impede her flight?
Who rob her of her prey?

*Voice without.* Victory! Victory! Russia's famished eagles
Dare not to prey beneath the crescent's light.
Impale the remnant of the Greeks! despoil!
Violate! make their flesh cheaper than dust!

SEMICHORUS II

Thou voice which art
The herald of the ill in splendor hid!
Thou echo of the hollow heart
Of monarchy, bear me to thine abode
When desolation flashes o'er a world destroyed:
Oh, bear me to those isles of jagged cloud
Which float like mountains on the earthquake, mid
The momentary oceans of the lightning,
Or to some toppling promontory proud
Of solid tempest, whose black pyramid,
Riven, overhangs the founts intensely bright'ning
Of those dawn-tinted deluges of fire
Before their waves expire,
When heaven and earth are light, and only light
In the thunder-night!

*Voice without.* Victory! Victory! Austria, Russia, England,
And that tame serpent, that poor shadow, France,
Cry peace, and that means death when monarchs speak,
Ho, there! bring torches, sharpen those red stakes,
These chains are light, fitter for slaves and prisoners
Than Greeks. Kill! plunder! burn! let none remain.

SEMICHORUS I

Alas! for Liberty!
If numbers, wealth, or unfulfilling years,
Or fate, can quell the free!
Alas for Virtue! when
Torments, or contumely, or the sneers
Of erring judging men
Can break the heart where it abides!
Alas! if Love, whose smile makes this obscure world splendid,
Can change with its false times and tides,
Like hope and terror, —
Alas for Love!

And Truth, who wanderest lone and unbefriended,
If thou canst veil thy lie-consuming mirror
Before the dazzled eyes of Error,
Alas for thee! Image of the Above!

SEMICHORUS II

Repulse, with plumes from conquest torn,
Led the ten thousand from the limits of the morn
Through many an hostile Anarchy!
At length they wept aloud, and cried, "The Sea! the Sea!"
Through exile, persecution, and despair,
Rome was, and young Atlantis [1] shall become
The wonder, or the terror, or the tomb
Of all whose step wakes Power lulled in her savage lair.
But Greece was as a hermit-child,
Whose fairest thoughts and limbs were built
To woman's growth, by dreams so mild,
She knew not pain or guilt;
And now, O Victory, blush! and Empire, tremble,
When ye desert the free —
If Greece must be
A wreck, yet shall its fragments reassemble,
And build themselves again impregnably
In a diviner clime,
To Amphionic [2] music on some Cape sublime
Which frowns above the idle foam of Time.

SEMICHORUS I

Let the tyrants rule the desert they have made;
Let the free possess the Paradise they claim;
Be the fortune of our fierce oppressors weighed
With our ruin, our resistance, and our name!

SEMICHORUS II

Our dead shall be the seed of their decay,
Our survivors be the shadow of their pride,
Our adversity a dream to pass away —
Their dishonor a remembrance to abide!

*Voice without.* Victory! Victory! The bought Briton sends
The keys of ocean to the Islamite.[3] —

1 The new world; the name is from the mythical island which is supposed to have sunk beneath the ocean, west of the Pillars of Hercules.

2 Amphion rebuilt the walls of Thebes by playing on his lyre.

3 Mohammedan.

Now shall the blazon of the cross be veiled,
And British skill, directing Othman [1] might,
Thunder-strike rebel victory. Oh, keep holy
This jubilee of unrevengèd blood!
Kill! crush! despoil! Let not a Greek escape!

SEMICHORUS I

Darkness has dawned in the East
On the noon of time;
The death-birds descend to their feast
From the hungry clime.
Let Freedom and Peace flee far
To a sunnier strand,
And follow Love's folding-star
To the Evening land!

SEMICHORUS II

The young moon has fed
Her exhausted horn
With the sunset's fire;
The weak day is dead,
But the night is not born;
And, like loveliness panting with wild desire,
While it trembles with fear and delight,
Hesperus flies from awakening night,
And pants in its beauty and speed with light
Fast-flashing, soft, and bright.
Thou beacon of love! thou lamp of the free!
Guide us far, far away,
To climes where now, veiled by the ardor of day,
Thou art hidden
From waves on which weary Noon
Faints in her summer swoon,
Between kingless continents, sinless as Eden,
Around mountains and islands inviolably
Pranked on the sapphire sea.

SEMICHORUS I

Through the sunset of hope,
Like the shapes of a dream,
What Paradise islands of glory gleam!
Beneath Heaven's cope,
Their shadows more clear float by;
The sound of their oceans, the light of their sky,
The music and fragrance their solitudes breathe.
Burst, like morning on dream, or like Heaven on death,
Through the walls of our prison;
And Greece, which was dead, is arisen!

1 Ottoman, Turkish.

CHORUS

The world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return,
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn;
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam,
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
From waves serener far;
A new Peneus [1] rolls his fountains
Against the morning star.
Where fairer Tempes [2] bloom, there sleep
Young Cyclads [3] on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo [4] cleaves the main,
Fraught with a later prize;
Another Orpheus sings again,
And loves, and weeps, and dies.
A new Ulysses leaves once more
Calypso [5] for his native shore.

Oh, write no more the tale of Troy,
If earth Death's scroll must be!
Nor mix with Laian [6] rage the joy
Which dawns upon the free;
Although a subtler Sphinx renew
Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendor of its prime;
And leave, if nought so bright may live,
All earth can take or Heaven can give.

Saturn and Love their long repose
Shall burst, more bright and good
Than all who fell, than One who rose,
Than many unsubdued;
Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
But votive tears and symbol flowers.

Oh, cease! must hate and death return?
Cease! must men kill and die?
Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn
Of bitter prophecy.
The world is weary of the past,
Oh, might it die or rest at last!

1821.

1 A river in Greece. 2 Beautiful vales.
3 Cyclades, islands in the Ægean.
4 The ship in which Jason and his Argonauts sailed to Colchis to get the golden fleece.
5 The nymph who detained Ulysses on her island when he was returning from Troy.
6 Referring to Laius, King of Thebes, husband of Jocasta. It was fated that his son Œdipus, who solved the riddle of the Sphinx, should kill him and marry Jocasta.

## TO ——

1

One word is too often profaned
For me to profane it,
One feeling too falsely disdained
For thee to disdain it;
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother,
And pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

2

I can give not what men call love,
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not, —
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?

1821.

## LINES: WHEN THE LAMP IS SHATTERED

1

When the lamp is shattered,
The light in the dust lies dead;
When the cloud is scattered,
The rainbow's glory is shed.
When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remembered not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot.

2

As music and splendor
Survive not the lamp and the lute,
The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute:
No song but sad dirges,
Like the wind through a ruined cell,
Or the mournful surges
That ring the dead seaman's knell.

3

When hearts have once mingled,
Love first leaves the well-built nest;
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once possessed.
O Love! who bewailest
The frailty of all things here,
Why choose you the frailest
For your cradle, your home, and your bier?

4

Its passions will rock thee,
As the storms rock the ravens on high;
Bright reason will mock thee,
Like the sun from a wintry sky.
From thy nest every rafter
Will rot, and thine eagle home
Leave thee naked to laughter,
When leaves fall and cold winds come.

1822.

## A DIRGE

Rough wind, that moanest loud
Grief too sad for song;
Wild wind, when sullen cloud
Knells all the night long;
Sad storm, whose tears are vain,
Bare woods, whose branches strain,
Deep caves and dreary main, —
Wail, for the world's wrong!

1822.

# JOHN KEATS (1795–1821)

John Keats, poet of beauty like his avowed master Spenser, was born in London, October 29, 1795. His father kept the livery-stable of an inn; his mother was the innkeeper's daughter. He received his schooling at Mr. Clarke's private school in Enfield, where he became deeply attached to the headmaster's son, Charles Cowden Clarke.

In 1804 Keats's father died; in 1810, his mother. The young poet, an orphan at fifteen, was taken from school by his guardians and apprenticed to a surgeon. He remained a surgeon's apprentice almost five years, developing more than usual skill in his profession. What was important during these years, however, was his continued friendship with Clarke, whose influence upon Keats's literary tastes was strong. Through him Keats became acquainted with Spenser and Chapman and other poets of the past; and from them came his own determination to be a poet.

In 1814 Keats moved to London to study medicine in a hospital. But he continued the practice, begun in Enfield, of writing verses. In the next two or three years he met, through Clarke, Leigh Hunt, Shelley, Hazlitt, Wordsworth, and other writers. In 1816 he contributed some poems to Leigh Hunt's *Examiner*; and in 1817 his medical career came definitely to an end with the publication of his first volume, *Poems*. The book caused little stir, except among his friends. In the following year he published *Endymion*. This brought forth a torrent of abusive and savage criticism, especially from *Blackwood's Magazine* and *The Quarterly Review*. The attack did not hurt Keats as deeply as commentators once thought. He knew as well as any one what the faults of his poem were. The simple fact was, he stated later, that *Endymion* was as good as he could make it then, and he thought it best to let the poem go forth as it was, rather than to torture it and himself by trying fruitlessly to improve it at the time. The reference in the reviews to his being a cockney, Keats ignored.

What did harass Keats was the beginnings of hereditary consumption. A vacation trip to the Lakes and Scotland had helped the fever and the hemorrhages very little; and close upon his return to Hampstead in the fall of 1818 there followed not only the bitter reviews of his second volume, but likewise his first meeting with Fanny Brawne, with whom he fell hopelessly in love, and the death from consumption of his brother Tom.

In the face of all this, Keats did his greatest work. During the next eighteen months, though racked by disease and torn by his love for Fanny Brawne, but tenderly cared for by his friends, Keats composed most of the poems that have made him immortal. These he published in his third and last volume, *Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and other Poems*, in July, 1820.

The kindness and nursing of the Hunts and Mrs. Brawne and Fanny brought him much ease and comfort, but no permanent relief. In September, with his friend Severn, he set sail for the milder climate of Italy. After a valiant struggle, but, towards the end, yearning for death to come, he died in Rome, February 23, 1821, and was buried three days later in the Protestant cemetery, near the tomb of Caius Cestius.

Keats is the poet of sensuous beauty. While his verse comes perilously near at times to mere sensuousness, his best poems exemplify his belief that ultimate truth may be arrived at through the senses. The truth behind the experience, not the sensation itself, is what counts. Keats, accordingly, has more thought in his poems than is generally admitted.

To Keats truth is beauty, and the effect of beauty is joy. By the magic of his imagination he produced a world of glamour, but a world that is true nevertheless. He is preëminently the artist, seeking perfection of form. In his best poems he achieved it.

Good one-volume editions of Keats are the Oxford (Oxford University Press), the Globe (Macmillan), and the Cambridge (Houghton Mifflin Company). The Standard biographies are by Sidney Colvin in the English Men of Letters Series and by Amy Lowell (Houghton Mifflin Company).

## SONNET

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER[1]

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne:
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez[2] when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific — and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise —
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

1815.

## TO MY BROTHERS[3]

Small, busy flames play through the fresh laid coals,
And their faint cracklings o'er our silence creep
Like whispers of the household gods that keep
A gentle empire o'er fraternal souls.
And while, for rhymes, I search around the poles,
Your eyes are fixed, as in poetic sleep,
Upon the lore so voluble and deep,
That aye at fall of night our care condoles.
This is your birth-day Tom,[4] and I rejoice
That thus it passes smoothly, quietly.
Many such eves of gently whisp'ring noise
May we together pass, and calmly try
What are this world's true joys, — ere the great voice,
From its fair face, shall bid our spirits fly.

*November* 18, 1816.

## PROEM TO ENDYMION

This poem is Keats's version of the story of Endymion, the beautiful boy, in love with the goddess of the moon.

### BOOK I

PROEM

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
Trees old, and young, sprouting a shady boon
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
With the green world they live in; and clear rills
That for themselves a cooling covert make
'Gainst the hot season; the mid forest brake,
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms:
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead;
All lovely tales that we have heard or read:
An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

Nor do we merely feel these essences
For one short hour; no, even as the trees
That whisper round a temple become soon
Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,
The passion poesy, glories infinite,
Haunt us till they become a cheering light
Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,
That, whether there be shine, or gloom o'ercast,
They always must be with us, or we die.

Therefore, 'tis with full happiness that I
Will trace the story of Endymion.
The very music of the name has gone
Into my being, and each pleasant scene
Is growing fresh before me as the green
Of our own vallies: so I will begin
Now while I cannot hear the city's din;
Now while the early budders are just new,
And run in mazes of the youngest hue
About old forests; while the willow trails
Its delicate amber; and the dairy pails
Bring home increase of milk. And, as the year
Grows lush in juicy stalks, I'll smoothly steer
My little boat, for many quiet hours,
With streams that deepen freshly into bowers.
Many and many a verse I hope to write,
Before the daisies, vermeil rimmed and white,

1 Written early one autumn morning after sitting up all night reading Chapman's translation of Homer with his friend Clarke.

2 It was, of course, Balboa who discovered the Pacific.

3 George, two years younger than the poet, and Thomas, three years younger.

4 Thomas died two years later, December, 1818. Keats nursed him through his illness.

Hid in deep herbage; and ere yet the bees
Hum about globes of clover and sweet peas,
I must be near the middle of my story.
O may no wintry season, bare and hoary,
See it half finished: but let Autumn bold,
With universal tinge of sober gold,
Be all about me when I make an end.[1]
And now at once, adventuresome, I send
My herald thought into a wilderness:
There let its trumpet blow, and quickly dress
My uncertain path with green, that I may speed
Easily onward, thorough flowers and weed.

1817.

## ROBIN HOOD

### TO A FRIEND[2]

No! those days are gone away,
And their hours are old and gray,
And their minutes buried all
Under the down-trodden pall
Of the leaves of many years:
Many times have Winter's shears,
Frozen North, and chilling East,
Sounded tempests to the feast
Of the forest's whispering fleeces,
Since men knew nor rent nor leases.

No, the bugle sounds no more,
And the twanging bow no more;
Silent is the ivy shrill
Past the heath and up the hill;
There is no mid-forest laugh,
Where lone Echo gives the half
To some wight, amazed to hear
Jesting, deep in forest drear.

On the fairest time of June
You may go, with sun or moon,
Or the seven stars[3] to light you,
Or the polar ray[4] to right you;
But you never may behold
Little John, or Robin bold;
Never one, of all the clan,
Thrumming on an empty can
Some old hunting ditty, while
He doth his green way beguile
To fair hostess Merriment,
Down beside the pasture Trent;[5]
For he left the merry tale,
Messenger for spicy ale.

Gone, the merry morris din;
Gone, the song of Gamelyn;[1]
Gone, the tough-belted outlaw
Idling in the "grenè shawe;"[2]
All are gone away and past!
And if Robin should be cast
Sudden from his turfed grave,
And if Marian should have
Once again her forest days,
She would weep, and he would craze:
He would swear, for all his oaks,
Fall'n beneath the dock-yard strokes,
Have rotted on the briny seas;
She would weep that her wild bees
Sang not to her — strange! that honey
Can't be got without hard money!

So it is; yet let us sing
Honor to the old bow-string!
Honor to the bugle horn!
Honor to the woods unshorn!
Honor to the Lincoln green!
Honor to the archer keen!
Honor to tight Little John,
And the horse he rode upon!
Honor to bold Robin Hood,
Sleeping in the underwood!
Honor to Maid Marian,
And to all the Sherwood clan!
Though their days have hurried by,
Let us two a burden[3] try.

February, 1818.

## STANZAS

### 1

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy tree,
Thy branches ne'er remember
Their green felicity:
The north cannot undo them,
With a sleety whistle through them;
Nor frozen thawings glue them
From budding at the prime.

### 2

In a drear-nighted December
Too happy, happy brook,
Thy bubblings ne'er remember
Apollo's summer look;
But with a sweet forgetting,
They stay their crystal fretting,

1 Keats actually kept to this schedule, beginning the poem late in April and completing it late in November, 1817.
2 J. H. Reynolds, who had sent him some poems on Robin Hood.
3 The Dipper. 4 The North Star.
5 In Sherwood Forest.

1 An outlaw, hero of a story once supposed to be Chaucer's.
2 green wood. 3 song.

Never, never petting [1]
About the frozen time.

3

Ah! would 'twere so with many
A gentle girl and boy!
But were there ever any
Writhed not at passed joy?
To know the change and feel it,
When there is none to heal it,
Nor numbed sense to steel it,
Was never said in rhyme.

1818?

## LINES ON THE MERMAID TAVERN [2]

Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern? [3]
Have ye tippled drink more fine
Than mine host's Canary wine?
Or are fruits of Paradise
Sweeter than those dainty pies
Of venison? O generous food!
Drest as though bold Robin Hood
Would, with his maid Marian,
Sup and bowse [4] from horn and can.

I have heard that on a day
Mine host's sign-board flew away,
Nobody knew whither, till
An astrologer's old quill
To a sheepskin gave the story,
Said he saw you in your glory,
Underneath a new old-sign
Sipping beverage divine,
And pledging with contented smack
The Mermaid in the Zodiac.

Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?

1818.

## FANCY

Ever let the Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home:
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;
Then let winged Fancy wander
Through the thought still spread beyond her:
Open wide the mind's cage-door,
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.
O sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,
And the enjoying of the Spring
Fades as does its blossoming;
Autumn's red-lipped fruitage too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,
Cloys with tasting: What do then?
Sit thee by the ingle, when
The sear faggot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night;
When the soundless earth is muffled,
And the caked snow is shuffled
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon;
When the Night doth meet the Noon
In a dark conspiracy
To banish Even from her sky.
Sit thee there, and send abroad,
With a mind self-overawed,
Fancy, high-commissioned: — send her!
She has vassals to attend her:
She will bring, in spite of frost,
Beauties that the earth hath lost;
She will bring thee, all together,
All delights of summer weather;
All the buds and bells of May,
From dewy sward or thorny spray;
All the heaped Autumn's wealth,
With a still, mysterious stealth:
She will mix these pleasures up
Like three fit wines in a cup,
And thou shalt quaff it: — thou shalt hear
Distant harvest-carols clear;
Rustle of the reaped corn;
Sweet birds antheming the morn:
And, in the same moment — hark!
'Tis the early April lark,
Or the rooks, with busy caw,
Foraging for sticks and straw.
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold
The daisy and the marigold;
White-plumed lilies, and the first
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst;
Shaded hyacinth, alway
Sapphire queen of the mid-May;
And every leaf, and every flower
Pearled with the self-same shower.
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep
Meagre from its celled sleep;
And the snake all winter-thin
Cast on sunny bank its skin;
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest
Quiet on her mossy nest;

1 showing ill-humor.
2 Sent, along with *Robin Hood*, to his friend Reynolds.
3 The famous rendezvous in London of the Elizabethan dramatists and poets.
4 drink.

Then the hurry and alarm
When the bee-hive casts its swarm;
Acorns ripe down-pattering,
While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Every thing is spoilt by use;
Where's the cheek that doth not fade,
Too much gazed at? Where's the maid
Whose lip mature is ever new?
Where's the eye, however blue,
Doth not weary? Where's the face
One would meet in every place?
Where's the voice, however soft,
One would hear so very oft?
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.
Let, then, winged Fancy find
Thee a mistress to thy mind:
Dulcet-eyed as Ceres' daughter [1]
Ere the God of Torment taught her
How to frown and how to chide;
With a waist and with a side
White as Hebe's,[2] when her zone
Slipt its golden clasp, and down
Fell her kirtle to her feet,
While she held the goblet sweet,
And Jove grew languid. — Break the mesh
Of the Fancy's silken leash;
Quickly break her prison-string,
And such joys as these she'll bring. —
Let the winged Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home.

1818.

## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

1

St. Agnes' Eve [3] — Ah, bitter chill it was!
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;
The hare limped trembling through the frozen grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold:
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seemed taking flight for heaven, without a death,
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

2

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,
And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:
The sculptured dead, on each side, seem to freeze,
Emprisoned in black, purgatorial rails:
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,
He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

3

Northward he turneth through a little door,
And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden tongue
Flattered to tears this aged man and poor;
But no — already had his death-bell rung:
The joys of all his life were said and sung:
His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve:
Another way he went, and soon among
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to grieve.

4

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft;
And so it chanced, for many a door was wide,
From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide:
The level chambers, ready with their pride,
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests:
The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,
Stared, where upon their heads the cornice rests,
With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise on their breasts.

5

At length burst in the argent revelry,
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
Numerous as shadows haunting faerily
The brain, new-stuffed, in youth, with triumphs gay
Of old romance. These let us wish away,
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,

1 Proserpine, Pluto's wife. 2 Cupbearer of the gods. 3 St. Agnes' Day is January 21. The night before, according to tradition, is always extremely cold.

On love, and winged St. Agnes' saintly care,
As she had heard old dames full many times declare.

6

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,
Young virgins might have visions of delight,
And soft adorings from their loves receive
Upon the honeyed middle of the night,
If ceremonies due they did aright;
As, supperless to bed they must retire,
And couch supine their beauties, lily white;
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

7

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline:
The music, yearning like a God in pain,
She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,
Fixed on the floor, saw many a sweeping train
Pass by — she heeded not at all: in vain
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,
And back retired; not cooled by high disdain,
But she saw not: her heart was otherwhere;
She sighed for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the year.

8

She danced along with vague, regardless eyes,
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short:
The hallowed hour was near at hand: she sighs
Amid the timbrels, and the thronged resort
Of whisperers in anger, or in sport;
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,
Hoodwinked with faery fancy; all amort,[1]
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs[2] unshorn,
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

9

So, purposing each moment to retire,
She lingered still. Meantime, across the moors,
Had come young Porphyro, with heart on fire
For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,
Buttressed from moonlight, stands he, and implores
All saints to give him sight of Madeline,
But for one moment in the tedious hours,
That he might gaze and worship all unseen;
Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss — in sooth such things have been.

10

He ventures in: let no buzzed whisper tell:
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords
Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous citadel:
For him, those chambers held barbarian hordes,
Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,
Whose very dogs would execrations howl
Against his lineage: not one breast affords
Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,
Save one old beldame, weak in body and in soul.

11

Ah, happy chance! the aged creature came,
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,
To where he stood, hid from the torch's flame,
Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond
The sound of merriment and chorus bland:
He startled her; but soon she knew his face,
And grasped his fingers in her paisied hand,
Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro! hie thee from this place;
They are all here to-night, the whole blood-thirsty race!

12

"Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish Hildebrand;
He had a fever late, and in the fit
He cursed thee and thine, both house and land:
Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a whit
More tame for his gray hairs — Alas me! flit!
Flit like a ghost away." — "Ah, Gossip[1] dear,
We're safe enough; here in this armchair sit,
And tell me how" — Good Saints! not here, not here;
Follow me, child, or else these stones will be thy bier."

1 dead.

2 On the anniversary of the martyrdom of St. Agnes, a Roman virgin, two lambs were blessed while the Agnus Dei (Lamb of God) was sung. The lambs were later shorn and the wool made into cloth by nuns.

1 Godmother.

13

He followed through a lowly arched way,
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume;
And as she muttered "Well-a — well-a-day!"
He found him in a little moonlight room,
Pale, latticed, chill, and silent as a tomb.
"Now tell me where is Madeline," said he,
"O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom
Which none but secret sisterhood may see,
When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving, piously."

14

"St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes' Eve —
Yet men will murder upon holy days:
Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,
And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays,
To venture so: it fills me with amaze
To see thee, Porphyro! — St. Agnes' Eve!
God's help! my lady fair the conjuror plays
This very night: good angels her deceive!
But let me laugh awhile, I've mickle time to grieve."

15

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,
Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone
Who keepeth closed a wond'rous riddle-book,
As spectacled she sits in chimney nook.
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she told
His lady's purpose; and he scarce could brook [1]
Tears, at the thought of those enchantments cold,
And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old.

16

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose,
Flushing his brow, and in his pained heart
Made purple riot: then doth he propose
A stratagem, that makes the beldame start:
"A cruel man and impious thou art:
Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep, and dream
Alone with her good angels, far apart
From wicked men like thee. Go, go! I deem
Thou canst not surely be the same that thou didst seem."

1 check (used erroneously).

17

"I will not harm her, by all saints I swear,"
Quoth Porphyro: "O may I ne'er find grace
When my weak voice shall whisper its last prayer,
If one of her soft ringlets I displace,
Or look with ruffian passion in her face:
Good Angela, believe me by these tears;
Or I will, even in a moment's space,
Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's ears,
And beard them, though they be more fanged than wolves and bears."

18

"Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul?
A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churchyard thing,
Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight toll;
Whose prayers for thee, each morn and evening,
Were never missed." Thus plaining, doth she bring
A gentler speech from burning Porphyro;
So woful, and of such deep sorrowing,
That Angela gives promise she will do
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or woe.

19

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide
Him in a closet, of such privacy
That he might see her beauty unespied,
And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,
While legioned faeries paced the coverlet,
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.
Never on such a night have lovers met,
Since Merlin paid his Demon [1] all the monstrous debt.

20

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the Dame:
"All cates [2] and dainties shall be stored there
Quickly on this feast-night: by the tambor frame [3]
Her own lute thou wilt see: no time to spare,

1 Merlin, the son of a demon, was destroyed by Vivien, who used the magic that he had taught her. See Tennyson's *Merlin and Vivien*.
2 delicacies. 3 A drum-shaped embroidery frame.

For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare
On such a catering trust my dizzy head.
Wait here, my child, with patience; kneel in prayer
The while: Ah! thou must needs the lady wed,
Or may I never leave my grave among the dead."

21

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear.
The lover's endless minutes slowly passed;
The Dame returned, and whispered in his ear
To follow her; with aged eyes aghast
From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,
Through many a dusky gallery, they gain
The maiden's chamber, silken, hushed and chaste;
Where Porphyro took covert, pleased amain.[1]
His poor guide hurried back with agues in her brain.

22

Her faltering hand upon the balustrade,
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,
When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmed maid,
Rose, like a missioned spirit, unaware:
With silver taper's light, and pious care,
She turned, and down the aged gossip led
To a safe level matting.[2] Now prepare,
Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;
She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove frayed[3] and fled.

23

Out went the taper as she hurried in;
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:
She closed the door, she panted, all akin
To spirits of the air, and visions wide:
No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!
But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled in her dell.

24

A casement high and triple-arched there was,
All garlanded with carven imag'ries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damasked wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blushed with blood of queens and kings.

25

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules[1] on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven: — Porphyro grew faint:
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

26

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,
Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees;
Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one;
Loosens her fragrant bodice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees:
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

27

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplexed she lay,
Until the poppied warmth of sleep oppressed
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day;
Blissfully havened both from joy and pain;
Clasped[2] like a missal[3] where swart Paynims[4] pray;

1 tremendously. 2 straw carpet. 3 frightened.

1 red (a term in heraldry). 2 Here, tightly shut.
3 prayer-book. 4 Pagans.

Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

28

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,
Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,
And listened to her breathing, if it chanced
To wake into a slumberous tenderness;
Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,
And breathed himself: then from the closet crept,
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,
And over the hushed carpet, silent, stept,
And 'tween the curtains peeped, where, lo! — how fast she slept.

29

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon
Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set
A table, and, half anguished, threw thereon
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet: —
O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!
The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,
The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarionet,
Affray his ears, though but in dying tone: —
The hall-door shuts again, and all the noise is gone.

30

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,
In blanched linen, smooth, and lavendered,
While he from forth the closet brought a heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;
With jellies soother[1] than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrops, tinct with cinnamon;
Manna and dates, in argosy transferred
From Fez; and spiced dainties, every one,
From silken Samarcand to cedared Lebanon.

31

These delicates he heaped with glowing hand
On golden dishes and in baskets bright
Of wreathed silver: sumptuous they stand
In the retired quiet of the night,
Filling the chilly room with perfume light. —
"And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake!
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:[2]
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth ache."

32

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved arm
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream
By the dusk curtains: — 'twas a midnight charm
Impossible to melt as iced stream:
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam;
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies:
It seemed he never, never could redeem
From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes;
So mused awhile, entoiled in woofed phantasies.

33

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute, —
Tumultuous, — and, in chords that tenderest be,
He played an ancient ditty, long since mute,
In Provence called "La belle dame sans mercy:"
Close to her ear touching the melody; —
Wherewith disturbed, she uttered a soft moan:
He ceased — she panted quick — and suddenly
Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone:
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured stone.

34

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:
There was a painful change, that nigh expelled
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep
At which fair Madeline began to weep,
And moan forth witless words with many a sigh;
While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep;
Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous eye,
Fearing to move or speak, she looked so dreamingly.

35

"Ah, Porphyro!" said she, "but even now
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,
Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;
And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear:

[1] smoother. [2] hermit; here, devoted follower.

How changed thou art! how pallid, chill, and drear!
Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!
Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,
For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go."

36

Beyond a mortal man impassioned far
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,
Ethereal, flushed, and like a throbbing star
Seen mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose;
Into her dream he melted, as the rose
Blendeth its odor with the violet, —
Solution sweet: meantime the frost-wind blows
Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp sleet
Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon hath set.

37

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-blown[1] sleet:
"This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"
'Tis dark: the iced gusts still rave and beat:
"No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!
Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine. —
Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?
I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,
Though thou forsakest a deceived thing; —
A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing."

38

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!
Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?
Thy beauty's shield, heart-shaped and vermeil[2] dyed?
Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest
After so many hours of toil and quest,
A famished pilgrim, — saved by miracle.
Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest
Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think'st well
To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

39

"Hark! 'tis an elfin storm from faery land,
Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:
Arise — arise! the morning is at hand: —
The bloated wassailers will never heed: —
Let us away, my love, with happy speed;
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see, —
Drowned all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead:
Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,
For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee."

40

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
For there were sleeping dragons all around,
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears —
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found. —
In all the house was heard no human sound.
A chain-drooped lamp was flickering by each door;
The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,
Fluttered in the besieging wind's uproar;
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

41

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;
Like phantoms to the iron porch they glide,
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,
With a huge empty flagon by his side:
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide: —
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones; —
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

42

And they are gone: aye, ages long ago
These lovers fled away into the storm.
That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,
And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form
Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,
Were long be-nightmared. Angela the old
Died palsy-twitched, with meagre face deform;
The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,
For aye unsought-for slept among his ashes cold.

January, 1819.

1 wind-blown. 2 vermilion.

## ODE

Keats wrote the poem in his copy of Beaumont and Fletcher, on the blank page before *The Fair Maid of the Inn.*

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Have ye souls in heaven too,
Double-lived in regions new?
Yes, and those of heaven commune
With the spheres of sun and moon;
With the noise of fountains wond'rous
And the parle of voices thund'rous;
With the whisper of heaven's trees
And one another, in soft ease
Seated on Elysian lawns
Browsed by none but Dian's fawns;
Underneath large blue-bells tented,
Where the daisies are rose-scented,
And the rose herself has got
Perfume which on earth is not;
Where the nightingale doth sing
Not a senseless, tranced thing,
But divine melodious truth;
Philosophic numbers smooth;
Tales and golden histories
Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then
On the earth ye live again;
And the souls ye left behind you
Teach us, here, the way to find you,
Where your other souls are joying,
Never slumbered, never cloying.
Here, your earth-born souls still speak
To mortals, of their little week;
Of their sorrows and delights;
Of their passions and their spites;
Of their glory and their shame;
What doth strengthen and what maim.
Thus ye teach us, every day,
Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Ye have souls in heaven too,
Double-lived in regions new!

1819.

## ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

1

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

2

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal — yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

3

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new.
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
For ever panting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

4

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

5

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede[1]
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,

1 braid, embroidery.

With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form! dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty," — that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

1819.

## ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

1

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock[1] I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

2

O for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cooled a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,[2]
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stained mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

3

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

4

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless[2] wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

5

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed[3] darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

6

Darkling I listen; and for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain —
To thy high requiem become a sod.

1 poison.
2 The Muses' fountain on Helicon.

1 leopards. 2 invisible. 3 fragrant.

7

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;[1]
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

8

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music: — Do I wake or sleep?

*May*, 1819.

## ODE ON MELANCHOLY

No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist
Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine;
Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kissed
By nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine;[2]
Make not your rosary of yew-berries,
Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be
Your mournful Psyche,[3] nor the downy owl
A partner in your sorrow's mysteries;
For shade to shade will come too drowsily,
And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul.

But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,
And hides the green hill in an April shroud;
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,
Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,
Or on the wealth of globed peonies;
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,
Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,
And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes.

She dwells with Beauty — Beauty that must die;
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure nigh,
Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips:
Ay, in the very temple of Delight
Veiled Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue
Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine;
His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,
And be among her cloudy trophies hung.

1819.

## TO AUTUMN

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometime like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too, —

1 See Ruth, II. 2 Queen of the lower regions.
3 The soul, often symbolized by the butterfly.

While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows,[1] borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;[2]
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

1819.

## LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

Keats took the title of the poem, "The Beautiful Lady without Pity," from an old French poem by Alain Chartier, which he probably knew through a translation that was once ascribed to Chaucer. The two poems are alike only in title.

"Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

"Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

"I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever-dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too."

"I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful — a faery's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

"I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long;
For sideways would she lean, and sing
A faery's song.

"I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

"She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild and manna-dew;
And sure in language strange she said,
'I love thee true.'

"She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she gazed and sighed deep,
And there I shut her wild sad eyes —
So kissed to sleep.

"And there we slumbered on the moss,
And there I dreamed — ah! woe betide! —
The latest dream I ever dreamed
On the cold hill side.

"I saw pale kings, and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
They cried — 'La belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!'

"I saw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke, and found me here
On the cold hill side.

"And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake
And no birds sing."

April–May, 1819.

## TWO SONNETS ON FAME

### 1

Fame, like a wayward Girl, will still be coy
To those who woo her with too slavish knees,
But makes surrender to some thoughtless Boy,
And dotes the more upon a heart at ease;
She is a Gipsy, will not speak to those
Who have not learned to be content without her;
A Jilt, whose ear was never whispered close,
Who thinks they scandal her who talk about her;
A very Gipsy is she, Nilus-born,[1]
Sister-in-law to jealous Potiphar;[2]
Ye love-sick Bards, repay her scorn for scorn.
Ye Artists lovelorn, madmen that ye are!
Make your best bow to her and bid adieu,
Then, if she likes it, she will follow you.

### 2

"You cannot eat your cake and have it too." — *Proverb*

How fevered is the man, who cannot look
Upon his mortal days with temperate blood,

1 willows. 2 country.

1 Gypsies were supposed to come from Egypt.
2 One of Pharaoh's officers, whose wife loved Joseph.

Who vexes all the leaves of his life's book,
And robs his fair name of its maidenhood;
It is as if the rose should pluck herself,
Or the ripe plum finger its misty bloom,
As if a Naiad, like a meddling elf,
Should darken her pure grot with muddy gloom;
But the rose leaves herself upon the briar,
For winds to kiss and grateful bees to feed,
And the ripe plum still wears its dim attire,
The undisturbed lake has crystal space;
Why then should man, teasing the world for grace,
Spoil his salvation for a fierce miscreed?

1819.

## TO SLEEP

O soft embalmer of the still midnight,
Shutting, with careful fingers and benign,
Our gloom-pleased eyes, embowered from the light,
Enshaded in forgetfulness divine:
O soothest Sleep! if so it please thee, close
In midst of this thine hymn my willing eyes,
Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws
Around my bed its lulling charities.
Then save me, or the passed day will shine
Upon my pillow, breeding many woes, —
Save me from curious Conscience, that still lords
Its strength for darkness, burrowing like a mole;
Turn the key deftly in the oiled wards,
And seal the hushed Casket of my Soul.

1819.

## SONNET

TO A YOUNG LADY WHO SENT ME A LAUREL CROWN

Fresh morning gusts have blown away all fear
From my glad bosom, — now from gloominess
I mount for ever — not an atom less
Than the proud laurel shall content my bier.
No! by the eternal stars! or why sit here
In the Sun's eye, and 'gainst my temples press
Apollo's very leaves, woven to bless
By thy white fingers and thy spirit clear.
Lo! who dares say, "Do this?" Who dares call down
My will from its high purpose? Who say, "Stand,"
Or "Go?" This mighty moment I would frown
On abject Cæsars — not the stoutest band
Of mailed heroes should tear off my crown:
Yet would I kneel and kiss thy gentle hand!

1819?

## LAMIA

Keats himself added the following quotation from Burton as a note to the poem:

"Philostratus, in his fourth book *de Vita Apollonii*, hath a memorable instance in this kind, which I may not omit, of one Menippus Lycius, a young man twenty-five years of age, that going betwixt Cenchreas and Corinth, met such a phantasm in the habit of a fair gentlewoman, which, taking him by the hand, carried him home to her house, in the suburbs of Corinth, and told him she was a Phœnician by birth, and if he would tarry with her, he should hear her sing and play, and drink such wine as never any drank, and no man should molest him; but she, being fair and lovely, would live and die with him, that was fair and lovely to behold. The young man, a philosopher, otherwise staid and discreet, able to moderate his passions, though not this of love, tarried with her a while to his great content, and at last married her, to whose wedding, amongst other guests, came Apollonius; who, by some probable conjectures, found her out to be a serpent, a lamia; and that all her furniture was, like Tantalus' gold, described by Homer, no substance but mere illusions. When she saw herself descried, she wept, and desired Apollonius to be silent, but he would not be moved, and thereupon she, plate, house, and all that was in it, vanished in an instant: many thousands took notice of this fact, for it was done in the midst of Greece." (Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Part 3. Sect. 2. Memb. 1. Subs. 1.)

PART I

Upon a time, before the faery broods
Drove Nymph and Satyr from the prosperous woods,
Before king Oberon's bright diadem,
Sceptre, and mantle, clasped with dewy gem,
Frighted away the Dryads and the Fauns
From rushes green, and brakes, and cowslipped lawns,
The ever-smitten Hermes empty left
His golden throne, bent warm on amorous theft:
From high Olympus had he stolen light,
On this side of Jove's clouds, to escape the sight
Of his great summoner, and made retreat
Into a forest on the shores of Crete.
For somewhere in that sacred island dwelt
A nymph, to whom all hoofed Satyrs knelt;

At whose white feet the languid Tritons poured
Pearls, while on land they withered and adored.
Fast by the springs where she to bathe was wont,
And in those meads where sometime she might haunt,
Were strewn rich gifts, unknown to any Muse,
Though Fancy's casket were unlocked to choose.
Ah, what a world of love was at her feet!
So Hermes thought, and a celestial heat
Burnt from his winged heels to either ear,
That from a whiteness, as the lily clear,
Blushed into roses 'mid his golden hair,
Fallen in jealous curls about his shoulders bare.

From vale to vale, from wood to wood, he flew,
Breathing upon the flowers his passion new,
And wound with many a river to its head,
To find where this sweet nymph prepared her secret bed:
In vain; the sweet nymph might nowhere be found,
And so he rested, on the lonely ground,
Pensive, and full of painful jealousies
Of the Wood-Gods, and even the very trees.
There as he stood, he heard a mournful voice,
Such as once heard, in gentle heart, destroys
All pain but pity: thus the lone voice spake:
"When from this wreathed tomb shall I awake!
When move in a sweet body fit for life,
And love, and pleasure, and the ruddy strife
Of hearts and lips! Ah, miserable me!"
The God, dove-footed, glided silently
Round bush and tree, soft-brushing, in his speed,
The taller grasses and full-flowering weed,
Until he found a palpitating snake,
Bright, and cirque-couchant [1] in a dusky brake.

She was a gordian [2] shape of dazzling hue,
Vermilion-spotted, golden, green, and blue;
Striped like a zebra, freckled like a pard,
Eyed like a peacock, and all crimson barred;
And full of silver moons, that, as she breathed,
Dissolved, or brighter shone, or interwreathed
Their lustres with the gloomier tapestries —
So rainbow-sided, touched with miseries,
She seemed, at once, some penanced lady elf,
Some demon's mistress, or the demon's self.
Upon her crest she wore a wannish fire
Sprinkled with stars, like Ariadne's tiar: [1]
Her head was serpent, but ah, bitter-sweet!
She had a woman's mouth with all its pearls complete:
And for her eyes: what could such eyes do there
But weep, and weep, that they were born so fair?
As Proserpine still weeps for her Sicilian air.
Her throat was serpent, but the words she spake
Came, as through bubbling honey, for Love's sake,
And thus; while Hermes on his pinions lay,
Like a stooped falcon ere he takes his prey.

"Fair Hermes, crowned with feathers, fluttering light,
I had a splendid dream of thee last night:
I saw thee sitting, on a throne of gold,
Among the Gods, upon Olympus old,
The only sad one; for thou didst not hear
The soft, lute-fingered Muses chaunting clear,
Nor even Apollo when he sang alone,
Deaf to his throbbing throat's long, long melodious moan.
I dreamt I saw thee, robed in purple flakes,
Break amorous through the clouds, as morning breaks,
And, swiftly as a bright Phœbean [2] dart,
Strike for the Cretan isle; and here thou art!
Too gentle Hermes, hast thou found the maid?"
Whereat the star of Lethe [3] not delayed
His rosy eloquence, and thus inquired:
"Thou smooth-lipped serpent, surely high inspired!
Thou beauteous wreath, with melancholy eyes,
Possess whatever bliss thou canst devise,
Telling me only where my nymph is fled, —
Where she doth breathe!" "Bright planet, thou hast said,"
Returned the snake, "but seal with oaths, fair God!"
"I swear," said Hermes, "by my serpent rod,
And by thine eyes, and by thy starry crown!"
Light flew his earnest words, among the blossoms blown.

1 coiled. 2 like the Gordian Knot.

1 The tiara of the seven stars, which later became a constellation, given to Ariadne by Bacchus.
2 Of Apollo.
3 i.e. Hermes, who guided souls to Hades.

Then thus again the brilliance feminine:
"Too frail of heart! for this lost nymph of thine,
Free as the air, invisibly, she strays
About these thornless wilds; her pleasant days
She tastes unseen; unseen her nimble feet
Leave traces in the grass and flowers sweet;
From weary tendrils, and bowed branches green,
She plucks the fruit unseen, she bathes unseen:
And by my power is her beauty veiled
To keep it unaffronted, unassailed
By the love-glances of unlovely eyes,
Of Satyrs, Fauns, and bleared Silenus' sighs.
Pale grew her immortality, for woe
Of all these lovers, and she grieved so
I took compassion on her, bade her steep
Her hair in weird syrops, that would keep
Her loveliness invisible, yet free
To wander as she loves, in liberty.
Thou shalt behold her, Hermes, thou alone,
If thou wilt, as thou swearest, grant my boon!"
Then, once again, the charmed God began
An oath, and through the serpent's ears it ran
Warm, tremulous, devout, psalterian.
Ravished, she lifted her Circean head,
Blushed a live damask, and swift-lisping said,
"I was a woman, let me have once more
A woman's shape, and charming as before.
I love a youth of Corinth — O the bliss!
Give me my woman's form, and place me where he is.
Stoop, Hermes, let me breathe upon thy brow,
And thou shalt see thy sweet nymph even now."
The God on half-shut feathers sank serene,
She breathed upon his eyes, and swift was seen
Of both the guarded nymph near-smiling on the green.
It was no dream; or say a dream it was,
Real are the dreams of Gods, and smoothly pass
Their pleasures in a long immortal dream.
One warm, flushed moment, hovering, it might seem
Dashed by the wood-nymph's beauty, so he burned;
Then, lighting on the printless verdure, turned
To the swooned serpent, and with languid arm,
Delicate, put to proof the lithe Caducean [1] charm.
So done, upon the nymph his eyes he bent
Full of adoring tears and blandishment,
And towards her stept: she, like a moon in wane,
Faded before him, cowered, nor could restrain
Her fearful sobs, self-folding like a flower
That faints into itself at evening hour:
But the God fostering her chilled hand,
She felt the warmth, her eyelids opened bland,
And, like new flowers at morning song of bees,
Bloomed, and gave up her honey to the lees.
Into the green-recessed woods they flew;
Nor grew they pale, as mortal lovers do.

Left to herself, the serpent now began
To change; her elfin blood in madness ran,
Her mouth foamed, and the grass, therewith besprent,[2]
Withered at dew so sweet and virulent;
Her eyes in torture fixed, and anguish drear,
Hot, glazed, and wide, with lid-lashes all sear,
Flashed phosphor and sharp sparks, without one cooling tear.
The colors all inflamed throughout her train,
She writhed about, convulsed with scarlet pain:
A deep volcanian yellow took the place
Of all her milder-mooned body's grace;
And, as the lava ravishes the mead,
Spoilt all her silver mail, and golden brede;
Made gloom of all her frecklings, streaks and bars,
Eclipsed her crescents, and licked up her stars:
So that, in moments few, she was undrest
Of all her sapphires, greens, and amethyst,
And rubious-argent: of all these bereft,
Nothing but pain and ugliness were left.
Still shone her crown; that vanished, also she
Melted and disappeared as suddenly;
And in the air, her new voice luting soft,
Cried, "Lycius! gentle Lycius!" — Borne aloft
With the bright mists about the mountains hoar
These words dissolved: Crete's forests heard no more.

1 The staff or wand of Hermes (Mercury) was called a caduceus. "Lithe" suggests the snakes that entwined the staff.

2 sprinkled.

Whither fled Lamia, now a lady bright,
A full-born beauty new and exquisite?
She fled into that valley they pass o'er
Who go to Corinth from Cenchreas shore;
And rested at the foot of those wild hills,
The rugged founts of the Peræan rills,
And of that other ridge whose barren back
Stretches, with all its mist and cloudy rack,
South-westward to Cleone. There she stood
About a young bird's flutter from a wood,
Fair, on a sloping green of mossy tread,
By a clear pool, wherein she passioned
To see herself escaped from so sore ills,
While her robes flaunted with the daffodils.

Ah, happy Lycius! — for she was a maid
More beautiful than ever twisted braid,
Or sighed, or blushed, or on spring-flowered lea
Spread a green kirtle to the minstrelsy:
A virgin purest lipped, yet in the lore
Of love deep learned to the red heart's core:
Not one hour old, yet of sciential brain
To unperplex bliss from its neighbor pain;
Define their pettish limits, and estrange
Their points of contact, and swift counterchange;
Intrigue with the specious chaos, and dispart
Its most ambiguous atoms with sure art;
As though in Cupid's college she had spent
Sweet days a lovely graduate, still unshent,[1]
And kept his rosy terms in idle languishment.

Why this fair creature chose so faerily
By the wayside to linger, we shall see;
But first 'tis to tell how she could muse
And dream, when in the serpent prison-house,
Of all she list, strange or magnificent:
How, ever, where she willed, her spirit went;
Whether to faint Elysium, or where
Down through tress-lifting waves the Nereids fair
Wind into Thetis' bower by many a pearly stair;
Or where God Bacchus drains his cups divine,
Stretched out, at ease, beneath a glutinous pine;
Or where in Pluto's gardens palatine[2]
Mulciber's[3] columns gleam in far piazzian line.
And sometimes into cities she would send
Her dream, with feast and rioting to blend;
And once, while among mortals dreaming thus,
She saw the young Corinthian Lycius
Charioting foremost in the envious race,
Like a young Jove with calm uneager face,
And fell into a swooning love of him.
Now on the moth-time of that evening dim
He would return that way, as well she knew,
To Corinth from the shore; for freshly blew
The eastern soft wind, and his galley now
Grated the quaystones with her brazen prow
In port Cenchreas, from Egina isle
Fresh anchored; whither he had been awhile
To sacrifice to Jove, whose temple there
Waits with high marble doors for blood and incense rare.
Jove heard his vows, and bettered his desire;
For by some freakful chance he made retire
From his companions, and set forth to walk,
Perhaps grown wearied of their Corinth talk:
Over the solitary hills he fared,
Thoughtless at first, but ere eve's star appeared
His phantasy was lost, where reason fades,
In the calmed twilight of Platonic shades.
Lamia beheld him coming, near, more near —
Close to her passing, in indifference drear,
Her silent sandals swept the mossy green;
So neighbored to him, and yet so unseen
She stood: he passed, shut up in mysteries,
His mind wrapped like his mantle, while her eyes
Followed his steps, and her neck regal white
Turned — syllabling thus, "Ah, Lycius bright,
And will you leave me on the hills alone?
Lycius, look back! and be some pity shown."
He did; not with cold wonder fearingly,
But Orpheus-like at an Eurydice;
For so delicious were the words she sung,
It seemed he had loved them a whole summer long:
And soon his eyes had drunk her beauty up
Leaving no drop in the bewildering cup,
And still the cup was full, — while he, afraid
Lest she should vanish ere his lip had paid
Due adoration, thus began to adore;
Her soft look growing coy, she saw his chain so sure:
"Leave thee alone! Look back! Ah, Goddess, see
Whether my eyes can ever turn from thee!
For pity do not this sad heart belie —
Even as thou vanishest so shall I die.
Stay! though a Naiad of the rivers, stay!
To thy far wishes will thy streams obey:

1 blameless. 2 palatial. 3 Vulcan's.

Stay! though the greenest woods be thy domain,
Alone they can drink up the morning rain:
Though a descended Pleiad, will not one
Of thine harmonious sisters keep in tune
Thy spheres, and as thy silver proxy shine?
So sweetly to these ravished ears of mine
Came thy sweet greeting, that if thou shouldst fade
Thy memory will waste me to a shade: — 270
For pity do not melt!" — "If I should stay,"
Said Lamia, "here, upon this floor of clay,
And pain my steps upon these flowers too rough,
What canst thou say or do of charm enough
To dull the nice remembrance of my home?
Thou canst not ask me with thee here to roam 276
Over these hills and vales, where no joy is, —
Empty of immortality and bliss!
Thou art a scholar, Lycius, and must know
That finer spirits cannot breathe below 280
In human climes, and live: Alas! poor youth,
What taste of purer air hast thou to soothe
My essence? What serener palaces,
Where I may all my many senses please,
And by mysterious sleights a hundred thirsts appease? 285
It cannot be — Adieu!" So said, she rose
Tiptoe with white arms spread. He, sick to lose
The amorous promise of her lone complain,
Swooned, murmuring of love, and pale with pain.
The cruel lady, without any show 290
Of sorrow for her tender favorite's woe,
But rather, if her eyes could brighter be,
With brighter eyes and slow amenity,
Put her new lips to his, and gave afresh
The life she had so tangled in her mesh: 295
And as he from one trance was wakening
Into another, she began to sing,
Happy in beauty, life, and love, and every thing,
A song of love, too sweet for earthly lyres,
While, like held breath, the stars drew in their panting fires. 300
And then she whispered in such trembling tone,
As those who, safe together met alone
For the first time through many anguished days,
Use other speech than looks; bidding him raise
His drooping head, and clear his soul of doubt, 305
For that she was a woman, and without
Any more subtle fluid in her veins
Than throbbing blood, and that the self-same pains
Inhabited her frail-strung heart as his.
And next she wondered how his eyes could miss 310
Her face so long in Corinth, where, she said,
She dwelt but half retired, and there had led
Days happy as the gold coin could invent
Without the aid of love; yet in content
Till she saw him, as once she passed him by, 315
Where 'gainst a column he lent thoughtfully
At Venus' temple porch, 'mid baskets heaped
Of amorous herbs and flowers, newly reaped
Late on that eve, as 'twas the night before
The Adonian feast[1]; whereof she saw no more, 320
But wept alone those days, for why should she adore?
Lycius from death awoke into amaze,
To see her still, and singing so sweet lays;
Then from amaze into delight he fell
To hear her whisper woman's lore so well; 325
And every word she spake enticed him on
To unperplexed delight and pleasure known.
Let the mad poets say whate'er they please
Of the sweets of Faeries, Peris, Goddesses,
There is not such a treat among them all, 330
Haunters of cavern, lake, and waterfall,
As a real woman, lineal indeed
From Pyrrha's[2] pebbles or old Adam's seed.
Thus gentle Lamia judged, and judged aright,
That Lycius could not love in half a fright,
So threw the goddess off, and won his heart 336
More pleasantly by playing woman's part,
With no more awe than what her beauty gave,
That, while it smote, still guaranteed to save.
Lycius to all made eloquent reply, 340
Marrying to every word a twinborn sigh;
And last, pointing to Corinth, asked her sweet,
If 'twas too far that night for her soft feet.
The way was short, for Lamia's eagerness
Made, by a spell, the triple league decrease 345
To a few paces; not at all surmised
By blinded Lycius, so in her comprised.
They passed the city gates, he knew not how,
So noiseless, and he never thought to know.

As men talk in a dream, so Corinth all, 350
Throughout her palaces imperial,

1 In honor of Adonis, the beautiful boy beloved of Venus.

2 According to legend, Pyrrha and her husband Deucalion, after the flood, scattered pebbles, from which the new race of man grew.

And all her populous streets and temples lewd,
Muttered, like tempest in the distance brewed,
To the wide-spreaded night above her towers.
Men, women, rich and poor, in the cool hours,
Shuffled their sandals o'er the pavement white,
Companioned or alone; while many a light
Flared, here and there, from wealthy festivals,
And threw their moving shadows on the walls,
Or found them clustered in the corniced shade
Of some arched temple door, or dusky colonnade.

Muffling his face, of greeting friends in fear,
Her fingers he pressed hard, as one came near
With curled gray beard, sharp eyes, and smooth bald crown,
Slow-stepped, and robed in philosophic gown:
Lycius shrank closer, as they met and past,
Into his mantle, adding wings to haste,
While hurried Lamia trembled: "Ah," said he,
"Why do you shudder, love, so ruefully?
Why does your tender palm dissolve in dew?" —
"I'm wearied," said fair Lamia: "tell me who
Is that old man? I cannot bring to mind
His features: — Lycius! wherefore did you blind
Yourself from his quick eyes?" Lycius replied,
"'Tis Apollonius sage, my trusty guide
And good instructor; but to-night he seems
The ghost of folly haunting my sweet dreams."

While yet he spake they had arrived before
A pillared porch, with lofty portal door,
Where hung a silver lamp, whose phosphor glow
Reflected in the slabbed steps below,
Mild as a star in water; for so new,
And so unsullied was the marble's hue,
So through the crystal polish, liquid fine,
Ran the dark veins, that none but feet divine
Could e'er have touched there. Sounds Æolian [1]

1 As from an Æolian harp, played by the wind.

Breathed from the hinges, as the ample span
Of the wide doors disclosed a place unknown
Some time to any, but those two alone,
And a few Persian mutes, who that same year
Were seen about the markets: none knew where
They could inhabit; the most curious
Were foiled, who watched to trace them to their house:
And but the flitter-winged verse must tell,
For truth's sake, what woe afterwards befel,
'Twould humor many a heart to leave them thus,
Shut from the busy world of more incredulous.

PART II

Love in a hut, with water and a crust,
Is — Love, forgive us! — cinders, ashes, dust;
Love in a palace is perhaps at last
More grievous torment than a hermit's fast: —
That is a doubtful tale from faery land,
Hard for the non-elect to understand.
Had Lycius lived to hand his story down,
He might have given the moral a fresh frown,
Or clenched it quite: but too short was their bliss
To breed distrust and hate, that make the soft voice hiss.
Beside, there, nightly, with terrific glare,
Love, jealous grown of so complete a pair,
Hovered and buzzed his wings, with fearful roar,
Above the lintel of their chamber door,
And down the passage cast a glow upon the floor.

For all this came a ruin: side by side
They were enthroned, in the even tide,
Upon a couch, near to a curtaining
Whose airy texture, from a golden string,
Floated into the room, and let appear
Unveiled the summer heaven, blue and clear,
Betwixt two marble shafts: — there they reposed,
Where use had made it sweet, with eyelids closed,
Saving a tithe which love still open kept,
That they might see each other while they almost slept;
When from the slope side of a suburb hill,
Deafening the swallow's twitter, came a thrill
Of trumpets — Lycius started — the sounds fled,

But left a thought, a buzzing in his head.
For the first time, since first he harbored in
That purple-lined palace of sweet sin,
His spirit passed beyond its golden bourn
Into the noisy world almost forsworn.
The lady, ever watchful, penetrant,
Saw this with pain, so arguing a want
Of something more, more than her empery
Of joys; and she began to moan and sigh
Because he mused beyond her, knowing well
That but a moment's thought is passion's passing bell.
"Why do you sigh, fair creature?" whispered he:
"Why do you think?" returned she tenderly:
"You have deserted me; — where am I now?
Not in your heart while care weighs on your brow:
No, no, you have dismissed me; and I go
From your breast houseless: aye, it must be so."
He answered, bending to her open eyes,
Where he was mirrored small in paradise,
"My silver planet, both of eve and morn!
Why will you plead yourself so sad forlorn,
While I am striving how to fill my heart
With deeper crimson, and a double smart?
How to entangle, trammel up and snare
Your soul in mine, and labyrinth you there
Like the hid scent in an unbudded rose?
Aye, a sweet kiss — you see your mighty woes.
My thoughts! shall I unveil them? Listen then!
What mortal hath a prize, that other men
May be confounded and abashed withal,
But lets it sometimes pace abroad majestical,
And triumph, as in thee I should rejoice
Amid the hoarse alarm of Corinth's voice.
Let my foes choke, and my friends shout afar,
While through the thronged streets your bridal car
Wheels round its dazzling spokes." — The lady's cheek
Trembled; she nothing said, but, pale and meek,
Arose and knelt before him, wept a rain
Of sorrows at his words; at last with pain
Beseeching him, the while his hand she wrung,
To change his purpose. He thereat was stung,
Perverse, with stronger fancy to reclaim
Her wild and timid nature to his aim:
Besides, for all his love, in self despite,
Against his better self, he took delight
Luxurious in her sorrows, soft and new.
His passion, cruel grown, took on a hue
Fierce and sanguineous as 'twas possible
In one whose brow had no dark veins to swell.
Fine was the mitigated fury, like
Apollo's presence when in act to strike
The serpent — Ha, the serpent! certes, she
Was none. She burnt, she loved the tyranny,
And, all subdued, consented to the hour
When to the bridal he should lead his paramour.
Whispering in midnight silence, said the youth,
"Sure some sweet name thou hast, though, by my truth,
I have not asked it, ever thinking thee
Not mortal, but of heavenly progeny,
As still I do. Hast any mortal name,
Fit appellation for this dazzling frame?
Or friends or kinsfolk on the citied earth,
To share our marriage feast and nuptial mirth?"
"I have no friends," said Lamia, "no, not one;
My presence in wide Corinth hardly known:
My parents' bones are in their dusty urns
Sepulchred, where no kindled incense burns,
Seeing all their luckless race are dead, save me,
And I neglect the holy rite for thee.
Even as you list invite your many guests;
But if, as now it seems, your vision rests
With any pleasure on me, do not bid
Old Apollonius — from him keep me hid."
Lycius, perplexed at words so blind and blank,
Made close inquiry; from whose touch she shrank,
Feigning a sleep; and he to the dull shade
Of deep sleep in a moment was betrayed.

It was the custom then to bring away
The bride from home at blushing shut of day,
Veiled, in a chariot, heralded along
By strewn flowers, torches, and a marriage song,
With other pageants: but this fair unknown
Had not a friend. So being left alone,
(Lycius was gone to summon all his kin)
And knowing surely she could never win
His foolish heart from its mad pompousness,
She set herself, high-thoughted, how to dress
The misery in fit magnificence.
She did so, but 'tis doubtful how and whence

Came, and who were her subtle servitors.
About the halls, and to and from the doors,
There was a noise of wings, till in short space
The glowing banquet-room shone with wide-arched grace.
A haunting music, sole perhaps and lone
Supportress of the faery-roof, made moan
Throughout, as fearful the whole charm might fade.
Fresh carved cedar, mimicking a glade
Of palm and plantain,[1] met from either side,
High in the midst, in honor of the bride:
Two palms and then two plantains, and so on,
From either side their stems branched one to one
All down the aisled place; and beneath all
There ran a stream of lamps straight on from wall to wall,
So canopied, lay an untasted feast
Teeming with odors. Lamia, regal drest,
Silently paced about, and as she went,
In pale contented sort of discontent,
Missioned her viewless servants to enrich
The fretted splendor of each nook and niche.
Between the tree-stems, marbled plain at first,
Came jasper pannels; then, anon, there burst
Forth creeping imagery of slighter trees,
And with the larger wove in small intricacies.
Approving all, she faded at self-will,
And shut the chamber up, close, hushed and still,
Complete and ready for the revels rude,
When dreadful guests would come to spoil her solitude.

The day appeared, and all the gossip rout.
O senseless Lycius! Madman! wherefore flout
The silent-blessing fate, warm cloistered hours,
And show to common eyes these secret bowers?
The herd approached; each guest, with busy brain,
Arriving at the portal, gazed amain,
And entered marveling: for they knew the street,
Remembered it from childhood all complete
Without a gap, yet ne'er before had seen
That royal porch, that high-built fair demesne;[2]
So in they hurried all, mazed, curious and keen:
Save one, who looked thereon with eye severe,
And with calm-planted steps walked in austere;
'Twas Apollonius: something too he laughed,
As though some knotty problem, that had daft
His patient thought, had now begun to thaw,
And solve and melt: — 'twas just as he foresaw.

He met within the murmurous vestibule
His young disciple. "'Tis no common rule,
Lycius," said he, "for uninvited guest
To force himself upon you, and infest
With an unbidden presence the bright throng
Of younger friends; yet must I do this wrong,
And you forgive me." Lycius blushed, and led
The old man through the inner doors broad-spread;
With reconciling words and courteous mien
Turning into sweet milk the sophist's spleen.

Of wealthy lustre was the banquet-room,
Filled with pervading brilliance and perfume:
Before each lucid pannel fuming stood
A censer fed with myrrh and spiced wood,
Each by a sacred tripod held aloft,
Whose slender feet wide-swerved upon the soft
Wool-woofed carpets: fifty wreaths of smoke
From fifty censers their light voyage took
To the high roof, still mimicked as they rose
Along the mirrored walls by twin-clouds odorous.
Twelve sphered tables, by silk seats insphered,
High as the level of a man's breast reared
On libbard's[1] paws, upheld the heavy gold
Of cups and goblets, and the store thrice told
Of Ceres' horn, and, in huge vessels, wine
Come from the gloomy tun with merry shine.
Thus loaded with a feast the tables stood,
Each shrining in the midst the image of a God.

When in an antechamber every guest
Had felt the cold full sponge to pleasure pressed,
By minist'ring slaves, upon his hands and feet,
And fragrant oils with ceremony meet

1 A tropical tree, in its shape and in its fruit, something like a banana tree.
2 i.e., demain, estate.

1 leopard's.

Poured on his hair, they all moved to the feast
In white robes, and themselves in order placed
Around the silken couches, wondering
Whence all this mighty cost and blaze of wealth could spring.

Soft went the music the soft air along,
While fluent Greek a voweled undersong
Kept up among the guests, discoursing low
At first, for scarcely was the wine at flow;
But when the happy vintage touched their brains,
Louder they talk, and louder come the strains
Of powerful instruments: — the gorgeous dyes,
The space, the splendor of the draperies,
The roof of awful richness, nectarous cheer,
Beautiful slaves, and Lamia's self, appear,
Now, when the wine has done its rosy deed,
And every soul from human trammels freed,
No more so strange; for merry wine, sweet wine,
Will make Elysian shades not too fair, too divine.
Soon was God Bacchus at meridian height;
Flushed were their cheeks, and bright eyes double bright:
Garlands of every green, and every scent
From vales deflowered, or forest-trees branch-rent,
In baskets of bright osiered gold were brought
High as the handles heaped, to suit the thought
Of every guest; that each, as he did please,
Might fancy-fit his brows, silk-pillowed at his ease.

What wreath for Lamia? What for Lycius?
What for the sage, old Apollonius?
Upon her aching forehead be there hung
The leaves of willow and of adder's tongue [1];
And for the youth, quick, let us strip for him
The thyrsus,[2] that his watching eyes may swim
Into forgetfulness; and, for the sage,
Let spear-grass and the spiteful thistle wage
War on his temples. Do not all charms fly
At the mere touch of cold philosophy?
There was an awful rainbow once in heaven:
We know her woof, her texture; she is given
In the dull catalogue of common things.
Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings,
Conquer all mysteries by rule and line,
Empty the haunted air, and gnomed mine —
Unweave a rainbow, as it erewhile made
The tender-personed Lamia melt into a shade.

By her glad Lycius sitting, in chief place,
Scarce saw in all the room another face,
Till, checking his love trance, a cup he took
Full brimmed, and opposite sent forth a look
'Cross the broad table, to beseech a glance
From his old teacher's wrinkled countenance,
And pledge him. The bald-head philosopher
Had fixed his eye, without a twinkle or stir
Full on the alarmed beauty of the bride,
Brow-beating her fair form, and troubling her sweet pride.
Lycius then pressed her hand, with devout touch,
As pale it lay upon the rosy couch:
'Twas icy, and the cold ran through his veins;
Then sudden it grew hot, and all the pains
Of an unnatural heat shot to his heart.
"Lamia, what means this? Wherefore dost thou start?
Know'st thou that man?" Poor Lamia answered not.
He gazed into her eyes, and not a jot
Owned they the lovelorn piteous appeal:
More, more he gazed: his human senses reel:
Some hungry spell that loveliness absorbs;
There was no recognition in those orbs.
"Lamia!" he cried — and no soft-toned reply.
The many heard, and the loud revelry
Grew hush; the stately music no more breathes;
The myrtle sickened in a thousand wreaths.
By faint degrees, voice, lute, and pleasure ceased;
A deadly silence step by step increased,
Until it seemed a horrid presence there,
And not a man but felt the terror in his hair.
"Lamia!" he shrieked; and nothing but the shriek
With its sad echo did the silence break.
"Begone, foul dream!" he cried, gazing again
In the bride's face, where now no azure vein
Wandered on fair-spaced temples; no soft bloom
Misted the cheek; no passion to illume
The deep-recessed vision: — all was blight;
Lamia, no longer fair, there sat a deadly white.
"Shut, shut those juggling eyes, thou ruthless man!

1 A fern.
2 The wand, entwined with ivy and vine-leaves, carried by Bacchus and his followers.

Turn them aside, wretch! or the righteous ban
Of all the Gods, whose dreadful images
Here represent their shadowy presences,
May pierce them on the sudden with the thorn
Of painful blindness; leaving thee forlorn,
In trembling dotage to the feeblest fright
Of conscience, for their long offended might,
For all thine impious proud-heart sophistries,
Unlawful magic, and enticing lies.
Corinthians! look upon that grey-beard wretch!
Mark how, possessed, his lashless eyelids stretch
Around his demon eyes! Corinthians, see!
My sweet bride withers at their potency."
"Fool!" said the sophist, in an under-tone
Gruff with contempt; which a death-nighing moan
From Lycius answered, as heart-struck and lost,
He sank supine beside the aching ghost.
"Fool! Fool!" repeated he, while his eyes still
Relented not, nor moved; "from every ill
Of life have I preserved thee to this day,
And shall I see thee made a serpent's prey?"
Then Lamia breathed death breath; the sophist's eye,
Like a sharp spear, went through her utterly,
Keen, cruel, perceant, stinging: she, as well
As her weak hand could any meaning tell,
Motioned him to be silent; vainly so,
He looked and looked again a level — No!
"A serpent!" echoed he; no sooner said,
Than with a frightful scream she vanished:
And Lycius' arms were empty of delight,
As were his limbs of life, from that same night.
On the high couch he lay! — his friends came round —
Supported him — no pulse, or breath they found,
And, in its marriage robe, the heavy body wound.

*July–September*, 1819.

## SONNET

This sonnet, probably the next to the last poem that Keats wrote, was composed aboard the boat carrying him to Italy, after the ship had stopped for a short time on the coast of Dorsetshire.

Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art —
Not in lone splendor hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like Nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors —
No — yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel forever its soft fall and swell,
Awake forever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever — or else swoon to death.

*September*, 1820.

# WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR (1775–1864)

Walter Savage Landor, the son of a prominent physician, was born at Warwick in 1775. He was educated at Rugby and at Trinity College, Oxford. He early declared himself a poet, and throughout a long life gave himself to the pursuit of letters. In 1805 his father's death put him in control of a large fortune. After a romantic expedition to Spain to assist the Spaniards in their revolt against Napoleon, Landor married and settled first at Bath, then at Llanthony in Wales. He was constantly in dispute with his neighbors, and later with his own family, for though generous and magnanimous he was hot in temper and poor in judgment. In 1814 he went to France and then to Italy where he lived until 1835, chiefly at Florence. He died in 1864.

Landor's first important poem, *Gebir*, a tale of the Moslem invasion of Spain and the hero who gave his name to Gibraltar, appeared in 1798. This poem is a sign of the romantic spirit scarcely less impressive than the Lyrical Ballads, published the same year. Landor, however, united a romantic temperament with an absorbing interest in classical life and a style of classical distinction. He wrote much in Latin, and translated *Gebir* into that tongue. He wrote a series of dramas in blank verse, on subjects drawn from Neapolitan history and much other poetry on classical themes — the *Hellenics* and *Heroic Idyls*. His best known poetry is in the form of quatrains, distinguished for their extreme compression and precision of utterance. Landor's prose, like his

poetry, is profoundly influenced by his love of the Greek and Roman classics. He used the classical form of the dialogue in the series of *Imaginary Conversations* which appeared in successive volumes between 1824 and 1846. These present famous and significant figures of history in circumstances which reveal their characters, sometimes with tragic intensity. Of this semi-dramatic form Landor was a master. *Pericles and Aspasia* (1836) is an adaptation of it, the story of the famous Athenian lovers being told in letters.

Landor's works were collected in 1846 with a biography by John Forster. A later edition by C. G. Crump appeared in 1893. A volume of selections in the Golden Treasury Series was made by Sidney Colvin, who also contributed the life of Landor in the English Men of Letters Series. J. R. Lowell's essay on Landor is the leading American appreciation. The character of Boythorn, in Dickens's *Bleak House*, is drawn with much exaggeration from Landor.

## ROSE AYLMER

Ah, what avails the sceptred race,
Ah, what the form divine!
What every virtue, every grace!
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.
Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
I consecrate to thee.

## A FIESOLAN IDYL

Here, where precipitate Spring with one light bound
Into hot Summer's lusty arms expires,
And where go forth at morn, at eve, at night,
Soft airs that want the lute to play with 'em,
And softer sighs that know not what they want,
Aside a wall, beneath an orange-tree,
Whose tallest flowers could tell the lowlier ones
Of sights in Fiesole right above,
While I was gazing a few paces off
At what they seemed to show me with their nods,
Their frequent whispers and their pointing shoots,
A gentle maid came down the garden-steps
And gathered the pure treasure in her lap.
I heard the branches rustle, and stept forth
To drive the ox away, or mule, or goat, —
Such I believed it must be. How could I
Let beast o'erpower them? when hath wind or rain
Borne hard upon weak plant that wanted me,
And I (however they might bluster round)
Walkt off? 'Twere most ungrateful; for sweet scents
Are the swift vehicles of still sweeter thoughts,
And nurse and pillow the dull memory
That would let drop without them her best stores.
They bring me tales of youth and tones of love,
And 'tis and ever was my wish and way
To let all flowers live freely, and all die
(Whene'er their Genius bids their souls depart)
Among their kindred in their native place.
I never pluck the rose; the violet's head
Hath shaken with my breath upon its bank
And not reproacht me; the ever-sacred cup
Of the pure lily hath between my hands
Felt safe, unsoiled, nor lost one grain of gold.
I saw the light that made the glossy leaves
More glossy; the fair arm, the fairer cheek
Warmed by the eye intent on its pursuit;
I saw the foot that, although half-erect
From its gray slipper, could not lift her up
To what she wanted. I held down a branch
And gathered her some blossoms, since their hour
Was come, and bees had wounded them, and flies
Of harder wing were working their way through
And scattering them in fragments under foot.
So crisp were some, they rattled unevolved;
Others, ere broken off, fell into shells,
Unbending, brittle, lucid, white like snow,
And like snow not seen through, by eye or sun;
Yet every one her gown received from me
Was fairer than the first. I thought not so,
But so she praised them to reward my care.
I said, "You find the largest." "This indeed,"
Cried she, "is large and sweet." She held one forth,
Whether for me to look at or to take
She knew not, nor did I; but taking it
Would best have solved (and this she felt) her doubt.
I dared not touch it; for it seemed a part
Of her own self; fresh, full, the most mature
Of blossoms, yet a blossom; with a touch
To fall, and yet unfallen. She drew back
The boon she tendered, and then, finding not
The ribbon at her waist to fix it in,
Dropt it, as loth to drop it, on the rest.

1831; pub. 1846.

## ON HIS SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY

I strove with none, for none was worth my strife,
Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art;
I warmed both hands before the fire of life,
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

## IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS
### 1824–1846

### MARCELLUS AND HANNIBAL

Marcellus commanded the Roman army in the Second Punic War after the defeat of Cannæ. He was killed in a skirmish at Venusia, 208 B.C.

*Hannibal.* Could a Numidian horseman ride no faster? Marcellus! ho! Marcellus! He moves not — he is dead. Did he not stir his fingers? Stand wide, soldiers — wide, forty paces — give him air — bring water — halt! Gather those broad leaves, and all the rest, growing under the brushwood — unbrace his armor. Loose the helmet first — his breast rises. I fancied his eyes were fixed on me — they have rolled back again. Who presumed to touch my shoulder? This horse? It was surely the horse of Marcellus! Let no man mount him. Ha! ha! the Romans, too, sink into luxury: here is gold about the charger.

*Gaulish Chieftain.* Execrable thief! The golden chain of our king under a beast's grinders! The vengeance of the gods hath overtaken the impure ——

*Hannibal.* We will talk about vengeance when we have entered Rome, and about purity among the priests, if they will hear us. Sound for the surgeon. That arrow may be extracted from the side, deep as it is. — The conqueror of Syracuse lies before me. — Send a vessel off to Carthage. Say Hannibal is at the gates of Rome. — Marcellus, who stood alone between us, fallen. Brave man! I would rejoice and cannot. — How awfully serene a countenance! Such as we hear are in the islands of the Blessed. And how glorious a form and stature! Such too was theirs! They also once lay thus upon the earth wet with their blood — few other enter there. And what plain armor!

*Gaulish Chieftain.* My party slew him — indeed I think I slew him myself. I claim the chain: it belongs to my king; the glory of Gaul requires it. Never will she endure to see another take it.

*Hannibal.* My friend, the glory of Marcellus did not require him to wear it. When he suspended the arms of your brave king in the temple, he thought such a trinket unworthy of himself and of Jupiter. The shield he battered down, the breast-plate he pierced with his sword — these he showed to the people and to the gods; hardly his wife and little children saw this, ere his horse wore it.

*Gaulish Chieftain.* Hear me, O Hannibal!

*Hannibal.* What! when Marcellus lies before me? when his life may perhaps be recalled? when I may lead him in triumph to Carthage? when Italy, Sicily, Greece, Asia, wait to obey me? Content thee! I will give thee mine own bridle, worth ten such.

*Gaulish Chieftain.* For myself?

*Hannibal.* For thyself.

*Gaulish Chieftain.* And these rubies and emeralds, and that scarlet ——

*Hannibal.* Yes, yes.

*Gaulish Chieftain.* O glorious Hannibal! unconquerable hero! O my happy country! to have such an ally and defender. I swear eternal gratitude — yes, gratitude, love, devotion, beyond eternity.

*Hannibal.* In all treaties we fix the time: I could hardly ask a longer. Go back to thy station. — I would see what the surgeon is about, and hear what he thinks. The life of Marcellus! the triumph of Hannibal! what else has the world in it? Only Rome and Carthage: these follow.

*Marcellus.* I must die then? The gods be praised! The commander of a Roman army is no captive.

*Hannibal* (*to the Surgeon*). Could not he bear a sea-voyage? Extract the arrow.

*Surgeon.* He expires that moment.

*Marcellus.* It pains me: extract it.

*Hannibal.* Marcellus, I see no expression of pain on your countenance, and never will I consent to hasten the death of an enemy in my power. Since your recovery is hopeless, you say truly you are no captive.

(*To the Surgeon.*) Is there nothing, man, that can assuage the mortal pain? for, suppress the signs of it as he may, he must feel it. Is there nothing to alleviate and allay it?

*Marcellus.* Hannibal, give me thy hand — thou hast found it and brought it me, compassion.

(*To the Surgeon.*) Go, friend; others want thy aid; several fell around me.

*Hannibal.* Recommend to your country, O Marcellus, while time permits it, reconciliation and peace with me, informing the Senate of my superiority in force, and the impossibility of resistance. The tablet is ready: let

me take off this ring — try to write, to sign it, at least. Oh, what satisfaction I feel at seeing you able to rest upon the elbow, and even to smile!

*Marcellus.* Within an hour or less, with how severe a brow would Minos say to me, "Marcellus, is this thy writing?"

Rome loses one man: she hath lost many such, and she still hath many left.

*Hannibal.* Afraid as you are of falsehood, say you this? I confess in shame the ferocity of my countrymen. Unfortunately, too, the nearer posts are occupied by Gauls, infinitely more cruel. The Numidians are so in revenge: the Gauls both in revenge and in sport. My presence is required at a distance, and I apprehend the barbarity of one or other, learning, as they must do, your refusal to execute my wishes for the common good, and feeling that by this refusal you deprive them of their country, after so long an absence.

*Marcellus.* Hannibal, thou art not dying.

*Hannibal.* What then? What mean you?

*Marcellus.* That thou mayest, and very justly, have many things yet to apprehend: I can have none. The barbarity of thy soldiers is nothing to me: mine would not dare be cruel. Hannibal is forced to be absent; and his authority goes away with his horse. On this turf lies defaced the semblance of a general; but Marcellus is yet the regulator of his army. Dost thou abdicate a power conferred on thee by thy nation? Or wouldst thou acknowledge it to have become, by thy own sole fault, less plenary than thy adversary's?

I have spoken too much: let me rest; this mantle oppresses me.

*Hannibal.* I placed my mantle on your head when the helmet was first removed, and while you were lying in the sun. Let me fold it under, and then replace the ring.

*Marcellus.* Take it, Hannibal. It was given me by a poor woman who flew to me at Syracuse, and who covered it with her hair, torn off in desperation that she had no other gift to offer. Little thought I that her gift and her words should be mine. How suddenly may the most powerful be in the situation of the most helpless! Let that ring and the mantle under my head be the exchange of guests at parting. The time may come, Hannibal, when thou (and the gods alone know whether as conqueror or conquered) mayest sit under the roof of my children, and in either case it shall serve thee. In thy adverse fortune, they will remember on whose pillow their father breathed his last; in thy prosperous (Heaven grant it may shine upon thee in some other country!) it will rejoice thee to protect them. We feel ourselves the most exempt from affliction when we relieve it, although we are then the most conscious that it may befall us.

There is one thing here which is not at the disposal of either.

*Hannibal.* What?

*Marcellus.* This body.

*Hannibal.* Whither would you be lifted? Men are ready.

*Marcellus.* I meant not so. My strength is failing. I seem to hear rather what is within than what is without. My sight and my other senses are in confusion. I would have said — This body, when a few bubbles of air shall have left it, is no more worthy of thy notice than of mine; but thy glory will not let thee refuse it to the piety of my family.

*Hannibal.* You would ask something else. I perceive an inquietude not visible till now.

*Marcellus.* Duty and Death make us think of home sometimes.

*Hannibal.* Thitherward the thoughts of the conqueror and of the conquered fly together.

*Marcellus.* Hast thou any prisoners from my escort?

*Hannibal.* A few dying lie about — and let them lie — they are Tuscans. The remainder I saw at a distance, flying, and but one brave man among them — he appeared a Roman — a youth who turned back, though wounded. They surrounded and dragged him away, spurring his horse with their swords. These Etrurians measure their courage carefully, and tack it well together before they put it on, but throw it off again with lordly ease.

Marcellus, why think about them? or does aught else disquiet your thoughts?

*Marcellus.* I have suppressed it long enough. My son — my beloved son!

*Hannibal.* Where is he? Can it be? Was he with you?

*Marcellus.* He would have shared my fate — and has not. Gods of my country! beneficent throughout life to me, in death surpassingly beneficent: I render you, for the last time, thanks.

## LEOFRIC AND GODIVA

Leofric, the Saxon Earl, is riding into Coventry with his young bride, Godiva. The story is a famous one, told among others by Tennyson. The date is before the Norman Conquest.

*Godiva.* There is a dearth in the land, my sweet Leofric! Remember how many weeks of drought we have had, even in the deep

pastures of Leicestershire; and how many Sundays we have heard the same prayers for rain, and supplications that it would please the Lord in his mercy to turn aside his anger from the poor, pining cattle. You, my dear husband, have imprisoned more than one malefactor for leaving his dead ox in the public way; and other hinds have fled before you out of the traces, in which they, and their sons and their daughters, and haply their old fathers and mothers, were dragging the abandoned wain homeward. Although we were accompanied by many brave spearmen and skilful archers, it was perilous to pass the creatures which the farm-yard dogs, driven from the hearth by the poverty of their masters, were tearing and devouring; while others, bitten and lamed, filled the air either with long and deep howls or sharp and quick barkings, as they struggled with hunger and feebleness, or were exasperated by heat and pain. Nor could the thyme from the heath, nor the bruised branches of the fir-tree, extinguish or abate the foul odor.

*Leofric.* And now, Godiva, my darling, thou art afraid we should be eaten up before we enter the gates of Coventry; or perchance that in the gardens there are no roses to greet thee, no sweet herbs for thy mat and pillow.

*Godiva.* Leofric, I have no such fears. This is the month of roses: I find them everywhere since my blessed marriage. They, and all other sweet herbs, I know not why, seem to greet me wherever I look at them, as though they knew and expected me. Surely they cannot feel that I am fond of them.

*Leofric.* O light, laughing simpleton! But what wouldst thou? I came not hither to pray; and yet if praying would satisfy thee, or remove the drought, I would ride up straightway to Saint Michael's and pray until morning.

*Godiva.* I would do the same, O Leofric! but God hath turned away his ear from holier lips than mine. Would my own dear husband hear me, if I implored him for what is easier to accomplish, — what he can do like God?

*Leofric.* How! what is it?

*Godiva.* I would not, in the first hurry of your wrath, appeal to you, my loving Lord, in behalf of these unhappy men who have offended you.

*Leofric.* Unhappy! is that all?

*Godiva.* Unhappy they must surely be, to have offended you so grievously. What a soft air breathes over us! how quiet and serene and still an evening! how calm are the heavens and the earth! — Shall none enjoy them; not even we, my Leofric? The sun is ready to set: let it never set, O Leofric, on your anger. These are not my words: they are better than mine. Should they lose their virtue from my unworthiness in uttering them?

*Leofric.* Godiva, would'st thou plead to me for rebels?

*Godiva.* They have, then, drawn the sword against you? Indeed, I knew it not.

*Leofric.* They have omitted to send me my dues, established by my ancestors, well knowing of our nuptials, and of the charges and festivities they require, and that in a season of such scarcity my own lands are insufficient.

*Godiva.* If they were starving, as they said they were ——

*Leofric.* Must I starve too? Is it not enough to lose my vassals?

*Godiva.* Enough! O God! too much! too much! May you never lose them! Give them life, peace, comfort, contentment. There are those among them who kissed me in my infancy, and who blessed me at the baptismal font. Leofric, Leofric! the first old man I meet I shall think is one of those; and I shall think on the blessing he gave, and (ah me!) on the blessing I bring back to him. My heart will bleed, will burst; and he will weep at it! he will weep, poor soul, for the wife of a cruel lord who denounces vengeance on him, who carries death into his family!

*Leofric.* We must hold solemn festivals.

*Godiva.* We must, indeed.

*Leofric.* Well, then?

*Godiva.* Is the clamorousness that succeeds the death of God's dumb creatures, are crowded halls, are slaughtered cattle, festivals? — are maddening songs, and giddy dances, and hireling praises from parti-colored coats? Can the voice of a minstrel tell us better things of ourselves than our own internal one might tell us; or can his breath make our breath softer in sleep? O my beloved! let everything be a joyance to us: it will, if we will. Sad is the day, and worse must follow, when we hear the blackbird in the garden, and do not throb with joy. But, Leofric, the high festival is strown by the servant of God upon the heart of man. It is gladness, it is thanksgiving; it is the orphan, the starveling, pressed to the bosom, and bidden as its first commandment to remember its benefactor. We will hold this festival; the guests are ready: we may keep it up for weeks, and months, and years together, and always be the happier and the richer for it. The beverage of this feast, O Leofric, is sweeter than bee or flower or vine can give us: it flows

from heaven; and in heaven will it abundantly be poured out again to him who pours it out here abundantly.

*Leofric.* Thou art wild.

*Godiva.* I have, indeed, lost myself. Some Power, some good kind Power, melts me (body and soul and voice) into tenderness and love. O my husband, we must obey it. Look upon me! look upon me! lift your sweet eyes from the ground! I will not cease to supplicate; I dare not.

*Leofric.* We may think upon it.

*Godiva.* O never say that! What! think upon goodness when you can be good? Let not the infants cry for sustenance! The mother of our blessed Lord will hear them; us never, never afterward.

*Leofric.* Here comes the Bishop: we are but one mile from the walls. Why dismountest thou? no bishop can expect it. Godiva! my honor and rank among men are humbled by this. Earl Godwin will hear of it. Up! up! the Bishop hath seen it: he urgeth his horse onward. Dost thou not hear him now upon the solid turf behind thee?

*Godiva.* Never, no, never will I rise, O Leofric, until you remit this most impious task — this tax on hard labor, on hard life.

*Leofric.* Turn round: look how the fat nag canters, as to the tune of a sinner's psalm, slow and hard-breathing. What reason or right can the people have to complain, while their bishop's steed is so sleek and well caparisoned? Inclination to change, desire to abolish old usages. — Up! up! for shame! They shall smart for it, idlers! Sir Bishop, I must blush for my young bride.

*Godiva.* My husband, my husband! will you pardon the city?

*Leofric.* Sir Bishop! I could not think you would have seen her in this plight. Will I pardon? Yea, Godiva, by the holy rood, will I pardon the city, when thou ridest naked at noontide through the streets!

*Godiva.* O my dear, cruel Leofric, where is the heart you gave me? It was not so: can mine have hardened it?

*Bishop.* Earl, thou abashest thy spouse; she turneth pale, and weepeth. Lady Godiva, peace be with thee.

*Godiva.* Thanks, holy man! peace will be with me when peace is with your city. Did you hear my Lord's cruel word?

*Bishop.* I did, lady.

*Godiva.* Will you remember it, and pray against it.

*Bishop.* Wilt *thou* forget it, daughter?

*Godiva.* I am not offended.

*Bishop.* Angel of peace and purity!

*Godiva.* But treasure it up in your heart: deem it an incense, good only when it is consumed and spent, ascending with prayer and sacrifice. And, now, what was it?

*Bishop.* Christ save us! that he will pardon the city when thou ridest naked through the streets at noon.

*Godiva.* Did he swear an oath?

*Bishop.* He sware by the holy rood.

*Godiva.* My Redeemer, thou hast heard it! save the city!

*Leofric.* We are now upon the beginning of the pavement: these are the suburbs. Let us think of feasting: we may pray afterward; to-morrow we shall rest.

*Godiva.* No judgments, then, to-morrow, Leofric?

*Leofric.* None: we will carouse.

*Godiva.* The saints of heaven have given me strength and confidence; my prayers are heard; the heart of my beloved is now softened.

*Leofric.* Ay, ay.

*Godiva.* Say, dearest Leofric, is there indeed no other hope, no other mediation?

*Leofric.* I have sworn. Beside, thou hast made me redden and turn my face away from thee, and all the knaves have seen it: this adds to the city's crime.

*Godiva.* I have blushed too, Leofric, and was not rash nor obdurate.

*Leofric.* But thou, my sweetest, art given to blushing: there is no conquering it in thee. I wish thou hadst not alighted so hastily and roughly: it hath shaken down a sheaf of thy hair. Take heed thou sit not upon it, lest it anguish thee. Well done! it mingleth now sweetly with the cloth of gold upon the saddle, running here and there, as if it had life and faculties and business, and were working thereupon some newer and cunninger device. O my beauteous Eve! there is a Paradise about thee! the world is refreshed as thou movest and breathest on it. I cannot see or think of evil where thou art. I could throw my arms even here about thee. No signs for me! no shaking of sunbeams! no reproof or frown of wonderment. — I *will* say it — now, then, for worse — I could close with my kisses thy half-open lips, ay, and those lovely and living eyes, before the people.

*Godiva.* To-morrow you shall kiss me, and they shall bless you for it. I shall be very pale, for to-night I must fast and pray.

*Leofric.* I do not hear thee; the voices of the folk are so loud under this archway.

*Godiva* (to *herself*). God help them! good kind souls! I hope they will not crowd about

me so to-morrow. O Leofric! could my name be forgotten, and yours alone remembered! But perhaps my innocence may save me from reproach; and how many as innocent are in fear and famine! No eye will open on me but fresh from tears. What a young mother for so large a family! Shall my youth harm me? Under God's hand it gives me courage. Ah! when will the morning come? Ah! when will the noon be over?

The story of Godiva, at one of whose festivals or fairs I was present in my boyhood, has always much interested me; and I wrote a poem on it, sitting, I remember, by the *square pool* at Rugby. When I showed it to the friend in whom I had most confidence, he began to scoff at the subject; and, on his reaching the last line, his laughter was loud and immoderate. This conversation has brought both laughter and stanza back to me, and the earnestness with which I entreated and implored my friend *not to tell the lads*, so heart-strickenly and desperately was I ashamed. The verses are these, if any one else should wish another laugh at me:

> In every hour, in every mood,
> O lady, it is sweet and good
> To bathe the soul in prayer;
> And, at the close of such a day,
> When we have ceased to bless and pray,
> To dream on thy long hair.

May the peppermint be still growing on the bank in that place! (Landor's note.)

## HENRY VIII. AND ANNE BOLEYN

This conversation is supposed to take place in 1537 after the condemnation of the Queen.

*Henry.* Dost thou know me, Nanny, in this yeoman's dress? 'S blood! does it require so long and vacant a stare to recollect a husband after a week or two? No tragedy-tricks with me! a scream, a sob, or thy kerchief a trifle the wetter, were enough. Why, verily the little fool faints in earnest. These whey faces, like their kinsfolk the ghosts, give us no warning. (*Sprinkling water over her.*) Hast had water enough upon thee? Take that, then: art thyself again?

*Anne.* Father of mercies! do I meet again my husband, as was my last prayer on earth? Do I behold my beloved lord — in peace — and pardoned, my partner in eternal bliss? it was his voice. I cannot see him: why cannot I? Oh why do these pangs interrupt the transports of the blessed?

*Henry.* Thou openest thy arms: faith! I came for that. Nanny, thou art a sweet slut. Thou groanest, wench: art in labor? Faith! among the mistakes of the night, I am ready to think almost that thou hast been drinking, and that I have not.

*Anne.* God preserve your Highness: grant me your forgiveness for one slight offence. My eyes were heavy; I fell asleep while I was reading. I did not know of your presence at first; and, when I did, I could not speak. I strove for utterance: I wanted no respect for my liege and husband.

*Henry.* My pretty warm nestling, thou wilt then lie! Thou wert reading, and aloud too, with thy saintly cup of water by thee, and — what! thou art still girlishly fond of those dried cherries!

*Anne.* I had no other fruit to offer your Highness the first time I saw you, and you were then pleased to invent for me some reason why they should be acceptable. I did not dry these: may I present them, such as they are? We shall have fresh next month.

*Henry.* Thou art always driving away from the discourse. One moment it suits thee to know me, another not.

*Anne.* Remember, it is hardly three months since I miscarried. I am weak, and liable to swoons.

*Henry.* Thou hast, however, thy bridal cheeks, with lustre upon them when there is none elsewhere, and obstinate lips resisting all impression; but, now thou talkest about miscarrying, who is the father of that boy?

*Anne.* The Father is yours and mine — He who hath taken him to his own home, before (like me) he could struggle or cry for it.

*Henry.* Pagan, or worse, to talk so! He did not come into the world alive: there was no baptism.

*Anne.* I thought only of our loss: my senses are confounded. I did not give him my milk, and yet I loved him tenderly; for I often fancied, had he lived, how contented and joyful he would have made you and England.

*Henry.* No subterfuges and escapes. I warrant, thou canst not say whether at my entrance thou wert waking or wandering.

*Anne.* Faintness and drowsiness came upon me suddenly.

*Henry.* Well, since thou really and truly sleepedst, what didst dream of?

*Anne.* I begin to doubt whether I did indeed sleep.

*Henry.* Ha! false one — never two sentences of truth together! But come, what didst think about, asleep or awake?

*Anne,* I thought that God had pardoned me my offences, and had received me unto him.

*Henry.* And nothing more?

*Anne.* That my prayers had been heard and my wishes were accomplishing: the angels alone can enjoy more beatitude than this.

*Henry.* Vexatious little devil! She says nothing now about me, merely from perverseness. Hast thou never thought about me, nor about thy falsehood and adultery?

*Anne.* If I had committed any kind of falsehood, in regard to you or not, I should never have rested until I had thrown myself at your feet and obtained your pardon; but, if ever I had been guilty of that other crime, I know not whether I should have dared to implore it, even of God's mercy.

*Henry.* Thou hast heretofore cast some soft glances upon Smeaton; hast thou not?

*Anne.* He taught me to play on the virginals, as you know, when I was little, and thereby to please your Highness.

*Henry.* And Brereton and Norris — what have they taught thee?

*Anne.* They are your servants, and trusty ones.

*Henry.* Has not Weston told thee plainly that he loved thee?

*Anne.* Yes; and ——

*Henry.* What didst thou?

*Anne.* I defied him.

*Henry.* Is that all?

*Anne.* I could have done no more if he had told me that he hated me. Then, indeed, I should have incurred more justly the reproaches of your Highness: I should have smiled.

*Henry.* We have proofs abundant: the fellows shall one and all confront thee. — Ay, clap thy hands and kiss thy sleeve, harlot!

*Anne.* Oh that so great a favor is vouchsafed me! My honor is secure; my husband will be happy again; he will see my innocence.

*Henry.* Give me now an account of the moneys thou hast received from me within these nine months. I want them not back: they are letters of gold in record of thy guilt. Thou hast had no fewer than fifteen thousand pounds in that period, without even thy asking; what hast done with it, wanton?

*Anne.* I have regularly placed it out to interest.

*Henry.* Where? I demand of thee.

*Anne.* Among the needy and ailing. My Lord Archbishop has the account of it, sealed by him weekly. I also had a copy myself; those who took away my papers may easily find it; for there are few others, and they lie open.

*Henry.* Think on my munificence to thee; recollect who made thee. Dost sigh for what thou hast lost?

*Anne.* I do, indeed.

*Henry.* I never thought thee ambitious; but thy vices creep out one by one.

*Anne.* I do not regret that I have been a queen and am no longer one; nor that my innocence is called in question by those who never knew me; but I lament that the good people who loved me so cordially, hate and curse me; that those who pointed me out to their daughters for imitation check them when they speak about me; and that he whom next to God I have served with most devotion is my accuser.

*Henry.* Wast thou conning over something in that dingy book for thy defence? Come, tell me, what wast thou reading?

*Anne.* This ancient chronicle. I was looking for some one in my own condition, and must have missed the page. Surely in so many hundred years there shall have been other young maidens, first too happy for exaltation, and after too exalted for happiness — not, perchance, doomed to die upon a scaffold, by those they ever honored and served faithfully; that, indeed, I did not look for nor think of; but my heart was bounding for any one I could love and pity. She would be unto me as a sister dead and gone; but hearing me, seeing me, consoling me, and being consoled. O my husband! it is so heavenly a thing ——

*Henry.* To whine and whimper, no doubt, is vastly heavenly.

*Anne.* I said not so; but those, if there be any such, who never weep, have nothing in them of heavenly or of earthly. The plants, the trees, the very rocks and unsunned clouds, show us at least the semblances of weeping; and there is not an aspect of the globe we live on, nor of the waters and skies around it, without a reference and a similitude to our joys or sorrows.

*Henry.* I do not remember that notion anywhere. Take care no enemy rake out of it something of materialism. Guard well thy empty hot brain; it may hatch more evil. As for those odd words, I myself would fain see no great harm in them, knowing that grief and frenzy strike out many things which would else lie still, and neither spirt nor sparkle. I also know that thou hast never read any thing but Bible and history — the two worst books in the world for young people, and the most certain to lead astray both prince and subject. For which reason I have interdicted and entirely put down the one, and will (by the blessing of the Virgin and of holy Paul) commit the other to a rigid censor. If it behooves us kings to enact what our people shall eat and drink — of which the most unruly and rebellious spirit can entertain no doubt — greatly more doth it behoove us to examine what they read and think. The body is moved according to the mind and will; we

must take care that the movement be a right one, on pain of God's anger in this life and the next.

*Anne.* O my dear husband! it must be a naughty thing, indeed, that makes him angry beyond remission. Did you ever try how pleasant it is to forgive any one? There is nothing else wherein we can resemble God perfectly and easily.

*Henry.* Resemble God perfectly and easily! Do vile creatures talk thus of the Creator?

*Anne.* No, Henry, when his creatures talk thus of him, they are no longer vile creatures! When they know that he is good, they love him; and, when they love him, they are good themselves. O Henry! my husband and King! the judgments of our Heavenly Father are righteous; on this, surely, we must think alike.

*Henry.* And what, then? Speak out; again I command thee, speak plainly! thy tongue was not so torpid but this moment. Art ready? Must I wait?

*Anne.* If any doubt remains upon your royal mind of your equity in this business: should it haply seem possible to you that passion or prejudice, in yourself or another, may have warped so strong an understanding — do but supplicate the Almighty to strengthen and enlighten it, and he will hear you.

*Henry.* What! thou wouldst fain change thy quarters, ay?

*Anne.* My spirit is detached and ready, and I shall change them shortly, whatever your Highness may determine.

*Henry.* Yet thou appearest hale and resolute and (they tell me) smirkest and smilest to everybody.

*Anne.* The withered leaf catches the sun sometimes, little as it can profit by it; and I have heard stories of the breeze in other climates that sets in when daylight is about to close, and how constant it is, and how refreshing. My heart, indeed, is now sustained strangely; it became the more sensibly so from that time forward, when power and grandeur and all things terrestrial were sunk from sight. Every act of kindness in those about me gives me satisfaction and pleasure, such as I did not feel formerly. I was worse before God chastened me; yet I was never an ingrate. What pains have I taken to find out the village-girls who placed their posies in my chamber ere I arose in the morning! How gladly would I have recompensed the forester who lit up a brake on my birthnight, which else had warmed him half the winter! But these are times past: I was not Queen of England.

*Henry.* Nor adulterous, nor heretical.

*Anne.* God be praised!

*Henry.* Learned saint! thou knowest nothing of the lighter, but perhaps canst inform me about the graver, of them.

*Anne.* Which may it be, my liege?

*Henry.* Which may it be? Pestilence! I marvel that the walls of this tower do not crack around thee at such impiety.

*Anne.* I would be instructed by the wisest of theologians: such is your Highness.

*Henry.* Are the sins of the body, foul as they are, comparable to those of the soul?

*Anne.* When they are united, they must be worse.

*Henry.* Go on, go on: thou pushest thy own breast against the sword. God hath deprived thee of thy reason for thy punishment. I must hear more: proceed, I charge thee.

*Anne.* An aptitude to believe one thing rather than another, from ignorance or weakness, or from the more persuasive manner of the teacher, or from his purity of life, or from the strong impression of a particular text at a particular time, and various things beside, may influence and decide our opinion; and the hand of the Almighty, let us hope, will fall gently on human fallibility.

*Henry.* Opinion in matters of faith! rare wisdom! rare religion! Troth, Anne! thou hast well sobered me. I came rather warmly and lovingly; but these light ringlets, by the holy rood, shall not shade this shoulder much longer. Nay, do not start; I tap it for the last time, my sweetest. If the Church permitted it, thou shouldst set forth on thy long journey with the eucharist between thy teeth, however loath.

*Anne.* Love your Elizabeth, my honored lord, and God bless you! She will soon forget to call me. Do not chide her: think how young she is.

Could I, could I kiss her, but once again! it would comfort my heart, — or break it.

## BOSSUET AND THE DUCHESS DE FONTANGES

This conversation is supposed to occur about 1680. The Duchess de Fontanges was a mistress of Louis XIV; Landor quotes a remark of the Abbé du Choisy, that she was *belle comme un ange, mais sotte comme un panier* ("beautiful as an angel, but stupid as a post" — literally, basket).

*Bossuet.* Mademoiselle, it is the King's desire that I compliment you on the elevation you have attained.

*Fontanges.* O monseigneur, I know very well what you mean. His Majesty is kind and polite to everybody. The last thing he said to me was, "Angélique! do not forget to compliment Monseigneur the Bishop on the dignity I have conferred upon him, of almoner to the Dauphiness. I desired the appointment for him only that he might be of rank sufficient to confess you, now you are Duchess. Let him be your confessor, my little girl. He has fine manners."

*Bossuet.* I dare not presume to ask you, mademoiselle, what was your gracious reply to the condescension of our royal master.

*Fontanges.* Oh! yes you may! I told him I was almost sure I should be ashamed of confessing such naughty things to a person of high rank, who writes like an angel.

*Bossuet.* The observation was inspired, mademoiselle, by your goodness and modesty.

*Fontanges.* You are so agreeable a man, monseigneur, I will confess to you directly, if you like.

*Bossuet.* Have you brought yourself to a proper frame of mind, young lady?

*Fontanges.* What is that?

*Bossuet.* Do you hate sin?

*Fontanges.* Very much.

*Bossuet.* Are you resolved to leave it off?

*Fontanges.* I have left it off entirely since the King began to love me. I have never said a spiteful word of anybody since.

*Bossuet.* In your opinion, mademoiselle, are there no other sins than malice?

*Fontanges.* I never stole anything; I never committed adultery; I never coveted my neighbor's wife; I never killed any person, though several have told me they should die for me.

*Bossuet.* Vain, idle talk! Did you listen to it?

*Fontanges.* Indeed I did, with both ears; it seemed so funny.

*Bossuet.* You have something to answer for, then.

*Fontanges.* No, indeed, I have not, monseigneur. I have asked many times after them, and found they were all alive; which mortified me.

*Bossuet.* So, then! you would really have them die for you?

*Fontanges.* Oh, no, no! but I wanted to see whether they were in earnest, or told me fibs; for, if they told me fibs I would never trust them again. I do not care about them; for the King told me I was only to mind *him.*

*Bossuet.* Lowest and highest, we all owe to his Majesty our duty and submission.

*Fontanges.* I am sure he has mine; so you need not blame me or question me on that. At first, indeed, when he entered the folding-doors, I was in such a flurry I could hear my heart beat across the chamber; by degrees I cared little about the matter; and at last, when I grew used to it, I liked it rather than not. Now, if this is not confession, what is?

*Bossuet.* We must abstract the soul from every low mundane thought. Do you hate the world, mademoiselle?

*Fontanges.* A good deal of it; all Picardy, for example, and all Sologne; nothing is uglier, — and, oh my life! What frightful men and women!

*Bossuet.* I would say, in plain language, do you hate the flesh and the Devil?

*Fontanges.* Who does not hate the Devil? If you will hold my hand the while, I will tell him so. — I hate you, beast! There now. As for flesh, I never could bear a fat man. Such people can neither dance nor hunt, nor do anything that I know of.

*Bossuet.* Mademoiselle Marie-Angélique de Scoraille de Rousille, Duchess de Fontanges! do you hate titles and dignities and yourself?

*Fontanges.* Myself! does any one hate me? Why should I be the first? Hatred is the worst thing in the world: it makes one so very ugly.

*Bossuet.* To love God, we must hate ourselves. We must detest our bodies, if we would save our souls.

*Fontanges.* That is hard; how can I do it? I see nothing so detestable in mine! Do you? To love is easier. I love God whenever I think of him, he has been so very good to me; but I cannot hate myself, if I would. As God hath not hated me, why should I? Beside, it was he who made the King to love me; for I heard you say in a sermon that the hearts of kings are in his rule and governance. As for titles and dignities, I do not care much about them while His Majesty loves me, and calls me his Angélique. They make people more civil about us; and therefore it must be a simpleton who hates or disregards them, and a hypocrite who pretends it. I am glad to be a duchess. Manon and Lisette have never tied my garter so as to hurt me since, nor has the mischievous old La Grange said anything cross or bold; on the contrary, she told me what a fine color and what a plumpness it gave me. Would not you rather be a duchess than a waiting-maid or a nun, if the King gave you your choice?

*Bossuet.* Pardon me, mademoiselle, I am confounded at the levity of your question.

*Fontanges.* I am in earnest, as you see.

*Bossuet.* Flattery will come before you in other and more dangerous forms; you will be commended for excellences which do not belong to you; and this you will find as injurious to your repose as to your virtue. An ingenuous mind feels in unmerited praise the bitterest reproof. If you reject it, you are unhappy; if you accept it, you are undone. The compliments of a king are of themselves sufficient to pervert your intellect.

*Fontanges.* There you are mistaken twice over. It is not my person that pleases him so greatly: it is my spirit, my wit, my talents, my genius, and that very thing which you have mentioned — what was it? my intellect. He never complimented me the least upon my beauty. Others have said that I am the most beautiful young creature under heaven; a blossom of Paradise, a nymph, an angel; worth (let me whisper it in your ear — do I lean too hard?) a thousand Montespans. But His Majesty never said more on the occasion than that I was *imparagonable!* (what is that?) and that he adored me; holding my hand and sitting quite still, when he might have romped with me and kissed me.

*Bossuet.* I would aspire to the glory of converting you.

*Fontanges.* You may do anything with me but convert me; you must not do that; I am Catholic born. M. de Turenne and Mademoiselle de Duras were heretics; you did right there. The King told the chancellor that he prepared them, that the business was arranged for you, and that you had nothing to do but to get ready the arguments and responses, which you did gallantly, — did not you? And yet Mademoiselle de Duras was very awkward for a long while afterward in crossing herself, and was once remarked to beat her breast in the Litany with the points of two fingers at a time, when every one is taught to use only the second, whether it has a ring upon it or not. I am sorry she did so; for people might think her insincere in her conversion, and pretend that she kept a finger for each religion.

*Bossuet.* It would be as uncharitable to doubt the conviction of Mademoiselle de Duras as that of M. le Maréchal.

*Fontanges.* I have heard some fine verses, I can assure you, monseigneur, in which you are called the conqueror of Turenne. I should like to have been his conqueror myself, he was so great a man. I understand that you have lately done a much more difficult thing.

*Bossuet.* To what do you refer, mademoiselle?

*Fontanges.* That you have overcome Quietism. Now, in the name of wonder, how could you manage that?

*Bossuet.* By the grace of God.

*Fontanges.* Yes, indeed; but never until now did God give any preacher so much of his grace as to subdue this pest.

*Bossuet.* It has appeared among us but lately.

*Fontanges.* Oh, dear me! I have always been subject to it dreadfully, from a child.

*Bossuet.* Really! I never heard so.

*Fontanges.* I checked myself as well as I could, although they constantly told me I looked well in it.

*Bossuet.* In what, mademoiselle?

*Fontanges.* In Quietism; that is, when I fell asleep at sermon-time. I am ashamed that such a learned and pious man as M. de Fénélon should incline to it,[1] as they say he does.

*Bossuet.* Mademoiselle, you quite mistake the matter.

*Fontanges.* Is not then M. de Fénélon thought a very pious and learned person?

*Bossuet.* And justly.

*Fontanges.* I have read a great way in a romance he has begun, about a knight-errant in search of a father. The King says there are many such about his court; but I never saw them nor heard of them before. The Marchioness de la Motte, his relative, brought it to me, written out in a charming hand, as much as the copy-book would hold; and I got through, I know not how far. If he had gone on with the nymphs in the grotto, I never should have been tired of him; but he quite forgot his own story, and left them at once; in a hurry (I suppose) to set out upon his mission to Saintonge in the *pays de d'Aunis*, where the King has promised him a famous *heretic-hunt.* He is, I do assure you, a wonderful creature: he understands so much Latin and Greek, and knows all the tricks of the sorceresses. Yet you keep him under.

*Bossuet.* Mademoiselle, if you really have anything to confess, and if you desire that I should have the honor of absolving you, it

1 The opinion of Molinos on Mysticism and Quietism had begun to spread abroad: but Fénélon, who had acquired already a very high celebrity for eloquence, had not yet written on the subject. We may well suppose that Bossuet was among the earliest assailants of a system which he afterwards attacked so vehemently. The stormier superstition swept away the more vapory. (Landor's note.)

would be better to proceed in it, than to oppress me with unmerited eulogies on my humble labors.

*Fontanges.* You must first direct me, monseigneur: I have nothing particular. The King assures me there is no harm whatever in his love toward me.

*Bossuet.* That depends on your thoughts at the moment. If you abstract the mind from the body, and turn your heart toward heaven ——

*Fontanges.* O monseigneur, I always did so — every time but once. You quite make me blush. Let us converse about something else, or I shall grow too serious, just as you made me the other day at the funeral sermon. And now let me tell you, my lord, you compose such pretty funeral sermons, I hope I shall have the pleasure of hearing you preach nine.

*Bossuet.* Rather let us hope, mademoiselle, that the hour is yet far distant when so melancholy a service will be performed for you. May he who is unborn be the sad announcer of your departure hence![1] May he indicate to those around him many virtues not perhaps yet full-blown in you, and point triumphantly to many faults and foibles checked by you in their early growth, and lying dead on the open road you shall have left behind you! To me the painful duty will, I trust, be spared: I am advanced in age; you are a child.

*Fontanges.* Oh, no! I am seventeen.

*Bossuet.* I should have supposed you younger by two years at least. But do you collect nothing from your own reflection, which raises so many in my breast? You think it possible that I, aged as I am, may preach a sermon on your funeral. Alas, it is so! such things have been. There is, however, no funeral so sad to follow as the funeral of our own youth, which we have been pampering with fond desires, ambitious hopes, and all the bright berries that hang in poisonous clusters over the path of life.

*Fontanges.* I never minded them: I like peaches better; and one a day is quite enough for me.

*Bossuet.* We say that our days are few; and, saying it, we say too much. Marie-Angélique, we have but one: the past are not ours, and who can promise us the future? This in which we live is ours only while we live in it; the next moment may strike it off from us; the next sentence I would utter may be broke and fall between us.[1] The beauty that has made a thousand hearts to beat at one instant, at the succeeding has been without pulse and color, without admirer, friend, companion, follower. She by whose eyes the march of victory shall have been directed, whose name shall have animated armies at the extremities of the earth, drops into one of its crevices and mingles with its dust. Duchess de Fontanges! think on this! Lady! so live as to think on it undisturbed!

*Fontanges.* O God! I am quite alarmed. Do not talk thus gravely. It is in vain that you speak to me in so sweet a voice. I am frightened even at the rattle of the beads about my neck; take them off, and let us talk on other things. What was it that dropped on the floor as you were speaking? It seemed to shake the room, though it sounded like a pin or button.

*Bossuet.* Never mind it: leave it there; I pray you, I implore you, madame!

*Fontanges.* Why do you rise? Why do you run? Why not let me? I am nimbler. So your ring fell from your hand, my Lord Bishop! How quick you are! Could not you have trusted me to pick it up?

*Bossuet.* Madame is too condescending; had this happened, I should have been overwhelmed with confusion. My hand is shriveled; the ring has ceased to fit it. A mere accident may draw us into perdition; a mere accident may bestow on us the means of grace. A pebble has moved you more than my words.

*Fontanges.* It pleases me vastly; I admire rubies. I will ask the King for one exactly like it. This is the time he usually comes in from the chase. I am sorry you cannot be present to hear how prettily I shall ask him; but that is impossible, you know; for I shall do it just when I am certain he would give me anything. He said so himself; he said but yesterday, "Such a sweet creature is worth a world," and no actor on the stage was more like a king than his Majesty was when he spoke it, if he had but kept his wig and robe on. And yet you know he is rather stiff and wrinkled for so great a monarch;

1 Bossuet was in his fifty-fourth year; Mlle. de Fontanges died in child-bed the year following; he survived her twenty-three. (Landor's note.)

1 Though Bossuet was capable of uttering and even of feeling such a sentiment, his conduct towards Fénélon, the fairest apparition that Christianity ever presented, was ungenerous and unjust.

While the diocese of Cambray was ravaged by Louis, it was spared by Marlborough; who said to the Archbishop that, if he was sorry he had not taken Cambray, it was chiefly because he lost for a time the pleasure of visiting so great a man. Peterborough, the next of our generals in glory, paid his respects to him some years afterward. (Landor's note.)

and his eyes, I am afraid, are beginning to fail him, he looks so close at things.

*Bossuet.* Mademoiselle, such is the duty of a prince who desires to conciliate our regard and love.

*Fontanges.* Well, I think so too, though I did not like it in him at first. I am sure he will order the ring for me, and I will confess to you with it upon my finger. But first I must be cautious and particular to know of him how much it is his royal will that I should say.

## THE EMPRESS CATHARINE AND PRINCESS DASHKOF

Czar Peter III was assassinated on July 17, 1762. Landor notes: "It is unnecessary to inform the generality of readers that Catharine was not present at the murder of her husband . . . our business is character."

*Catharine.* Into his heart! into his heart! If he escapes, we perish.

Do you think, Dashkof, they can hear me through the double door? Yes; hark! they heard me: they have done it.

What bubbling and gurgling! he groaned but once.

Listen! his blood is busier now than it ever was before. I should not have thought it could have splashed so loud upon the floor, although our bed, indeed, is rather of the highest.

Put your ear against the lock.

*Dashkof.* I hear nothing.

*Catharine.* My ears are quicker than yours, and know these notes better. Let me come. — Hear nothing! You did not wait long enough, nor with coolness and patience. There! — there again! The drops are now like lead: every half-minute they penetrate the eider-down and the mattress. — How now! which of these fools has brought his dog with him? What tramping and lapping! the creature will carry the marks all about the palace with his feet and muzzle.

*Dashkof.* Oh, heavens!

*Catharine.* Are you afraid?

*Dashkof.* There is a horror that surpasses fear, and will have none of it. I knew not this before.

*Catharine.* You turn pale and tremble. You should have supported me, in case I had required it.

*Dashkof.* I thought only of the tyrant. Neither in life nor in death could any one of these miscreants make me tremble. But the husband slain by his wife! — I saw not into my heart; I looked not into it, and it chastises me.

*Catharine.* Dashkof, are you then really unwell?

*Dashkof.* What will Russia, what will Europe, say?

*Catharine.* Russia has no more voice than a whale. She may toss about in her turbulence; but my artillery (for now, indeed, I can safely call it mine) shall stun and quiet her.

*Dashkof.* God grant ——

*Catharine.* I cannot but laugh at thee, my pretty Dashkof! God grant, forsooth! He has granted all we wanted from him at present — the safe removal of this odious Peter.

*Dashkof.* Yet Peter loved *you;* and even the worst husband must leave, surely, the recollection of some sweet moments. The sternest must have trembled, both with apprehension and with hope, at the first alteration in the health of his consort; at the first promise of true union, imperfect without progeny. Then there are thanks rendered together to heaven, and satisfactions communicated, and infant words interpreted; and when the one has failed to pacify the sharp cries of babyhood, pettish and impatient as sovereignty itself, the success of the other in calming it, and the unenvied triumph of this exquisite ambition, and the calm gazes that it wins upon it.

*Catharine.* Are these, my sweet friend, your lessons from the Stoic school? Are not they, rather, the pale-faced reflections of some kind epithalamiast[1] from Livonia or Bessarabia? Come, come away. I am to know nothing at present of the deplorable occurrence. Did not you wish his death?

*Dashkof.* It is not his death that shocks me.

*Catharine.* I understand you: beside, you said as much before.

*Dashkof.* I fear for your renown.

*Catharine.* And for your own good name — ay, Dashkof!

*Dashkof.* He was not, nor did I ever wish him to be, my friend.

*Catharine.* You hated him.

*Dashkof.* Even hatred may be plucked up too roughly.

*Catharine.* Europe shall be informed of my reasons, if she should ever find out that I countenanced the conspiracy. She shall be persuaded that her repose made the step necessary; that my own life was in danger; that I fell upon my knees to soften the con-

[1] Maker of a marriage-ode.

spirators; that, only when I had fainted, the horrible deed was done. She knows already that Peter was always ordering new exercises and uniforms; and my ministers can evince at the first audience my womanly love of peace.

*Dashkof.* Europe may be more easily subjugated than duped.

*Catharine.* She shall be both, God willing.

*Dashkof.* The majesty of thrones will seem endangered by this open violence.

*Catharine.* The majesty of thrones is never in jeopardy by those who sit upon them. A sovereign may cover one with blood more safely than a subject can pluck a feather out of the cushion. It is only when the people does the violence that we hear an ill report of it. Kings poison and stab one another in pure legitimacy. Do your republican ideas revolt from such a doctrine?

*Dashkof.* I do not question this right of theirs, and never will oppose their exercise of it. But if you prove to the people how easy a matter it is to extinguish an emperor, and how pleasantly and prosperously we may live after it, is it not probable that they also will now and then try the experiment; particularly, if any one in Russia should hereafter hear of glory and honor, and how immortal are these by the consent of mankind, in all countries and ages, in him who releases the world, or any part of it, from a lawless and ungovernable despot? The chances of escape are many, and the greater if he should have no accomplices. Of his renown there is no doubt at all: that is placed above chance and beyond time, by the sword he hath exercised so righteously.

*Catharine.* True; but we must reason like democrats no longer. Republicanism is the best thing we can have, when we cannot have power; but no one ever held the two together. I am now autocrat.

*Dashkof.* Truly, then, may I congratulate you. The dignity is the highest a mortal can attain.

*Catharine.* I know and feel it.

*Dashkof.* I wish you always may.

*Catharine.* I doubt not the stability of power: I can make constant both fortune and love. My Dashkof smiles at this conceit: she has here the same advantage, and does not envy her friend, even the autocracy.

*Dashkof.* Indeed I do, and most heartily.

*Catharine.* How!

*Dashkof.* I know very well what those intended who first composed the word; but they blundered egregiously. In spite of them, it signifies power over oneself — of all power the most enviable, and the least consistent with power over others.

I hope and trust there is no danger to you from any member of the council-board inflaming the guards or other soldiery.

*Catharine.* The members of the council-board did not sit *at* it, but *upon* it, and their tactics were performed crosslegged. What partisans are to be dreaded of that commander-in-chief whose chief command is over pantaloons and facings, whose utmost glory is perched on loops and feathers, and who fancies that battles are to be won rather by pointing the hat than the cannon?

*Dashkof.* Peter was not insensible to glory; few men are: but wiser heads than his have been perplexed in the road to it, and many have lost it by their ardor to attain it. I have always said that, unless we devote ourselves to the public good, we may perhaps be celebrated; but it is beyond the power of fortune, or even of genius, to exalt us above the dust.

*Catharine.* Dashkof, you are a sensible, sweet creature; but rather too romantic on *principle*, and rather too visionary on glory. I shall always both esteem and love you; but no other woman in Europe will be great enough to endure you, and you will really put the men *hors de combat.* Thinking is an enemy to beauty, and no friend to tenderness. Men can ill brook it one in another; in women it renders them what they would fain call scornful (vain assumption of high prerogative!), and what you would find bestial and outrageous. As for my reputation, which I know is dear to you, I can purchase all the best writers in Europe with a snuff-box each, and all the remainder with its contents. Not a gentleman of the Academy but is enchanted by a toothpick, if I deign to send it him. A brilliant makes me Semiramis; a watch-chain, Venus; a ring, Juno. Voltaire is my friend.

*Dashkof.* He was Frederick's.

*Catharine.* I shall be the *Pucelle*[1] of Russia. No! I had forgotten; he has treated her scandalously.

*Dashkof.* Does your Majesty value the flatteries of a writer who ridicules the most virtuous and glorious of his nation; who crouched before that monster of infamy, Louis XV, and that worse monster, the king his predecessor? He reviled, with every indignity and indecency, the woman who rescued France, and who alone, of all that ever led the armies of that kingdom, made

1 Voltaire had written the Epic of *La Pucelle* (the Maid of Orleans).

its conquerors — the English — tremble. Its monarchs and marshals cried and ran like capons, flapping their fine crests from wall to wall, and cackling at one breath defiance and surrender. The village girl drew them back into battle, and placed the heavens themselves against the enemies of Charles. She seemed supernatural: the English recruits deserted; they would not fight against God.

*Catharine.* Fools and bigots!

*Dashkof.* The whole world contained none other, excepting those who fed upon them. The Maid of Orleans was pious and sincere: her life asserted it; her death confirmed it. Glory to her, Catharine, if you love glory. Detestation to him who has profaned the memory of this most holy martyr, the guide and avenger of her king, the redeemer and savior of her country.

*Catharine.* Be it so; but Voltaire buoys me up above some impertinent, troublesome qualms.

*Dashkof.* If Deism had been prevalent in Europe, he would have been the champion of Christianity; and if the French had been Protestants, he would have shed tears upon the papal slipper. He buoys up no one: for he gives no one hope. He may amuse: dulness itself must be amused, indeed, by the versatility and brilliancy of his wit.

*Catharine.* While I was meditating on the great action I have now so happily accomplished, I sometimes thought his wit feeble. This idea, no doubt, originated from the littleness of everything in comparison with my undertaking.

*Dashkof.* Alas! we lose much when we lose the capacity of being delighted by men of genius, and gain little when we are forced to run to them for incredulity.

*Catharine.* I shall make some use of my philosopher at Ferney.[1] I detest him as much as you do; but where will you find me another who writes so pointedly? You really, then, fancy that people care for truth! Innocent Dashkof! Believe me, there is nothing so delightful in life as to find a liar in a person of repute. Have you never heard good folks rejoicing at it? Or, rather, can you mention to me any one who has not been in raptures when he could communicate such glad tidings? The goutiest man would go on foot without a crutch to tell his friend of it at midnight; and would cross the Neva for the purpose, when he doubted whether the ice would bear him. Men in general are so weak in truth that they are obliged to put their bravery under it to prop it. Why do they pride themselves, think you, on their courage, when the bravest of them is by many degrees less courageous than a mastiff-bitch in the straw? It is only that they may be rogues without hearing it, and make their fortunes without rendering an account of them.

Now we chat again as we used to do. Your spirits and your enthusiasm have returned. Courage, my sweet Dashkof; do not begin to sigh again. We never can want husbands while we are young and lively. Alas! I cannot always be so. Heigho! But serfs and preferment will do; none shall refuse me at ninety — Paphos or Tobolsk.[1]

Have not you a song for me?

*Dashkof.* German or Russian?

*Catharine.* Neither, neither. Some frightful word might drop — might remind me — no, nothing shall remind me. French, rather: French songs are the liveliest in the world.

Is the rouge off my face?

*Dashkof.* It is rather in streaks and mottles; excepting just under the eyes, where it sits as it should do.

*Catharine.* I am heated and thirsty: I cannot imagine how. I think we have not yet taken our coffee. Was it so strong? What am I dreaming of? I could eat only a slice of melon at breakfast; my duty urged me *then;* and dinner is yet to come. Remember, I am to faint at the midst of it when the intelligence comes in, or rather when, in despite of every effort to conceal it from me, the awful truth has flashed upon my mind. Remember, too, you are to catch me, and to cry for help, and to tear those fine flaxen hairs which we laid up together on the toilet; and we are both to be as inconsolable as we can be for the life of us. Not now, child, not now. Come, sing. I know not how to fill up the interval. Two long hours yet! — how stupid and tiresome! I wish all things of the sort could be done and be over in a day. They are mightily disagreeable when by nature one is not cruel. People little know my character. I have the tenderest heart upon earth: I am courageous, but I am full of weaknesses. I possess in perfection the higher part of men, and — to a friend I may say it — the most amiable part of women. Ho, ho! at last you smile: now your thoughts upon that.

*Dashkof.* I have heard fifty men swear it.

*Catharine.* They lied, the knaves! I hardly knew them by sight. We were talk-

1 Voltaire's place of residence.

1 They may choose the home of Venus or exile in Siberia.

ing of the sad necessity. — Ivan must follow next: he is heir to the throne. I have a wild, impetuous, pleasant little *protégé*, who shall attempt to rescue him. I will have him persuaded and incited to it, and assured of pardon on the scaffold. He can never know the trick we play him; unless his head, like a bottle of Bordeaux, ripens its contents in the sawdust. Orders are given that Ivan be despatched at the first disturbance in the precincts of the castle; in short, at the fire of the sentry. But not now, — another time: two such scenes together, and without some interlude, would perplex people.

I thought we spoke of singing: do not make me wait, my dearest creature! Now cannot you sing as usual, without smoothing your dove's-throat with your handkerchief, and taking off your necklace? Give it me, then; give it me. I will hold it for you: I must play with something.

Sing, sing; I am quite impatient.

## THOMAS HOOD (1799–1845)

Thomas Hood was a magazine editor, an illustrator, and a writer of light verses, who, in the face of hardship and illness, produced some genuinely humorous lyrics. He is known especially, however, for his serious poems which illustrate the sympathy and restrained tenderness that was typical of the man.

### THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS

"Drowned! Drowned!" — Hamlet

One more Unfortunate,
  Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
  Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
  Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly,
  Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements;
Whilst the wave constantly
  Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
  Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully;
Think of her mournfully,
  Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her,
All that remains of her
  Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
  Rash and undutiful:
Past all dishonor,
Death has left on her
  Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
  One of Eve's family —
Wipe those poor lips of hers
  Oozing so clammily.

Loop up her tresses
  Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses
  Where was her home?

Who was her father?
  Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
  Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
  Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
  Under the sun!
O, it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
  Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
  Feelings had changed:
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
  Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
  With many a light
From window to casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood with amazement,
  Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
  Made her tremble and shiver;
But not the dark arch,
  Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
  Swift to be hurled —
Anywhere, anywhere
  Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
  The rough river ran, —
Over the brink of it,
Picture it — think of it,
  Dissolute Man!
Lave in it, drink of it,
  Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
  Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly,
  Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen so rigidly,
  Decently, kindly,
Smooth and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
  Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
  Thro' muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
  Fixed on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurred by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
  Into her rest. —
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
  Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,
  Her evil behavior,
And leaving with meekness,
  Her sins to her Savior!

1843

## THE SONG OF THE SHIRT

With fingers weary and worn,
  With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
  Plying her needle and thread —
Stitch! stitch! stitch!
  In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch
  She sang the "Song of the Shirt."

"Work! work! work!
  While the cock is crowing aloof!
And work — work — work,
  Till the stars shine through the roof!
It's Oh! to be a slave
  Along with the barbarous Turk,
Where woman has never a soul to save,
  If this is Christian work!

"Work — work — work,
  Till the brain begins to swim;
Work — work — work,
  Till the eyes are heavy and dim!
Seam, and gusset, and band,
  Band, and gusset, and seam,
Till over the buttons I fall asleep,
  And sew them on in a dream!

"Oh, men, with sisters dear!
  Oh, men, with mothers and wives!
It is not linen you're wearing out
  But human creatures' lives!
Stitch — stitch — stitch,
  In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
Sewing at once, with a double thread,
  A Shroud as well as a Shirt.

"But why do I talk of Death?
  That phantom of grisly bone,
I hardly fear its terrible shape,
  It seems so like my own —
It seems so like my own,
  Because of the fasts I keep;
Oh, God! that bread should be so dear,
  And flesh and blood so cheap!

"Work — work — work!
  My labor never flags;
And what are its wages? A bed of straw,
  A crust of bread — and rags.
That shattered roof — this naked floor —
  A table — a broken chair —
And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank
  For sometimes falling there!

"Work — work — work!
  From weary chime to chime,
Work — work — work,
  As prisoners work for crime!
Band, and gusset, and seam,
  Seam, and gusset, and band,
Till the heart is sick, and the brain benumbed,
  As well as the weary hand.

"Work — work — work,
In the dull December light,
And work — work — work,
When the weather is warm and bright, —
While underneath the eaves
The brooding swallows cling
As if to show me their sunny backs
And twit me with the spring.

"Oh! but to breathe the breath
Of the cowslip and primrose sweet,
With the sky above my head,
And the grass beneath my feet;
For only one short hour
To feel as I used to feel,
Before I knew the woes of want
And the walk that costs a meal.

"Oh! but for one short hour!
A respite however brief!
No blessed leisure for Love or Hope,
But only time for Grief!
A little weeping would ease my heart,
But in their briny bed
My tears must stop, for every drop
Hinders needle and thread!"

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread —
Stitch! stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch, —
Would that its tone could reach the Rich! —
She sang this "Song of the Shirt!"

1843

## THE DEATH BED

We watched her breathing thro' the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied —
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed — she had
Another morn than ours.

## MORNING MEDITATIONS

Let Taylor preach upon a morning breezy,
How well to rise while nights and larks are flying —
For my part getting up seems not so easy
By half as *lying*.

What if the lark does carol in the sky,
Soaring beyond the sight to find him out —
Wherefore am I to rise at such a fly?
I'm not a trout.

Talk not to me of bees and such like hums,
The smell of sweet herbs at the morning prime —
Only lie long enough, and bed becomes
A bed of *time*.

To me Dan Phœbus and his car are nought,
His steeds that paw impatiently about, —
Let them enjoy, say I, as horses ought,
The first turn-out!

Right beautiful the dewy meads appear
Besprinkled by the rosy-fingered girl;
What then, — if I prefer my pillow-beer
To early pearl?

My stomach is not ruled by other men's,
And grumbling for a reason, quaintly begs
Wherefore should master rise before the hens
Have laid their eggs?

Why from a comfortable pillow start
To see faint flushes in the east awaken?
A fig, I say, for any streaky part,
Excepting bacon.

An early riser Mr. Gray has drawn,
Who used to haste the dewy grass among,
"To meet the sun upon the upland lawn" —
Well — he died young.

With charwomen such early hours agree,
And sweeps that earn betimes their bit and sup;
But I'm no climbing boy, and needs not be
All up — all up!

So here I'll lie, my morning calls deferring,
Till something nearer to the stroke of noon; —
A man that's fond precociously of *stirring*,
Must be a spoon.

# CHARLES LAMB (1775–1834)

Charles Lamb was born February 10, 1775, in the Temple, London. His father was the truste servant of a barrister who had his residence in that ancient abode of the law. Charles was th youngest of several children. He was sent to school at Christ's Hospital, where he knew Cole ridge and Leigh Hunt; and, at the age of seventeen, was appointed to a clerkship in the East Indi House. His older sister, Mary, was subject to fits of insanity in one of which she killed her mothe and wounded her father. After her release from the asylum Charles and Mary Lamb took up thei life together, which was maintained in various lodgings in London. His rooms were always a gath ering place for literary men of the day — Wordsworth and Southey came there in their visits fro the Lakes, to meet Hazlitt, Keats, Leigh Hunt, and others. Lamb was an urban spirit; he alway declared that he preferred the pavements and life of the city to the rarest views of Skiddaw an Helvellyn. After his retirement from the India House in 1825 he and his sister lived in the sub urbs, at Enfield and Edmonton, until his death in 1834.

Charles Lamb's employment at the India House was not engrossing. He had leisure for writing and attempted many of the forms current in his day, fiction, poetry, tragedy, comedy, and th essay. It was in this last that he won the success which makes him immortal. He began to cor tribute the *Essays of Elia* to the *London Magazine* in 1820. In these his charm of personality, hi tastes and his prejudices, his whimsical humor which delights in the oddities of people and the ir congruities of events, his tenderness toward misfortune, all those things which made him lovable t his friends are preserved to make him beloved of his readers. Lamb had a temperament to whic the positive, downright, and matter-of-fact was insipid; to which only the subtle, elusive, and sug gestive had charm. More than any English writer he must be read not for the importance of wha he says of morals and social problems, but for what he is.

Lamb's works have been collected and edited by Alfred Ainger (1883–88) and by E. V. Luca (seven volumes), with a *Life of Charles Lamb* in two volumes. The short life by Canon Ainger i the English Men of Letters Series is excellent. Hazlitt wrote of Lamb in *Persons One Woul Wish to Have Seen*, and in *The Spirit of the Age*.

## CHRIST'S HOSPITAL FIVE AND THIRTY YEARS AGO

Published in the *London Magazine*, November, 1820, with the signature "Elia." His opening sentence refers to an earlier essay on the subject published under his own name. Christ's Hospital was an endowed school for poor boys which Lamb and Coleridge entered at the same time, at the ages of seven and ten respectively. It is the situation of Coleridge, far from home and friends, which Lamb in part assumes.

In Mr. Lamb's *Works*, published a year or two since, I find a magnificent eulogy on my old school,[1] such as it was, or now appears to him to have been, between the years 1782 and 1789. It happens, very oddly, that my own standing at Christ's was nearly corresponding with his; and, with all gratitude to him for his enthusiasm for the cloisters, I think he has contrived to bring together whatever can be said in praise of them, dropping all the other side of the argument most ingeniously.

I remember L. at school; and can well recollect that he had some peculiar advantages, which I and others of his schoolfellows had not. His friends lived in town, and were near at hand; and he had the privilege of going to see them, almost as often as h wished, through some invidious distinctio which was denied to us. The present worth sub-treasurer to the Inner Temple can e plain how that happened. He had his te and hot rolls in a morning, while we wer battening upon our quarter of a penny loaf – our *crug* — moistened with attenuated sma beer, in wooden piggins, smacking of th pitched leathern jack it was poured fron Our Monday's milk porritch, blue and taste less, and the pease soup of Saturday, coars and choking, were enriched for him with slice of "extraordinary bread and butter, from the hot-loaf of the Temple. Th Wednesday's mess of millet, somewhat le repugnant — (we had three banyan[1] to fo meat days in the week) — was endeared t his palate with a lump of double-refined, an a smack of ginger (to make it go down th more glibly) or the fragrant cinnamon. I lieu of our *half-pickled* Sundays, or *quite fre* boiled beef on Thursdays (strong as *ca equina*[2]), with detestable marigolds floatin in the pail to poison the broth — our scant mutton crags on Fridays — and rather mo savory, but grudging, portions of the sam flesh, rotten-roasted or rare, on the Tuesday

1 Recollections of Christ's Hospital.

1 A name given to days on which sailors received no a lowance of meat.

2 horse flesh.

(the only dish which excited our appetites, and disappointed our stomachs, in almost equal proportion) — he had his hot plate of roast veal, or the more tempting griskin (exotics unknown to our palates), cooked in the paternal kitchen (a great thing), and brought him daily by his maid or aunt! I remember the good old relative (in whom love forbade pride) squatting down upon some odd stone in a by-nook of the cloisters, disclosing the viands (of higher regale than those cates which the ravens ministered to the Tishbite); and the contending passions of L. at the unfolding. There was love for the bringer; shame for the thing brought, and the manner of its bringing; sympathy for those who were too many to share in it; and, at top of all, hunger (eldest, strongest of the passions!) predominant, breaking down the stony fences of shame, and awkwardness, and a troubling over-consciousness.

I was a poor friendless boy. My parents, and those who should care for me, were far away. Those few acquaintances of theirs, which they could reckon upon being kind to me in the great city, after a little forced notice, which they had the grace to take of me on my first arrival in town, soon grew tired of my holiday visits. They seemed to them to recur too often, though I thought them few enough; and, one after another, they all failed me, and I felt myself alone among six hundred playmates.

O the cruelty of separating a poor lad from his early homestead! The yearnings which I used to have towards it in those unfledged years! How, in my dreams, would my native town (far in the west) come back, with its church, and trees, and faces! How I would wake weeping, and in the anguish of my heart exclaim upon sweet Calne in Wiltshire!

To this late hour of my life, I trace impressions left by the recollection of those friendless holidays. The long warm days of summer never return but they bring with them a gloom from the haunting memory of those *whole-day-leaves*, when, by some strange arrangement, we were turned out, for the live-long day, upon our own hands, whether we had friends to go to, or none. I remember those bathing excursions to the New River, which L. recalls with such relish, better, I think, than he can — for he was a home-seeking lad, and did not much care for such water-pastimes. — How merrily we would sally forth into the fields; and strip under the first warmth of the sun; and wanton like young dace in the streams; getting us appetites for noon, which those of us that were penniless (our scanty morning crust long since exhausted) had not the means of allaying — while the cattle, and the birds, and the fishes, were at feed about us, and we had nothing to satisfy our cravings — the very beauty of the day, and the exercise of the pastime, and the sense of liberty, setting a keener edge upon them! — How faint and languid, finally we would return, towards nightfall, to our desired morsel, half-rejoicing, half-reluctant, that the hours of our uneasy liberty had expired!

It was worse in the days of winter, to go prowling about the streets objectless — shivering at cold windows of print-shops, to extract a little amusement; or haply, as a last resort, in the hope of a little novelty, to pay a fifty-times repeated visit (where our individual faces should be as well known to the warden as those of his own charges) to the Lions in the Tower — to whose levée, by courtesy immemorial, we had a prescriptive title to admission.

L.'s governor[1] (so we called the patron who presented us to the foundation) lived in a manner under his paternal roof. Any complaint which he had to make was sure of being attended to. This was understood at Christ's, and was an effectual screen to him against the severity of masters, or worse tyranny of the monitors. The oppressions of these young brutes are heart-sickening to call to recollection. I have been called out of my bed, and *waked for the purpose*, in the coldest winter nights — and this not once, but night after night — in my shirt, to receive the discipline of a leathern thong, with eleven other sufferers, because it pleased my callow overseer, when there has been any talking heard after we were gone to bed, to make the six last beds in the dormitory, where the youngest children of us slept, answerable for an offence they neither dared to commit, nor had the power to hinder. — The same execrable tyranny drove the younger part of us from the fires, when our feet were perishing with snow; and under the cruellest penalties, forbade the indulgence of a drink of water, when we lay in sleepless summer nights, fevered with the season, and the day's sports.

There was one H——,[2] who, I learned, in after days, was seen expiating some maturer

1 Samuel Salt, the employer under whose roof John Lamb and his family lived.

2 Hodges. (Name supplied by Lamb.)

offence in the hulks. (Do I flatter myself in fancying that this might be the planter of that name, who suffered —— at Nevis, I think, or St. Kitts, —— some few years since? My friend Tobin was the benevolent instrument of bringing him to the gallows.) This petty Nero actually branded a boy, who had offended him, with a red-hot iron; and nearly starved forty of us, with exacting contributions, to the one half of our bread, to pamper a young ass, which, incredible as it may seem, with the connivance of the nurse's daughter (a young flame of his) he had contrived to smuggle in, and keep upon the leads of the *ward*, as they called our dormitories. This game went on for better than a week, till the foolish beast, not able to fare well but he must cry roast meat — happier than Caligula's minion,[1] could he have kept his own counsel — but, foolisher, alas! than any of his species in the fables — waxing fat, and kicking, in the fulness of bread, one unlucky minute would needs proclaim his good fortune to the world below; and, laying out his simple throat, blew such a ram's horn blast, as (toppling down the walls of his own Jericho) set concealment any longer at defiance. The client was dismissed, with certain attentions, to Smithfield; but I never understood that the patron underwent any censure on the occasion. This was in the stewardship of L.'s admired Perry.

Under the same *facile* administration, can L. have forgotten the cool impunity with which the nurses used to carry away openly, in open platters, for their own tables, one out of two of every hot joint, which the careful matron had been seeing scrupulously weighed out for our dinners? These things were daily practised in that magnificent apartment, which L. (grown connoisseur since, we presume) praises so highly for the grand paintings "by Verrio, and others," with which it is "hung round and adorned." But the sight of sleek, well-fed blue-coat boys in pictures was, at that time, I believe, little consolatory to him, or us, the living ones, who saw the better part of our provisions carried away before our faces by harpies; and ourselves reduced (with the Trojan in the hall of Dido)

"To feed our mind with idle portraiture."

L. has recorded the repugnance of the school to *gags*, or the fat of fresh beef boiled; and sets it down to some superstition. But these unctuous morsels are never grateful to young palates (children are universally fat haters) and in strong, coarse, boiled meats *unsalted*, are detestable. A *gag-eater* in our time was equivalent to a *ghoul*, and held in equal detestation. —— suffered under the imputation.

"—— 'Twas said,
He ate strange flesh."

He was observed, after dinner, carefully to gather up the remnants left at his table (not many, nor very choice fragments, you may credit me) — and, in an especial manner these disreputable morsels, which he would convey away, and secretly stow in the settle that stood at his bed-side. None saw when he ate them. It was rumored that he privately devoured them in the night. He was watched, but no traces of such midnight practices were discoverable. Some reported that, on leave-days, he had been seen to carry out of the bounds a large blue check handkerchief, full of something. This then must be the accursed thing. Conjecture next was at work to imagine how he could dispose of it. Some said he sold it to the beggars. This belief generally prevailed. He went about moping. None spake to him. No one would play with him. He was excommunicated, put out of the pale of the school. He was too powerful a boy to be beaten, but he underwent every mode of that negative punishment, which is more grievous than many stripes. Still he persevered. At length he was observed by two of his schoolfellows, who were determined to get at the secret, and had traced him one leave-day for that purpose, to enter a large worn-out building, such as there exist specimens of in Chancery Lane, which are let out to various scales of pauperism with open door, and common staircase. After him they silently slunk in, and followed by stealth up four flights, and saw him tap at a poor wicket which was opened by an aged woman meanly clad. Suspicion was now ripened into certainty. The informers had secured their victim. They had him in their toils. Accusation was formally preferred, and retribution most signal was looked for. Mr. Hathaway, the then steward (for this happened a little after my time), with that patient sagacity which tempered all his conduct, determined to investigate the matter, before he proceeded to sentence. The result was, that the supposed mendicants the receivers or purchasers of the mysterious

[1] The Emperor Caligula appointed a horse as chief consul.

scraps, turned out to be the parents of ——, an honest couple come to decay, — whom this seasonable supply had, in all probability, saved from mendicancy; and that this young stork, at the expense of his own good name, had all this while been only feeding the old birds! — The governors on this occasion, much to their honor, voted a present relief to the family of ——, and presented him with a silver medal. The lesson which the steward read upon RASH JUDGMENT, on the occasion of publicly delivering the medal to ——, I believe, would not be lost upon his auditory. — I had left school then, but I well remember ——. He was a tall, shambling youth, with a cast in his eye, not at all calculated to conciliate hostile prejudices. I have since seen him carrying a baker's basket. I think I heard he did not do quite so well by himself, as he had done by the old folks.

I was a hypochondriac lad; and the sight of a boy in fetters, upon the day of my first putting on the blue clothes, was not exactly fitted to assuage the natural terrors of initiation. I was of tender years, barely turned of seven; and had only read of such things in books, or seen them but in dreams. I was told he had *run away*. This was the punishment for the first offence. — As a novice I was soon after taken to see the dungeons. These were little square, Bedlam cells,[1] where a boy could just lie at his length upon straw and a blanket — a mattress, I think, was afterwards substituted — with a peep of light, let in askance, from a prison-orifice at top, barely enough to read by. Here the poor boy was locked in by himself all day, without sight of any but the porter who brought him his bread and water — who *might not speak to him;* — or of the beadle, who came twice a week to call him out to receive his periodical chastisement, which was almost welcome, because it separated him for a brief interval from solitude: — and here he was shut up by himself *of nights*, out of the reach of any sound, to suffer whatever horrors the weak nerves, and superstition incident to his time of life, might subject him to.[2] This was the penalty for the second offence. — Wouldst thou like, reader, to see what became of him in the next degree?

1 Bedlam was a corruption of Bethlehem. The hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem was used as an asylum for the insane.

2 One or two instances of lunacy, or attempted suicide, accordingly, at length convinced the governors of the impolicy of this part of the sentence, and the midnight torture to the spirits was dispensed with. — This fancy of dungeons for children was a sprout of Howard's brain; for which (saving the reverence due to Holy Paul), methinks, I could willingly spit upon his statue. (Lamb's note.)

The culprit, who had been a third time an offender, and whose expulsion was at this time deemed irreversible, was brought forth, as at some solemn *auto da fe*,[1] arrayed in uncouth and most appalling attire — all trace of his late "watchet weeds" [2] carefully effaced, he was exposed in a jacket, resembling those which London lamplighters formerly delighted in, with a cap of the same. The effect of this divestiture was such as the ingenious devisers of it could have anticipated. With his pale and frighted features, it was as if some of those disfigurements in Dante [3] had seized upon him. In this disguisement he was brought into the hall (*L.'s favorite state-room*), where awaited him the whole number of his schoolfellows, whose joint lessons and sports he was thenceforth to share no more; the awful presence of the steward, to be seen for the last time; of the executioner beadle, clad in his state robe for the occasion; and of two faces more, of direr import, because never but in these extremities visible. These were governors; two of whom, by choice, or charter, were always accustomed to officiate at these *Ultima Supplicia;* [4] not to mitigate (so at least we understood it), but to enforce the uttermost stripe Old Bamber Gascoigne, and Peter Aubert, I remember, were colleagues on one occasion, when the beadle turning rather pale, a glass of brandy was ordered to prepare him for the mysteries. The scourging was, after the old Roman fashion, long and stately. The lictor accompanied the criminal quite round the hall. We were generally too faint with attending to the previous disgusting circumstances, to make accurate report with our eyes of the degree of corporal suffering inflicted. Report, of course, gave out the back knotty and livid. After scourging, he was made over, in his *San Benito*,[5] to his friends, if he had any (but commonly such poor runagates were friendless), or to his parish officer, who, to enhance the effect of the scene, had his station allotted to him on the outside of the hall gate.

These solemn pageantries were not played off so often as to spoil the general mirth of the community. We had plenty of exercise and recreation *after* school hours; and, for myself, I must confess, that I was never happier, than *in* them. The Upper and

1 act of faith. The occasion on which heretics were burned at the stake.

2 blue uniforms.

3 Cf. *Inferno* Cantos XXVIII–XXX.

4 extreme punishments.

5 Garments of the same cut as those woven by the monks of St. Benedict, worn by victims of an *auto da fe*.

Lower Grammar Schools were held in the same room; and an imaginary line only divided their bounds. Their character was as different as that of the inhabitants on the two sides of the Pyrenees. The Rev. James Boyer was the Upper Master: but the Rev. Matthew Field presided over that portion of the apartment, of which I had the good fortune to be a member. We lived a life as careless as birds. We talked and did just what we pleased, and nobody molested us. We carried an accidence, or a grammar, for form; but, for any trouble it gave us, we might take two years in getting through the verbs deponent, and another two in forgetting all that we had learned about them. There was now and then the formality of saying a lesson, but if you had not learned it, a brush across the shoulders (just enough to disturb a fly) was the sole remonstrance. Field never used the rod; and in truth he wielded the cane with no great good will — holding it "like a dancer." It looked in his hands rather like an emblem than an instrument of authority; and an emblem, too, he was ashamed of. He was a good easy man, that did not care to ruffle his own peace, nor perhaps set any great consideration upon the value of juvenile time. He came among us, now and then, but often stayed away whole days from us; and when he came, it made no difference to us — he had his private room to retire to, the short time he stayed, to be out of the sound of our noise. Our mirth and uproar went on. We had classics of our own, without being beholden to "insolent Greece or haughty Rome," that passed current among us — Peter Wilkins — the Adventures of the Hon. Capt. Robert Boyle — the Fortunate Blue-Coat Boy — and the like. Or we cultivated a turn for mechanic or scientific operation; making little sundials of paper; or weaving those ingenious parentheses, called *cat-cradles;* or making dry peas to dance upon the end of a tin pipe; or studying the art military over that laudable game "French and English," and a hundred other such devices to pass away the time — mixing the useful with the agreeable — as would have made the souls of Rousseau and John Locke [1] chuckle to have seen us.

Matthew Field belonged to that class of modest divines who affect to mix in equal proportion the *gentleman*, the *scholar*, and the *Christian;* but, I know not how, the first ingredient is generally found to be the predominating dose in the composition. He was engaged in gay parties, or with his courtly bow at some episcopal levée, when he should have been attending upon us. He had for many years the classical charge of a hundred children, during the four or five first years of their education; and his very highest form seldom proceeded further than two or three of the introductory fables of Phædrus. How things were suffered to go on thus, I cannot guess. Boyer, who was the proper person to have remedied these abuses, always affected, perhaps felt, a delicacy in interfering in a province not strictly his own. I have not been without my suspicions, that he was not altogether displeased at the contrast we presented to his end of the school. We were a sort of Helots to his young Spartans. He would sometimes, with ironic deference, send to borrow a rod of the Under Master, and then, with Sardonic grin, observe to one of his upper boys, "how neat and fresh the twigs looked." While his pale students were battering their brains over Xenophon and Plato, with a silence as deep as that enjoined by the Samite,[1] we were enjoying ourselves at our ease in our little Goshen. We saw a little into the secrets of his discipline, and the prospect did but the more reconcile us to our lot. His thunders rolled innocuous for us; his storms came near, but never touched us; contrary to Gideon's miracle,[2] while all around were drenched, our fleece was dry. His boys turned out the better scholars; we, I suspect, have the advantage in temper. His pupils cannot speak of him without some thing of terror allaying their gratitude; the remembrance of Field comes back with all the soothing images of indolence, and summer slumbers, and work like play, and innocent idleness, and Elysian exemptions, and life itself a "playing holiday."

Though sufficiently removed from the jurisdiction of Boyer, we were near enough (as I have said) to understand a little of his system. We occasionally heard sounds of the *Ululantes*, and caught glances of Tartarus. B. was a rabid pedant. His English style was cramped to barbarism. His Easter anthems (for his duty obliged him to those periodical flights) were grating as scrannel pipes.[3] — He would laugh, ay, and heartily

1 Both exponents of a natural system of education.

1 Pythagoras enjoined silence upon his pupils in regard to their own conclusions until they had listened to his lectures for five years.

2 Cf. Judges VI, 36–38.

3 In this and every thing B. was the antipodes of his coadjutor. While the former was digging his brains for crude anthems, worth a pig-nut, F. would be recreating his gentlemanly fancy in the more flowery walks of the Muses. A little dramatic effusion of his, under the name of Vertumnus and Pomona, is not yet forgotten by the

but then it must be at Flaccus's quibble about *Rex*[1] —— or at the *tristis severitas in vultu*,[2] or *inspicere in patinas*,[3] of Terence — thin jests, which at their first broaching could hardly have had *vis*[4] enough to move a Roman muscle. — He had two wigs, both pedantic, but of different omen. The one serene, smiling, fresh powdered, betokening a mild day. The other, an old discolored, unkempt, angry caxon, denoting frequent and bloody execution. Woe to the school, when he made his morning appearance in his *passy*, or *passionate wig*. No comet expounded surer. — J. B. had a heavy hand. I have known him double his knotty fist at a poor trembling child (the maternal milk hardly dry upon its lips) with a "Sirrah, do you presume to set your wits at me?" — Nothing was more common than to see him make a headlong entry into the schoolroom, from his inner recess, or library, and, with turbulent eye, singling out a lad, roar out, "Od's my life, Sirrah" (his favorite adjuration), "I have a great mind to whip you," — then, with as sudden a retracting impulse, fling back into his lair — and, after a cooling lapse of some minutes (during which all but the culprit had totally forgotten the context) drive headlong out again, piecing out his imperfect sense, as if it had been some Devil's Litany, with the expletory yell — "*and I* WILL *too*." — In his gentler moods, when the *rabidus furor*[5] was assuaged, he had resort to an ingenious method, peculiar, for what I have heard, to himself, of whipping the boy, and reading the Debates, at the same time; a paragraph, and a lash between; which in those times, when parliamentary oratory was most at a height and flourishing in these realms, was not calculated to impress the patient with a veneration for the diffuser graces of rhetoric.

Once, and but once, the uplifted rod was known to fall ineffectual from his hand — when droll squinting W—— having been caught putting the inside of the master's desk to a use for which the architect had clearly not designed it, to justify himself, with great simplicity averred, that *he did not know that the thing had been forewarned*. This exquisite irrecognition of any law antecedent to the *oral* or *declaratory* struck so irresistibly upon the fancy of all who heard it (the pedagogue himself not excepted) that remission was unavoidable.

L. has given credit to B.'s great merits as an instructor. Coleridge, in his literary life, has pronounced a more intelligible and ample encomium on them. The author of the Country Spectator doubts not to compare him with the ablest teachers of antiquity. Perhaps we cannot dismiss him better than with the pious ejaculation of C. — when he heard that his old master was on his death-bed — "Poor J. B.! — may all his faults be forgiven; and may he be wafted to bliss by little cherub boys, all head and wings, with no *bottoms* to reproach his sublunary infirmities."

Under him were many good and sound scholars bred. — First Grecian[1] of my time was Lancelot Pepys Stevens, kindest of boys and men, since Co-grammar-master (and inseparable companion) with Dr. T——e.[2] What an edifying spectacle did this brace of friends present to those who remembered the anti-socialities of their predecessors! — You never met the one by chance in the street without a wonder, which was quickly dissipated by the almost immediate sub-appearance of the other. Generally arm in arm, these kindly coadjutors lightened for each other the toilsome duties of their profession, and when, in advanced age, one found it convenient to retire, the other was not long in discovering that it suited him to lay down the fasces also. Oh, it is pleasant, as it is rare, to find the same arm linked in yours at forty, which at thirteen helped it to turn over the *Cicero De Amicitia*, or some tale of Antique Friendship, which the young heart even then was burning to anticipate! — Co-Grecian with S. was Th——,[3] who has since executed with ability various diplomatic functions at the Northern courts. Th—— was a tall, dark, saturnine youth, sparing of speech, with raven locks. — Thomas Fanshaw Middleton followed him (now Bishop of Calcutta) a scholar and a gentleman in his teens. He has the reputation of an excellent critic; and is author (besides the Country Spectator) of a Treatise on the Greek Article, against Sharpe. — M. is said to bear his mitre high in India, where the *regni novitas*[4] (I dare say) sufficiently justifies the bearing. A humility quite as primitive as that of Jewel or Hooker might not be exactly fitted to impress the

chroniclers of that sort of literature. It was accepted by Garrick, but the town did not give it their sanction. — B. used to say of it, in a way of half-compliment, half-irony, that it was *too classical for representation*. (Lamb's note.)

1 Horace. *Satires*, I. 7. 35.
2 sad severity of countenance. (Terence, *Andrea*, V, II, 16.)
3 to look into the platter. (Terence, *Adelphi*, III, III, 74.)
4 power 5 raging madness.

1 Grecians were scholars recommended each year to Cambridge University.
2 Trollope, who succeeded Boyer as head master.
3 Thornton. 4 newness of the rule.

minds of those Anglo-Asiatic diocesans with a reverence for home institutions, and the church which those fathers watered. The manners of M. at school, though firm, were mild, and unassuming. — Next to M. (if not senior to him) was Richards, author of the Aboriginal Britons, the most spirited of the Oxford Prize Poems: a pale, studious Grecian. — Then followed poor S——,[1] ill-fated M——![2] of these the Muse is silent,

> Finding some of Edward's race
> Unhappy, pass their annals by.

Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the day-spring of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee — the dark pillar not yet turned — Samuel Taylor Coleridge — Logician, Metaphysician, Bard! — How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the *speech* and the *garb* of the young Mirandula), to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of Jamblichus, or Plotinus (for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in his Greek, or Pindar —— while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the *inspired charity-boy!* Many were the "wit-combats" (to dally awhile with the words of old Fuller) between him and C. V. Le G——,[3] "which two I behold like a Spanish great gallion, and an English man-of-war; Master Coleridge, like the former, was built far higher in learning, solid, but slow in his performances. C. V. L., with the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention."[4]

Nor shalt thou, their compeer, be quickly forgotten, Allen, with the cordial smile, and still more cordial laugh, with which thou wert wont to make the old Cloisters shake, in thy cognition of some poignant jest of theirs; or the anticipation of some more material, and, peradventure, practical one, of thine own. Extinct are those smiles, with that beautiful countenance, with which (for thou wert the *Nireus formosus*[5] of the school), in the days of thy maturer waggery, thou didst disarm the wrath of infuriated town-damsel, who, incensed by provoking pinch, turning tigress-like round, suddenly converted by thy angel-look, exchanged the half-formed terrible "bl——," for a gentler greeting — "*bless thy handsome face!*"

Next follow two, who ought to be now alive, and the friends of Elia — the junior Le G—— and F——;[1] who impelled, the former by a roving temper, the latter by too quick a sense of neglect — ill capable of enduring the slights poor Sizars are sometimes subject to in our seats of learning — exchanged their Alma Mater for the camp; perishing, one by climate, and one on the plains of Salamanca: — Le G—— sanguine, volatile, sweet-natured; F—— dogged, faithful, anticipative of insult, warm-hearted, with something of the old Roman height about him.

Fine, frank-hearted Fr——,[2] the present master of Hertford, with Marmaduke T——,[3] mildest of Missionaries — and both my good friends still — close the catalogue of Grecians in my time.

## MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST

1821

Published in the *London Magazine*, February, 1821. It has been conjectured that the original of Mrs. Battle was Sarah Burney, wife of Rear Admiral James Burney, with whom Lamb often played whist.

"A clear fire, a clean hearth,[4] and the rigor of the game." This was the celebrated *wish* of old Sarah Battle (now with God) who, next to her devotions, loved a good game at whist. She was none of your lukewarm gamesters, your half and half players, who have no objection to take a hand, if you want one to make up a rubber; who affirm that they have no pleasure in winning; that they like to win one game and lose another; that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no; and will desire an adversary who has slipt a wrong card, to take it up and play another.[5] These insufferable triflers are the curse of a table. One of these flies will spoil a whole pot. Of such it may be said, that they do not play

1 "Scott died in Bedlam." (Lamb's note.)
2 "Maunde, dismissed school." (Lamb's note.)
3 Charles Valentine Le Grice.
4 From Fuller's accounts of the combats of wit between Jonson and Shakespeare.
5 Handsome Nireus, most beautiful of the Greek warriors against Troy.

1 Favell. 2 Frederick William Franklin.
3 Marmaduke Thompson.
4 This was before the introduction of rugs, Reader. You must remember the intolerable crash of the unswept cinders betwixt your foot and the marble. (Lamb's note.)
5 As if a sportsman should tell you he liked to kill a fox one day and lose him the next. (Lamb's note.)

at cards, but only play at playing at them.

Sarah Battle was none of that breed. She detested them, as I do, from her heart and soul; and would not, save upon a striking emergency, willingly seat herself at the same table with them. She loved a thorough-paced partner, a determined enemy. She took, and gave, no concessions. She hated favors. She never made a revoke, nor ever passed it over in her adversary without exacting the utmost forfeiture. She fought a good fight: cut and thrust. She held not her good sword (her cards) "like a dancer." She sat bolt upright; and neither showed you her cards, nor desired to see yours. All people have their blind side — their superstitions; and I have heard her declare, under the rose, that Hearts was her favorite suit.

I never in my life — and I knew Sarah Battle many of the best years of it — saw her take out her snuffbox when it was her turn to play; or snuff a candle in the middle of a game; or ring for a servant, till it was fairly over. She never introduced or connived at miscellaneous conversation during its process. As she emphatically observed, cards were cards; and if I ever saw unmingled distaste in her fine last-century countenance, it was at the airs of a young gentleman of a literary turn, who had been with difficulty persuaded to take a hand; and who, in his excess of candor, declared, that he thought there was no harm in unbending the mind now and then, after serious studies, in recreations of that kind! She could not bear to have her noble occupation, to which she wound up her faculties, considered in that light. It was her business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to do, — and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards — over a book.

Pope was her favorite author: his Rape of the Lock her favorite work. She once did me the favor to play over with me (with the cards) his celebrated game of Ombre in that poem; and to explain to me how far it agreed with, and in what points it would be found to differ from, tradrille. Her illustrations were apposite and poignant; and I had the pleasure of sending the substance of them to Mr. Bowles:[1] but I suppose they came too late to be inserted among his ingenious notes upon that author.

Quadrille, she has often told me, was her first love; but whist had engaged her maturer esteem. The former, she said, was showy and specious, and likely to allure young persons. The uncertainty and quick shifting of partners — a thing which the constancy of whist abhors; the dazzling supremacy and regal investiture of Spadille[1] — absurd, as she justly observed, in the pure aristocracy of whist, where his crown and garter gave him no proper power above his brother-nobility of the Aces; — the giddy vanity, so taking to the inexperienced, of playing alone; — above all, the overpowering attractions of a *Sans Prendre Vole*,[2] — to the triumph of which there is certainly nothing parallel or approaching, in the contingencies of whist; — all these, she would say, make quadrille a game of captivation to the young and enthusiastic. But whist was the *solider* game: that was her word. It was a long meal; not like quadrille, a feast of snatches. One or two rubbers might co-extend in duration with an evening. They gave time to form rooted friendships, to cultivate steady enmities. She despised the chance-started, capricious, and ever fluctuating alliances of the other. The skirmishes of quadrille, she would say, reminded her of the petty ephemeral embroilments of the little Italian states, depicted by Machiavel; perpetually changing postures and connexions; bitter foes to-day, sugared darlings to-morrow; kissing and scratching in a breath; — but the wars of whist were comparable to the long, steady, deep-rooted, rational, antipathies of the great French and English nations.

A grave simplicity was what she chiefly admired in her favorite game. There was nothing silly in it, like the nob in cribbage — nothing superfluous. No *flushes* — that most irrational of all pleas that a reasonable being can set up: — that any one should claim four by virtue of holding cards of the same mark and color, without reference to the playing of the game, or the individual worth or pretensions of the cards themselves! She held this to be a solecism; as pitiful an ambition at cards as alliteration is in authorship. She despised superficiality, and looked deeper than the colors of things. Suits were soldiers, she would say, and must have a uniformity of array to distinguish them: but what should we say to a foolish squire, who should claim a merit for dressing up his tenantry in red jackets, that never were to be marshalled — never to take the field? — She even wished that whist were more simple than it is; and,

1 William Lisle Bowles who published an edition of Pope in 1807.

1 ace of spades.

2 In *ombre*, played by four, one may take a partner or play alone (*sans prendre*). *Vole* is to take all the tricks.

in my mind, would have stript it of some appendages, which, in the state of human frailty, may be venially, and even commendably allowed of. She saw no reason for the deciding of the trump by the turn of the card. Why not one suit always trumps? — Why two colors, when the mark of the suits would have sufficiently distinguished them without it? —

"But the eye, my dear Madam, is agreeably refreshed with the variety. Man is not a creature of pure reason — he must have his senses delightfully appealed to. We see it in Roman Catholic countries, where the music and the paintings draw in many to worship, whom your quaker spirit of unsensualising would have kept out. — You, yourself, have a pretty collection of paintings — but confess to me, whether, walking in your gallery at Sandham, among those clear Vandykes, or among the Paul Potters in the ante-room, you ever felt your bosom glow with an elegant delight, at all comparable to *that* you have it in your power to experience most evenings over a well-arranged assortment of the court cards? — the pretty antic habits, like heralds in a procession — the gay triumph-assuring scarlets — the contrasting deadly, killing sables — the 'hoary majesty of spades' — Pam in all his glory! [1] —

"All these might be dispensed with; and, with their naked names upon the drab pasteboard, the game might go on very well, pictureless. But the *beauty* of cards would be extinguished for ever. Stripped of all that is imaginative in them, they must degenerate into mere gambling. — Imagine a dull deal board, or drum head, to spread them on, instead of that nice verdant carpet (next to nature's), fittest arena for those courtly combatants to play their gallant jousts and tourneys in! — Exchange those delicately-turned ivory markers — (work of Chinese artist, unconscious of their symbol, — or as profanely slighting their true application as the arrantest Ephesian journeyman that turned out those little shrines for the goddess) [2] — exchange them for little bits of leather (our ancestors' money) or chalk and a slate!" —

The old lady, with a smile, confessed the soundness of my logic; and to her approbation of my arguments on her favorite topic that evening, I have always fancied myself indebted for the legacy of a curious cribbage board, made of the finest Sienna marble, which her maternal uncle (Old Walter Plumer, whom I have elsewhere celebrated brought with him from Florence: this, and trifle of five hundred pounds came to me her death.

The former bequest (which I do not lea value) I have kept with religious ca though she herself, to confess a truth, w never greatly taken with cribbage. It w an essentially vulgar game, I have heard h say, — disputing with her uncle, who w very partial to it. She could never hearti bring her mouth to pronounce "*go*," "*that's a go.*" She called it an ungra matical game. The pegging teased her. once knew her to forfeit a rubber (a fi dollar stake), because she would not take a vantage of the turn-up knave, which wou have given it her, but which she must ha claimed by the disgraceful tenure of d claring "*two for his heels.*" There is som thing extremely genteel in this sort of sel denial. Sarah Battle was a gentlewoman bor

Piquet she held the best game at the car for two persons, though she would ridicu the pedantry of the terms — such as piqu repique — the capot — they savored (sh thought) of affectation. But games for tw or even three, she never greatly cared fo She loved the quadrate, or square. Sh would argue thus: — Cards are warfare: t ends are gain, with glory. But cards a war, in disguise of a sport: when single a versaries encounter, the ends proposed a too palpable. By themselves, it is too clos a fight: with spectators, it is not much be tered. No looker-on can be interested, ex cept for a bet, and then it is a mere affair money; he cares not for your luck *sym pathetically*, or for your play. — Three ar still worse; a mere naked war of every ma against every man, as in cribbage, withou league or alliance; or a rotation of petty an contradictory interests, a succession of heart less leagues, and not much more hearty in fractions of them, as in tradrille. But i square games (*she meant whist*) all that i possible to be attained in card-playing accomplished. There are the incentive of profit with honor, common to ever species — though the *latter* can be but ver imperfectly enjoyed in those other games where the spectator is only feebly a par ticipator. But the parties in whist ar spectators and principals too. They are theatre to themselves, and a looker-on is no wanted. He is rather worse than nothing and an impertinence. Whist abhors ne

1 knave of clubs. 2 Acts XIX, 24.

1 In The South Sea House.

trality, or interests beyond its sphere. You glory in some surprising stroke of skill or fortune, not because a cold — or even an interested — by-stander witnesses it, but because your *partner* sympathizes in the contingency. You win for two. You triumph for two. Two are exalted. Two again are mortified; which divides their disgrace, as the conjunction doubles (by taking off the invidiousness) your glories. Two losing to two are better reconciled, than one to one in that close butchery. The hostile feeling is weakened by multiplying the channels. War becomes a civil game. — By such reasonings as these the old lady was accustomed to defend her favorite pastime.

No inducement could ever prevail upon her to play at any game where chance entered into the composition, *for nothing*. Chance, she would argue — and here again, admire the subtlety of her conclusion! — chance is nothing, but where something else depends upon it. It is obvious, that cannot be *glory*. What rational cause of exultation could it give to a man to turn up size ace a hundred times together by himself? or before spectators, where no stake was depending? — Make a lottery of a hundred thousand tickets with but one fortunate number — and what possible principle of our nature, except stupid wonderment, could it gratify to gain that number as many times successively, without a prize? — Therefore she disliked the mixture of chance in backgammon, where it was not played for money. She called it foolish, and those people idiots, who were taken with a lucky hit under such circumstances. Games of pure skill were as little to her fancy. Played for a stake, they were a mere system of over-reaching. Played for glory, they were a mere setting of one man's wit — his memory, or combination-faculty rather — against another's; like a mock-engagement at a review, bloodless and profitless. — She could not conceive a *game* wanting the spritely infusion of chance, — the handsome excuses of good fortune. Two people playing at chess in a corner of a room whilst whist was stirring in the centre, would inspire her with unsufferable horror and ennui. Those well-cut similitudes of Castles, and Knights, the *imagery* of the board, she would argue (and I think in this case justly) were entirely misplaced, and senseless. Those hard head-contests can in no instance ally with the fancy. They reject form and color. A pencil and dry slate (she used to say) were the proper arena for such combatants.

To those puny objectors against cards, as nurturing the bad passions, she would retort, that man is a gaming animal. He must be always trying to get the better in something or other: — that this passion can scarcely be more safely expended than upon a game at cards: that cards are a temporary illusion; in truth, a mere drama; for we do but *play* at being mightily concerned, where a few idle shillings are at stake, yet, during the illusion, we *are* as mightily concerned as those whose stake is crowns and kingdoms. They are a sort of dream-fighting; much ado; great battling, and little blood shed; mighty means for disproportioned ends; quite as diverting, and a great deal more innoxious, than many of those more serious *games* of life, which men play, without esteeming them to be such. ——

With great deference to the old lady's judgment on these matters, I think I have experienced some moments in my life, when playing at cards *for nothing* has even been very agreeable. When I am in sickness, or not in the best spirits, I sometimes call for the cards, and play a game at piquet *for love* with my cousin Bridget — Bridget Elia.[1]

I grant there is something sneaking in it: but with a toothache or a sprained ankle, — when you are subdued and humble, — you are glad to put up with an inferior spring of action.

There is such a thing in nature, I am convinced, as *sick whist*. —

I grant it is not the highest style of man — I deprecate the manes of Sarah Battle — she lives not, alas! to whom I should apologize. —

At such times those *terms* which my old friend objected to, come in as something admissible. — I love to get a tierce or a quatorze, though they mean nothing. I am subdued to an inferior interest. Those shadows of winning amuse me.

That last game I had with my sweet cousin (I capotted[2] her) — (dare I tell thee how foolish I am?) — I wished it might have lasted for ever, though we gained nothing, and lost nothing, though it was a mere shade of play: I would be content to go on in that idle folly for ever. The pipkin should be ever boiling, that was to prepare the gentle lenitive to my foot, which Bridget was doomed to apply after the game was over: and as I do not much relish appliances, there it should ever bubble. Bridget and I should be ever playing.

1 Mary Lamb. 2 won all the tricks.

## IMPERFECT SYMPATHIES

Published in the *London Magazine*, August, 1821. It was originally entitled "Jews, Quakers, Scotchmen and Other Imperfect Sympathies."

I am of a constitution so general, that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy, in anything. Those national repugnances do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch. — *Religio Medici*.

That the author of the *Religio Medici*, mounted upon the airy stilts of abstraction, conversant about notional and conjectural essences; in whose categories of Being the possible took the upper hand of the actual; should have overlooked the impertinent individualities of such poor concretions as mankind, is not much to be admired. It is rather to be wondered at, that in the genus of animal he should have condescended to distinguish that species at all. For myself — earth-bound and fettered to the scene of my activities,

Standing on earth, not rapt above the sky,

I confess that I do feel the differences of mankind, national or individual, to an unhealthy excess. I can look with no indifferent eye upon things or persons. Whatever is, is to me a matter of taste or distaste; or when once it becomes indifferent, it begins to be disrelishing. I am, in plainer words, a bundle of prejudices — made up of likings and dislikings — the veriest thrall to sympathies, apathies, antipathies. In a certain sense, I hope it may be said of me that I am a lover of my species. I can feel for all indifferently, but I cannot feel towards all equally. The more purely English word that expresses sympathy will better explain my meaning. I can be a friend to a worthy man, who upon another account cannot be my mate or *fellow*. I cannot *like* all people alike.[1]

I have been trying all my life to l Scotchmen, and am obliged to desist from t experiment in despair. They cannot like me and in truth, I never knew one of that nati who attempted to do it. There is somethi more plain and ingenuous in their mode of p ceeding. We know one another at first sig There is an order of imperfect intellects (u der which mine must be content to rar which in its constitution is essentially ar Caledonian. The owners of the sort faculties I allude to, have minds rather su gestive than comprehensive. They have pretences to much clearness or precision their ideas, or in their manner of expressi them. Their intellectual wardrobe ( confess fairly) has few whole pieces in They are content with fragments and sca tered pieces of Truth. She presents no f front to them — a feature or side-face at t most. Hints and glimpses, germs and cru essays at a system, is the utmost they pu tend to. They beat up a little game pe adventure — and leave it to knottier heac more robust constitutions, to run it dow The light that lights them is not steady a polar, but mutable and shifting: waxing, a again waning. Their conversation is a cordingly. They will throw out a randc word in or out of season, and be content let it pass for what it is worth. They cann speak always as if they were upon their oa — but must be understood, speaking or wr ing, with some abatement. They seldo wait to mature a proposition, but e'en bri it to market in the green ear. They delig to impart their defective discoveries, as th arise, without waiting for their full develo ment. They are no systematizers, a would but err more by attempting it. Th minds, as I said before, are suggestive merel The brain of a true Caledonian (if I a not mistaken) is constituted upon quite different plan. His Minerva is born panoply. You are never admitted to see h ideas in their growth — if, indeed, they grow, and are not rather put together upo principles of clock-work. You never cat his mind in an undress. He never hints suggests anything, but unlades his stock ideas in perfect order and completeness. H brings his total wealth into company, a gravely unpacks it. His riches are alway

[1] I would be understood as confining myself to the subjects of *imperfect sympathies*. To nations or classes of men there can be no direct *antipathy*. There may be individuals born and constellated so opposite to another individual nature, that the same sphere cannot hold them. I have met with my moral antipodes, and can believe the story of two persons meeting (who never saw one another before in their lives) and instantly fighting.

> ——— We by proof find there should be
> 'Twixt man and man such an antipathy,
> That though he can show no just reason why
> For any former wrong or injury,
> Can neither find a blemish in his fame,
> Nor aught in face or feature justly blame,
> Can challenge or accuse him of no evil,
> Yet notwithstanding hates him as a devil.

The lines are from old Heywood's *Hierarchie of Angels*, and he subjoins a curious story in confirmation, of a Spaniard who attempted to assassinate a King Ferdinand of Spain, and being put to the rack could give no other reason for the deed but an inveterate antipathy which he h taken to the first sight of the King.

> ——— The cause to which that act compell'd hin
> Was, he ne'er loved him since ne first beheld him.
>
> (Lamb's note.)

about him. He never stoops to catch a glittering something in your presence, to share it with you, before he quite knows whether it be true touch or not. You cannot cry *halves* to anything that he finds. He does not find, but bring. You never witness his first apprehension of a thing. His understanding is always at its meridian — you never see the first dawn, the early streaks. — He has no falterings of self-suspicion. Surmises, guesses, misgivings, half-intuitions, semi-consciousnesses, partial illuminations, dim instincts, embryo conceptions, have no place in his brain, or vocabulary. The twilight of dubiety never falls upon him. Is he orthodox — he has no doubts. Is he an infidel — he has none either. Between the affirmative and the negative there is no border-land with him. You cannot hover with him upon the confines of truth, or wander in the maze of a probable argument. He always keeps the path. You cannot make excursions with him — for he sets you right. His taste never fluctuates. His morality never abates. He cannot compromise, or understand middle actions. There can be but a right and a wrong. His conversation is as a book. His affirmations have the sanctity of an oath. You must speak upon the square with him. He stops a metaphor like a suspected person in an enemy's country. "A healthy book!" — said one of his countrymen to me, who had ventured to give that appellation to *John Buncle*[1] — "did I catch rightly what you said? I have heard of a man in health, and of a healthy state of body, but I do not see how that epithet can be properly applied to a book." Above all, you must beware of indirect expressions before a Caledonian. Clap an extinguisher upon your irony, if you are unhappily blest with a vein of it. Remember you are upon your oath. I have a print of a graceful female after Leonardo da Vinci, which I was showing off to Mr. ——. After he had examined it minutely, I ventured to ask him how he liked MY BEAUTY (a foolish name it goes by among my friends) — when he very gravely assured me, that "he had considerable respect for my character and talents" (so he was pleased to say), "but had not given himself much thought about the degree of my personal pretensions." The misconception staggered me, but did not seem much to disconcert him. — Persons of this nation are particularly fond of affirming a truth — which nobody doubts. They do not so properly affirm, as annunciate it. They do indeed appear to have such a love of truth (as if, like virtue, it were valuable for itself) that all truth becomes equally valuable, whether the proposition that contains it be new or old, disputed, or such as is impossible to become a subject of disputation. I was present not long since at a party of North Britons, where a son of Burns was expected; and happened to drop a silly expression (in my South British way), that I wished it were the father instead of the son — when four of them started up at once to inform me, that "that was impossible, because he was dead." An impracticable wish, it seems, was more than they could conceive. Swift has hit off this part of their character, namely, their love of truth, in his biting way, but with an illiberality that necessarily confines the passage to the margin.[1] The tediousness of these people is certainly provoking. I wonder if they ever tire one another! — In my early life I had a passionate fondness for the poetry of Burns. I have sometimes foolishly hoped to ingratiate myself with his countrymen by expressing it. But I have always found that a true Scot resents your admiration of his compatriot, even more than he would your contempt of him. The latter he imputes to your "imperfect acquaintance with many of the words which he uses;" and the same objection makes it a presumption in you to suppose that you can admire him, — Thomson they seem to have forgotten. Smollett they have neither forgotten nor forgiven for his delineation of Rory[2] and his companion, upon their first introduction to our metropolis. — Speak of Smollett as a great genius, and they will retort upon you Hume's *History* compared with *his* Continuation of it. What if the historian had continued *Humphrey Clinker?*

I have, in the abstract, no disrespect for Jews. They are a piece of stubborn antiquity, compared with which Stonehenge is in its nonage. They date beyond the pyramids. But I should not care to be in habits of familiar intercourse with any of that nation. I confess that I have not the

1 The title of a book by Thomas Amory (1691–1788).

1 There are some people who think they sufficiently acquit themselves, and entertain their company, with relating facts of no consequence, not at all out of the road of such common incidents as happen every day; and this I have observed more frequently among the Scots than any other nation, who are very careful not to omit the minutest circumstances of time or place; which kind of discourse, if it were not a little relieved by the uncouth terms and phrases, as well as accent and gesture peculiar to that country, would be hardly tolerable. — *Hints towards an Essay on Conversation.* (Lamb's note.)

2 Roderick Random in Smollett's novel of that name.

nerves to enter their synagogues. Old prejudices cling about me. I cannot shake off the story of Hugh of Lincoln.[1] Centuries of injury, contempt, and hate, on the one side, — of cloaked revenge, dissimulation, and hate, on the other, between our and their fathers, must, and ought, to affect the blood of the children. I cannot believe it can run clear and kindly yet; or that a few fine words, such as candor, liberality, the light of a nineteenth century, can close up the breaches of so deadly a disunion. A Hebrew is nowhere congenial to me. He is least distasteful on 'Change — for the mercantile spirit levels all distinctions, as are all beauties in the dark. I boldly confess I do not relish the approximation of Jew and Christian, which has become so fashionable. The reciprocal endearments have, to me, something hypocritical and unnatural in them. I do not like to see the Church and Synagogue kissing and congeeing in awkward postures of an affected civility. If *they* are converted, why do they not come over to us altogether? Why keep up a form of separation, when the life of it has fled? If they can sit with us at table, why do they kick at our cookery? I do not understand these half convertites. Jews christianizing — Christians judaizing — puzzle me. I like fish or flesh. A moderate Jew is a more confounding piece of anomaly than a wet Quaker. The spirit of the synagogue is essentially *separative*. B——[2] would have been more in keeping if he had abided by the faith of his forefathers. There is a fine scorn in his face, which nature meant to be of —— Christians. The Hebrew spirit is strong in him, in spite of his proselytism. He cannot conquer the Shibboleth. How it breaks out, when he sings, "The Children of Israel passed through the Red Sea!" The auditors, for the moment, are as Egyptians to him, and he rides over our necks in triumph. There is no mistaking him. B—— has a strong expression of sense in his countenance, and it is confirmed by his singing. The foundation of his vocal excellence is sense. He sings with understanding, as Kemble[3] delivered dialogue. He would sing the Commandments, and give an appropriate character to each prohibition. His nation, in general, have not over-sensible countenances. How should they? — but you seldom see a silly expression among them. Gain, and the pursuit of gain, sharpen man's visage. I never heard of an idio being born among them. — Some admir the Jewish female-physiognomy. I admir it — but with trembling. Jael had those fu dark inscrutable eyes.

In the Negro countenance you will ofte meet with strong traits of benignity. I hav felt yearnings of tenderness towards some o these faces — or rather masks — that hav looked out kindly upon one in casual en counters in the streets and highways. love what Fuller[1] beautifully calls — thes "images of God cut in ebony." But I shoul not like to associate with them, to share m meals and my good-nights with them – because they are black.

I love Quaker ways, and Quaker worshi I venerate the Quaker principles. It do me good for the rest of the day when I me any of their people in my path. When I a ruffled or disturbed by any occurrence, th sight, or quiet voice of a Quaker, acts upo me as a ventilator, lightening the air, an taking off a load from the bosom. But cannot like the Quakers (as Desdemon would say) "to live with them." I am a over sophisticated — with humors, fancie craving hourly sympathy. I must hav books, pictures, theatres, chit-chat, scanda jokes, ambiguities, and a thousand whin whams, which their simpler taste can d without. I should starve at their primitiv banquet. My appetities are too high for th salads which (according to Evelyn)[2] Ev dressed for the angel, my gusto too excited

To sit a guest with Daniel at his pulse.

The indirect answers which Quakers a often found to return to a question put them may be explained, I think, without th vulgar assumption, that they are more giv to evasion and equivocating than oth people. They naturally look to their wor more carefully, and are more cautious committing themselves. They have peculiar character to keep up on this hea They stand in a manner upon their veracit A Quaker is by law exempted from taking a oath. The custom of resorting to an oath extreme cases, sanctified as it is by all r ligious antiquity, is apt (it must be confesse to introduce into the laxer sort of minds t notion of two kinds of truth — the one a

1 A well-known legend of the ritualistic murder of a Christian child by the Jews. See Chaucer's *Prioress's Tale*.

2 John Braham (1774–1856), a popular tenor of the day.

3 John Philip Kemble (1757–1823), the chief Shakespearian actor of this time.

1 Thomas Fuller (1608–61), the author of *The Worthi of England*.

2 John Evelyn (1620–1706), an antiquarian and diari

plicable to the solemn affairs of justice, and the other to the common proceedings of daily intercourse. As truth bound upon the conscience by an oath can be but truth, so in the common affirmations of the shop and the market-place a latitude is expected and conceded upon questions wanting this solemn covenant. Something less than truth satisfies. It is common to hear a person say, "You do not expect me to speak as if I were upon my oath." Hence a great deal of incorrectness and inadvertency, short of falsehood, creeps into ordinary conversation; and a kind of secondary or laic-truth is tolerated, where clergy-truth — oath-truth, by the nature of the circumstances, is not required. A Quaker knows none of this distinction. His simple affirmation being received, upon the most sacred occasions, without any further test, stamps a value upon the words which he is to use upon the most indifferent topics of life. He looks to them, naturally, with more severity. You can have of him no more than his word. He knows, if he is caught tripping in a casual expression, he forfeits, for himself, at least, his claim to the invidious exemption. He knows that his syllables are weighed — and how far a consciousness of this particular watchfulness, exerted against a person, has a tendency to produce indirect answers, and a diverting of the question by honest means, might be illustrated, and the practice justified, by a more sacred example than is proper to be adduced upon this occasion. The admirable presence of mind, which is notorious in Quakers upon all contingencies, might be traced to this imposed self-watchfulness — if it did not seem rather an humble and secular scion of that old stock of religious constancy, which never bent or faltered, in the Primitive Friends, or gave way to the winds of persecution, to the violence of judge or accuser, under trials and racking examinations. "You will never be the wiser, if I sit here answering your questions till midnight," said one of those upright Justicers to Penn, who had been putting law-cases with a puzzling subtlety. "Thereafter as the answers may be," retorted the Quaker. The astonishing composure of this people is sometimes ludicrously displayed in lighter instances. — I was travelling in a stage-coach with three male Quakers, buttoned up in the straightest non-conformity of their sect. We stopped to bait at Andover, where a meal, partly tea apparatus, partly supper, was set before us. My friends confined themselves to the tea-table. I in my way took supper. When the landlady brought in the bill, the eldest of my companions discovered that she had charged for both meals. This was resisted. Mine hostess was very clamorous and positive. Some mild arguments were used on the part of the Quakers, for which the heated mind of the good lady seemed by no means a fit recipient. The guard came in with his usual peremptory notice. The Quakers pulled out their money, and formally tendered it — so much for tea — I, in humble imitation, tendering mine — for the supper which I had taken. She would not relax in her demand. So they all three quietly put up their silver, as did myself, and marched out of the room, the eldest and gravest going first, with myself closing up the rear, who thought I could not do better than follow the example of such grave and warrantable personages. We got in. The steps went up. The coach drove off. The murmurs of mine hostess, not very indistinctly or ambiguously pronounced, became after a time inaudible — and now my conscience, which the whimsical scene had for a while suspended, beginning to give some twitches, I waited, in the hope that some justification would be offered by these serious people for the seeming injustice of their conduct. To my great surprise, not a syllable was dropped on the subject. They sate as mute as at a meeting. At length the eldest of them broke silence, by inquiring of his next neighbor, "Hast thee heard how indigos go at the India House?" and the question operated as a soporific on my moral feeling as far as Exeter.

## DREAM CHILDREN: A REVERIE

Published in the *London Magazine* for January, 1822. Canon Ainger identifies Alice W——n with Anna Simmons, a girl Lamb had known when visiting his grandmother in Hertfordshire. Bartram was in fact the name of her husband.

Children love to listen to stories about their elders, when *they* were children; to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle or grandame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk [1] (a hundred times bigger than that in which they

1 Lamb's grandmother, Mary Field, for fifty years housekeeper at Blakesware, in Hertfordshire.

and papa lived) which had been the scene — so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country — of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the Children in the Wood. Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts, till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say, how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by every body, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C.'s tawdry gilt drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, "that would be foolish indeed." And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighborhood for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman; so good indeed that she knew all the Psaltery by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was; and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer — here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till upon my looking grave, it desisted — the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamb of the great lone house; and how she believe that an apparition of two infants was to l seen at midnight gliding up and down th great staircase near where she slept, but sh said "those innocents would do her no harm and how frightened I used to be, though those days I had my maid to sleep with m because I was never half so good or religio as she — and yet I never saw the infant Here John expanded all his eyebrows ar tried to look courageous. Then I told ho good she was to all her grand-children, havir us to the great house in the holydays, whe I in particular used to spend many hours b myself, in gazing upon the old busts of th Cæsars, that had been Emperors of Rom till the old marble heads would seem to liv again, or I be turned into marble with then how I never could be tired with roamin about that huge mansion, with its vast empt rooms, with their worn-out hangings, flutte ing tapestry, and carved oaken panels, wit the gilding almost rubbed out — sometime in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, whic I had almost to myself, unless when now an then a solitary gardening man would cros me — and how the nectarines and peache hung upon the walls, without my ever offe ing to pluck them, because they were fo bidden fruit, unless now and then, — an because I had more pleasure in strolling abou among the old melancholy-looking yew tree or the firs, and picking up the red berries, an the fir apples, which were good for nothin but to look at — or in lying about upon th fresh grass, with all the fine garden smell around me — or basking in the orangery, ti I could almost fancy myself ripening to along with the oranges and the limes in tha grateful warmth — or in watching the dac that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at th bottom of the garden, with here and there great sulky pike hanging midway down th water in silent state, as if it mocked at the impertinent friskings, — I had more pleasur in these busy-idle diversions than in all th sweet flavors of peaches, nectarines, orange and such like common baits of children. Her John slily deposited back upon the plate bunch of grapes, which, not unobserved b Alice, he had meditated dividing with he and both seemed willing to relinquish ther for the present as irrelevant. Then in some what a more heightened tone, I told how though their great-grandmother Field love all her grand-children, yet in an especia manner she might be said to love their uncle

John L——,[1] because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us; and, instead of moping about in solitary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the county in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out — and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries — and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of everybody, but of their great-grandmother Field most especially; and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy — for he was a good bit older than me — many a mile when I could not walk for pain; — and how in after life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowances enough for him when he was impatient and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed; and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death; and how I bore his death as I thought pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarrelling with him (for we quarrelled sometimes), rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he, their poor uncle, must have been when the doctor took off his limb. Here the children fell a-crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W——n; and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial meant in maidens — when suddenly, turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of re-presentment, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech; "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum father. We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before we have existence, and a name" — and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor armchair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side — but John L. (or James Elia) was gone for ever.

[1] Charles Lamb's brother, John.

## A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG

Published in the *London Magazine*, September, 1822. The tradition as to the origin of cooking was communicated to Lamb by his friend, Thomas Manning, a traveller in China and Thibet.

Mankind, says a Chinese manuscript, which my friend M. was obliging enough to read and explain to me, for the first seventy thousand ages ate their meat raw, clawing or biting it from the living animal, just as they do in Abyssinia to this day. This period is not obscurely hinted at by their great Confucius in the second chapter of his Mundane Mutations, where he designates a kind of golden age by the term Cho-fang, literally the Cook's Holiday. The manuscript goes on to say, that the art of roasting, or rather broiling (which I take to be the elder brother) was accidentally discovered in the manner following. The swine-herd, Ho-ti, having gone out into the woods one morning, as his manner was, to collect mast for his hogs, left his cottage in the care of his eldest son Bo-bo, a great lubberly boy, who being fond of playing with fire, as younkers of his age commonly are, let some sparks escape into a bundle of straw, which kindling quickly, spread the conflagration over every part of their poor mansion, till it was reduced to ashes. Together with the cottage (a sorry antediluvian make-shift of a building, you may think it), what was of much more importance, a fine litter of new-farrowed pigs, no less than nine in number, perished. China pigs have been esteemed a luxury all over the East from the

remotest periods that we read of. Bo-bo was in utmost consternation, as you may think, not so much for the sake of the tenement, which his father and he could easily build up again with a few dry branches, and the labor of an hour or two, at any time, as for the loss of the pigs. While he was thinking what he should say to his father, and wringing his hands over the smoking remnants of one of those untimely sufferers, an odor assailed his nostrils, unlike any scent which he had before experienced. What could it proceed from? — not from the burnt cottage — he had smelt that smell before — indeed this was by no means the first accident of the kind which had occurred through the negligence of this unlucky young firebrand. Much less did it resemble that of any known herb, weed, or flower. A premonitory moistening at the same time overflowed his nether lip. He knew not what to think. He next stooped down to feel the pig, if there were any signs of life in it. He burnt his fingers, and to cool them he applied them in his booby fashion to his mouth. Some of the crumbs of the scorched skin had come away with his fingers, and for the first time in his life (in the world's life indeed, for before him no man had known it) he tasted — *crackling!* Again he felt and fumbled at the pig. It did not burn him so much now, still he licked his fingers from a sort of habit. The truth at length broke into his slow understanding, that it was the pig that smelt so, and the pig that tasted so delicious; and, surrendering himself up to the newbor pleasure, he fell to tearing up whole handfuls of the scorched skin with the flesh next it, and was cramming it down his throat in his beastly fashion, when his sire entered amid the smoking rafters, armed with retributory cudgel, and finding how affairs stood, began to rain blows upon the young rogue's shoulders, as thick as hailstones, which Bo-bo heeded not any more than if they had been flies. The tickling pleasure, which he experienced in his lower regions, had rendered him quite callous to any inconveniences he might feel in those remote quarters. His father might lay on, but he could not beat him from his pig, till he had fairly made an end of it, when, becoming a little more sensible of his situation, something like the following dialogue ensued.

"You graceless whelp, what have you got there devouring? Is it not enough that you have burnt me down three houses with your dog's tricks, and be hanged to you, but you must be eating fire, and I know not what — what have you got there, I say?"

"O, father, the pig, the pig, do come and taste how nice the burnt pig eats."

The ears of Ho-ti tingled with horror. He cursed his son, and he cursed himself that ever he should beget a son that should eat burnt pig.

Bo-bo, whose scent was wonderfully sharpened since morning, soon raked out another pig, and fairly rending it asunder, thrust the lesser half by main force into the fists of Ho-ti, still shouting out "Eat, eat, eat the burnt pig, father, only taste — O Lord," — with such-like barbarous ejaculations, cramming all the while as if he would choke.

Ho-ti trembled every joint while he grasped the abominable thing, wavering whether he should not put his son to death for an unnatural young monster, when the cracklin scorching his fingers, as it had done his son's and applying the same remedy to them, he in his turn tasted some of its flavor, which make what sour mouths he would for a pre tence, proved not altogether displeasing t him. In conclusion (for the manuscript her is a little tedious) both father and son fairly sat down to the mess, and never left off ti they had despatched all that remained of th litter.

Bo-bo was strictly enjoined not to let th secret escape, for the neighbors would certainly have stoned them for a couple c abominable wretches, who could think of im proving upon the good meat which God ha set them. Nevertheless, strange stories go about. It was observed that Ho-ti's cottag was burnt down now more frequently tha ever. Nothing but fires from this time for wood. Some would break out in broad day others in the night-time. As often as th sow farrowed, so sure was the house of Ho-t to be in a blaze; and Ho-ti himself, whic was the more remarkable, instead of chastis ing his son, seemed to grow more indulgen to him than ever. At length they wer watched, the terrible mystery discovered and father and son summoned to take the trial at Pekin, then an inconsiderable assiz town. Evidence was given, the obnoxiou food itself produced in court, and verdic about to be pronounced, when the forema of the jury begged that some of the burn pig, of which the culprits stood accuse might be handed into the box. He handle it, and they all handled it, and burning thei fingers, as Bo-bo and his father had done be fore them, and nature prompting to each c

them the same remedy, against the face of all the facts, and the clearest charge which judge had ever given, — to the surprise of the whole court, townsfolk, strangers, reporters, and all present — without leaving the box, or any manner of consultation whatever, they brought in a simultaneous verdict of Not Guilty.

The judge, who was a shrewd fellow, winked at the manifest iniquity of the decision; and, when the court was dismissed, went privily, and bought up all the pigs that could be had for love or money. In a few days his Lordship's town house was observed to be on fire. The thing took wing, and now there was nothing to be seen but fires in every direction. Fuel and pigs grew enormously dear all over the district. The insurance offices one and all shut up shop. People built slighter and slighter every day, until it was feared that the very science of architecture would in no long time be lost to the world. Thus this custom of firing houses continued, till in process of time, says my manuscript, a sage arose, like our Locke, who made a discovery, that the flesh of swine, or indeed of any other animal, might be cooked (*burnt*, as they called it) without the necessity of consuming a whole house to dress it. Then first began the rude form of a gridiron. Roasting by the string, or spit, came in a century or two later, I forget in whose dynasty. By such slow degrees, concludes the manuscript, do the most useful, and seemingly the most obvious arts, make their way among mankind. ——

Without placing too implicit faith in the account above given, it must be agreed, that if a worthy pretext for so dangerous an experiment as setting houses on fire (especially in these days) could be assigned in favor of any culinary object, that pretext and excuse might be found in ROAST PIG.

Of all the delicacies in the whole *mundus edibilis*,[1] I will maintain it to be the most delicate — *princeps obsoniorum*.[2]

I speak not of your grown porkers — things between pig and pork — those hobbledehoys — but a young and tender suckling — under a moon old — guiltless as yet of the sty — with no original speck of the *amor immunditiæ*,[3] the hereditary failing of the first parent, yet manifest — his voice as yet not broken, but something between a childish treble, and a grumble — the mild forerunner or *præludium*, of a grunt.

*He must be roasted.* I am not ignorant that our ancestors ate them seethed, or boiled — but what a sacrifice of the exterior tegument!

There is no flavor comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well-watched, not over-roasted, *crackling*, as it is well called — the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure at this banquet in overcoming the coy, brittle resistance — with the adhesive oleaginous — O call it not fat — but an indefinable sweetness growing up to it — the tender blossoming of fat — fat cropped in the bud — taken in the shoot — in the first innocence — the cream and quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food — the lean, no lean, but a kind of animal manna — or, rather, fat, and lean, (if it must be so) so blended and running into each other, that both together make but one ambrosian result, or common substance.

Behold him, while he is doing — it seemeth rather a refreshing warmth, than a scorching heat, that he is so passive to. How equably he twirleth round the string! — Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age, he hath wept out his pretty eyes — radiant jellies — shooting stars. —

See him in the dish, his second cradle, how meek he lieth! — wouldst thou have had this innocent grow up to the grossness and indocility which too often accompany maturer swinehood? Ten to one he would have proved a glutton, a sloven, an obstinate, disagreeable animal — wallowing in all manner of filthy conversation — from these sins he is happily snatched away —

> Ere sin could blight, or sorrow fade,
> Death came with timely care —

his memory is odoriferous — no clown curseth, while his stomach half rejecteth, the rank bacon — no coal-heaver bolteth him in reeking sausages — he hath a fair sepulchre in the grateful stomach of the judicious epicure — and for such a tomb might be content to die.

He is the best of Sapors. Pine-apple is great. She is indeed almost too transcendent — a delight, if not sinful, yet so like to sinning, that really a tender-conscienced person would do well to pause — too ravishing for mortal taste, she woundeth and excoriateth the lips that approach her — like lovers' kisses, she biteth — she is a pleasure bordering on pain from the fierceness and insanity of her relish — but she stoppeth at the palate — she meddleth not with the

1 world of eatables. 2 prince of viands.
3 love of the unclean.

appetite — and the coarsest hunger might barter her consistently for a mutton chop.

Pig — let me speak his praise — is no less provocative of the appetite, than he is satisfactory to the criticalness of the censorious palate. The strong man may batten on him, and weakling refuseth not his mild juices.

Unlike to mankind's mixed characters, a bundle of virtues and vices, inexplicably intertwisted, and not to be unravelled without hazard, he is — good throughout. No part of him is better or worse than another. He helpeth, as far as his little means extend, all around. He is the least envious of banquets. He is all neighbors' fare.

I am one of those, who freely and ungrudgingly impart a share of the good things of this life which fall to their lot (few as mine are in this kind) to a friend. I protest I take a great an interest in my friend's pleasures, his relishes, and proper satisfactions, as in mine own. "Presents," I often say, "end ar Absents." Hares, pheasants, partridges, snipes, barn-door chickens (those "tame villatic fowl"), capons, plovers, brawn, barrels of oysters, I dispense as freely as I receive them. I love to taste them as it were, upon the tongue of my friend. But a stop must be put somewhere. One would not, like Lear, "give everything." I make my stand upon pig. Methinks it is an ingratitude to the Giver of all good flavors, to extra-domiciliate, or send out of the house, slightingly (under pretext of friendship, or I know not what), a blessing so particularly adapted, predestined, I may say, to my individual palate. — It argues an insensibility.

I remember a touch of conscience in this kind at school. My good old aunt, who never parted from me at the end of a holiday without stuffing a sweetmeat, or some nice thing, into my pocket, had dismissed me one evening with a smoking plum-cake, fresh from the oven. In my way to school (it was over London Bridge) a grey-headed old beggar saluted me (I have no doubt at this time of day that he was a counterfeit). I had no pence to console him with, and in the vanity of self-denial, and the very coxcombry of charity, school-boy like, I made him a present of — the whole cake! I walked on a little, buoyed up, as one is on such occasions, with a sweet soothing of self-satisfaction; but before I had got to the end of the bridge, my better feelings returned, and I burst into tears, thinking how ungrateful I had been to my good aunt, to go an give her good gift away to a stranger, that had never seen before, and who might be bad man for aught I knew; and then thought of the pleasure my aunt would h taking in thinking that I — I myself, and n another — would eat her nice cake — an what should I say to her the next time I sa her — how naughty I was to part with h pretty present! — and the odor of that spic cake came back upon my recollection, an the pleasure, and the curiosity I had taken seeing her make it, and her joy when she se it to the oven, and how disappointed sh would feel that I had never had a bit of it i my mouth at last — and I blamed my in pertinent spirit of alms-giving, and out-o place hypocrisy of goodness, and above all wished never to see the face again of th insidious, good-for-nothing, old grey in postor.

Our ancestors were nice in their method sacrificing these tender victims. We read pigs whipt to death with something of shock, as we hear of any other obsole custom. The age of discipline is gone by, it would be curious to inquire (in a phil sophical light merely) what effect this proce might have towards intenerating and dul fying a substance, naturally so mild a dulcet as the flesh of young pigs. It lool like refining a violet. Yet we should be ca tious, while we condemn the inhumanit how we censure the wisdom of the practic It might impart a gusto. —

I remember an hypothesis, argued upon b the young students, when I was at St. Or er's,[1] and maintained with much learning a pleasantry on both sides, "Whether, suppo ing that the flavor of a pig who obtained h death by whipping (*per flagellationem extremam*) superadded a pleasure upon t palate of a man more intense than any po sible suffering we can conceive in the anim is man justified in using that method of pu ting the animal to death?" I forget the d cision.

His sauce should be considered. Decidedl a few bread crumbs, done up with his liv and brains, and a dash of mild sage. Bu banish, dear Mrs. Cook, I beseech you, t whole onion tribe. Barbecue your whc hogs to your palate, steep them in shalo stuff them out with plantations of the ra and guilty garlic; you cannot poison them, make them stronger than they are — b consider, he is a weakling — a flower.

1 A Roman Catholic college for English boys in Fran

## IN PRAISE OF CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS

Published in the *London Magazine* for May, 1822.

I like to meet a sweep — understand me — not a grown sweeper — old chimney-sweepers are by no means attractive — but one of those tender novices, blooming through their first nigritude, the maternal washings not quite effaced from the cheek — such as come forth with the dawn, or somewhat earlier, with their little professional notes sounding like the *peep peep* of a young sparrow; or liker to the matin lark should I pronounce them, in their aerial ascents not seldom anticipating the sun-rise?

I have a kindly yearning toward these dim specks — poor blots — innocent blacknesses — I reverence these young Africans of our own growth — these almost clergy imps, who sport their cloth without assumption; and from their little pulpits (the tops of chimneys), in the nipping air of a December morning, preach a lesson of patience to mankind.

When a child, what a mysterious pleasure it was to witness their operation! to see a chit no bigger than one's self enter, one knew not by what process, into what seemed the *fauces Averni*[1] — to pursue him in imagination, as he went sounding on through so many dark stifling caverns, horrid shades! — to shudder with the idea that "now, surely, he must be lost for ever!" — to revive at hearing his feeble shout of discovered daylight — and then (O fulness of delight) running out of doors, to come just in time to see the sable phenomenon emerge in safety, the brandished weapon of his art victorious like some flag waved over a conquered citadel! I seem to remember having been told, that a bad sweep was once left in a stack with his brush, to indicate which way the wind blew. It was an awful spectacle certainly; not much unlike the old stage direction in Macbeth, where the "Apparition of a child crowned, with a tree in his hand, rises."

Reader, if thou meetest one of these small gentry in thy early rambles, it is good to give him a penny. It is better to give him two-pence. If it be starving weather, and to the proper troubles of his hard occupation, a pair of kibed heels[2] (no unusual accompaniment) be superadded, the demand on thy humanity will surely rise to a tester.[3]

There is a composition, the ground-work of which I have understood to be the sweet wood 'yclept sassafras. This wood boiled down to a kind of tea, and tempered with an infusion of milk and sugar, hath to some tastes a delicacy beyond the China luxury. I know not how thy palate may relish it; for myself, with every deference to the judicious Mr. Read, who hath time out of mind kept open a shop (the only one he avers in London) for the vending of this "wholesome and pleasant beverage," on the south side of Fleet Street, as thou approachest Bridge Street — *the only Salopian house*,[1] — I have never yet ventured to dip my own particular lip in a basin of his commended ingredients — a cautious premonition to the olfactories constantly whispering to me, that my stomach must infallibly, with all due courtesy, decline it. Yet I have seen palates, otherwise not uninstructed in dietetical elegances, sup it up with avidity.

I know not by what particular conformation of the organ it happens, but I have always found that this composition is surprisingly gratifying to the palate of a young chimney-sweeper — whether the oily particles (sassafras is slightly oleaginous) do attenuate and soften the fuliginous concretions, which are sometimes found (in dissections) to adhere to the roof of the mouth in these unfledged practitioners; or whether Nature, sensible that she had mingled too much of bitter wood in the lot of these raw victims, caused to grow out of the earth her sassafras for a sweet lenitive — but so it is, that no possible taste or odor to the senses of a young chimney-sweeper can convey a delicate excitement comparable to this mixture. Being penniless, they will yet hang their black heads over the ascending steam, to gratify one sense if possible, seemingly no less pleased than those domestic animals — cats — when they purr over a new-found sprig of valerian. There is something more in these sympathies than philosophy can inculcate.

Now albeit Mr. Read boasteth, not without reason, that his is the *only Salopian house;* yet be it known to thee, reader — if thou art one who keepest what are called good hours, thou art haply ignorant of the fact — he hath a race of industrious imitators, who from stalls, and under open sky, dispense the same savory mess to humbler customers, at that dead time of the dawn, when (as extremes meet) the rake, reeling home from his midnight cups, and the hard-handed artisan

1 jaws of Hades. 2 with chilblains. 3 sixpence.

1 Saloop was an herb drink, similar to sassafras tea.

leaving his bed to resume the premature labors of the day, jostle, not unfrequently to the manifest disconcerting of the former, for the honors of the pavement. It is the time when, in summer, between the expired and the not yet relumined kitchen-fires, the kennels of our fair metropolis give forth their least satisfactory odors. The rake, who wisheth to dissipate his o'er-night vapors in more grateful coffee, curses the ungenial fume, as he passeth; but the artisan stops to taste, and blesses the fragrant breakfast.

This is *Saloop* — the precocious herb-woman's darling — the delight of the early gardener, who transports his smoking cabbages by break of day from Hammersmith to Covent Garden's famed piazzas — the delight, and, oh I fear, too often the envy, of the unpennied sweep. Him shouldest thou haply encounter, with his dim visage pendent over the grateful steam, regale him with a sumptuous basin (it will cost thee but three half-pennies) and a slice of delicate bread and butter (an added halfpenny) — so may thy culinary fires, eased of the o'er-charged secretions from thy worse-placed hospitalities, curl up a lighter volume to the welkin — so may the descending soot never taint thy costly well-ingredienced soups — nor the odious cry, quick-reaching from street to street, of the *fired chimney*, invite the rattling engines from ten adjacent parishes, to disturb for a casual scintillation thy peace and pocket!

I am by nature extremely susceptible of street affronts; the jeers and taunts of the populace; the low-bred triumph they display over the casual trip, or splashed stocking, of a gentleman. Yet can I endure the jocularity of a young sweep with something more than forgiveness. — In the last winter but one, pacing along Cheapside with my accustomed precipitation when I walk westward, a treacherous slide brought me upon my back in an instant. I scrambled up with pain and shame enough — yet outwardly trying to face it down, as if nothing had happened — when the roguish grin of one of these young wits encountered me. There he stood, pointing me out with his dusky finger to the mob, and to a poor woman (I suppose his mother) in particular, till the tears for the exquisiteness of the fun (so he thought it) worked themselves out at the corners of his poor red eyes, red from many a previous weeping, and soot-inflamed, yet twinkling through all with such a joy, snatched out of desolation, that Hogarth[1] —— but Hogarth has got hi already (how could he miss him?) in t March to Finchley, grinning at the piem —— there he stood, as he stands in the pi ture, irremovable, as if the jest was to last f ever — with such a maximum of glee, a minimum of mischief, in his mirth — for t grin of a genuine sweep hath absolutely malice in it — that I could have been conter if the honor of a gentleman might endure to have remained his butt and his mocke till midnight.

I am by theory obdurate to the seductiv ness of what are called a fine set of teet Every pair of rosy lips (the ladies must pa don me) is a casket, presumably holding su jewels; but, methinks, they should take lea to "air" them as frugally as possible. T fine lady, or fine gentleman, who show n their teeth, show me bones. Yet must I co fess, that from the mouth of a true sweep display (even to ostentation) of those whi and shining ossifications, strikes me as a agreeable anomaly in manners, and an allov able piece of foppery. It is, as when

> A sable cloud
> Turns forth her silver lining on the night.

It is like some remnant of gentry not qui extinct; a badge of better days; a hint nobility: — and, doubtless, under the ol scuring darkness and double night of the forlorn disguisement, oftentimes lurket good blood, and gentle conditions, derive from lost ancestry, and a lapsed pedigre The premature apprenticements of the tender victims give but too much encourag ment, I fear, to clandestine, and almost i fantile abductions; the seeds of civility a true courtesy, so often discernible in the young grafts (not otherwise to be accounte for) plainly hint at some forced adoption many noble Rachels mourning for the children, even in our days, countenance t fact; the tales of fairy-spiriting may shadow lamentable verity, and the recovery of t young Montagu[2] be but a solitary instan of good fortune, out of many irreparable a hopeless *defiliations*.

In one of the state-beds at Arundel Castl a few years since — under a ducal canopy (that seat of the Howards is an object curiosity to visitors, chiefly for its beds, which the late duke was especially a co

1 William Hogarth (1697–1764), an English paint and engraver. The March to Finchley was the subject one of his prints.

2 Edward Wortley Montagu ran away from We minster School to become for a time a chimney-sweep

noisseur) — encircled with curtains of delicatest crimson, with starry coronets interwoven — folded between a pair of sheets whiter and softer than the lap where Venus lulled Ascanius — was discovered by chance, after all methods of search had failed, at noonday, fast asleep, a lost chimney-sweeper. The little creature, having somehow confounded his passage among the intricacies of those lordly chimneys, by some unknown aperture had alighted upon this magnificent chamber; and, tired with his tedious explorations, was unable to resist the delicious invitement to repose, which he there saw exhibited; so, creeping between the sheets very quietly, laid his black head upon the pillow, and slept like a young Howard.

Such is the account given to the visitors at the Castle. — But I cannot help seeming to perceive a confirmation of what I have just hinted at in this story. A high instinct was at work in the case, or I am mistaken. Is it probable that a poor child of that description, with whatever weariness he might be visited, would have ventured, under such a penalty, as he would be taught to expect, to uncover the sheets of a Duke's bed, and deliberately to lay himself down between them, when the rug, or the carpet, presented an obvious couch, still far above his pretensions — is this probable, I would ask, if the great power of nature, which I contend for, had not been manifested within him, prompting to the adventure? Doubtless this young nobleman (for such my mind misgives me that he must be) was allured by some memory, not amounting to full consciousness, of his condition in infancy, when he was used to be lapt by his mother, or his nurse, in just such sheets as he there found, into which he was but now creeping back as into his proper *incunabula*,[1] and resting-place. — By no other theory, than by this sentiment of a pre-existent state (as I may call it), can I explain a deed so venturous, and, indeed, upon any other system, so indecorous, in this tender, but unseasonable, sleeper.

My pleasant friend JEM WHITE[2] was so impressed with a belief of metamorphoses like this frequently taking place, that in some sort to reverse the wrongs of fortune in these poor changelings, he instituted an annual feast of chimney-sweepers, at which it was his pleasure to officiate as host and waiter. It was a solemn supper held in Smithfield, upon the yearly return of the fair of St. Bartholomew. Cards were issued a week before to the master-sweeps in and about the metropolis, confining the invitation to their younger fry. Now and then an elderly stripling would get in among us, and be good-naturedly winked at; but our main body were infantry. One unfortunate wight, indeed, who relying upon his dusky suit, had intruded himself into our party, but by tokens was providentially discovered in time to be no chimney-sweeper (all is not soot which looks so), was quoited out of the presence with universal indignation, as not having on the wedding garment; but in general the greatest harmony prevailed. The place chosen was a convenient spot among the pens, at the north side of the fair, not so far distant as to be impervious to the agreeable hubbub of that vanity; but remote enough not to be obvious to the interruption of every gaping spectator in it. The guests assembled about seven. In those little temporary parlors three tables were spread with napery, not so fine as substantial, and at every board a comely hostess presided with her pan of hissing sausages. The nostrils of the young rogues dilated at the savor. JAMES WHITE, as head waiter, had charge of the first table; and myself, with our trusty companion BIGOD,[1] ordinarily ministered to the other two. There was clambering and jostling, you may be sure, who should get at the first table — for Rochester in his maddest days could not have done the humors of the scene with more spirit than my friend. After some general expression of thanks for the honor the company had done him, his inaugural ceremony was to clasp the greasy waist of old dame Ursula (the fattest of the three), that stood frying and fretting, half-blessing, half-cursing "the gentleman," and imprint upon her chaste lips a tender salute, whereat the universal host would set up a shout that tore the concave, while hundreds of grinning teeth startled the night with their brightness. O it was a pleasure to see the sable younkers lick in the unctuous meat, with *his* more unctuous sayings — how he would fit the tit-bits to the puny mouths, reserving the lengthier links for the seniors — how he would intercept a morsel even in the jaws of some young desperado, declaring it "must to the pan again to be browned, for it was not fit for a gentleman's eating" — how he would recommend this slice of white bread, or that piece of kissing-crust, to a tender

1 cradle clothes.
2 A schoolfellow of Lamb's at Christ's Hospital.

1 John Fenwick.

juvenile, advising them all to have a care of cracking their teeth, which were their best patrimony — how genteelly he would deal about the small ale, as if it were wine, naming the brewer, and protesting, if it were not good he should lose their custom; with a special recommendation to wipe the lip before drinking. Then we had our toasts — "The King," — the "Cloth," — which, whether they understood or not, was equally diverting and flattering; — and for a crowning sentiment, which never failed, "May the Brush supersede the Laurel." All these, and fifty other fancies, which were rather felt than comprehended by his guests, would he utter, standing upon tables, and prefacing every sentiment with a "Gentlemen, give me leave to propose so and so," which was a prodigious comfort to those young orphans; every now and then stuffing into his mouth (for it did not do to be squeamish on these occasions) indiscriminate pieces of those reeking sausages, which pleased them mightily, and was the savoriest part, you may believe, of the entertainment.

> Golden lads and lasses must,
> As chimney-sweepers, come to dust —

James White is extinct, and with him these suppers have long ceased. He carried away with him half the fun of the world when he died — of my world at least. His old clients look for him among the pens; and, missing him, reproach the altered feast of St. Bartholomew, and the glory of Smithfield departed for ever.

## POOR RELATIONS

Published in the *London Magazine* for May, 1823. In style it is in part an excellent imitation of the character writing of the seventeenth century.

A poor Relation — is the most irrelevant thing in nature, — a piece of impertinent correspondency, — an odious approximation, — a haunting conscience, — a preposterous shadow, lengthening in the noontide of our prosperity, — an unwelcome remembrancer, — a perpetually recurring mortification, — a drain on your purse, — a more intolerable dun upon your pride, — a drawback upon success, — a rebuke to your rising, — a stain in your blood, — a blot on your 'scutcheon, — a rent in your garment, — a death's head at your banquet, — Agathocles' pot,[1] — a Mordecai in your gate, — a Lazarus at your door, — a lion in your path, — a frog in your chamber, — a fly in your ointment, — a mote in your eye, — a triumph to your enemy, an apology to your friends, — the one thing not needful, — the hail in harvest, — the ounce of sour in a pound of sweet.

He is known by his knock. Your heart telleth you "That is Mr. ——." A rap, between familiarity and respect; that demand and, at the same time, seems to despair of entertainment. He entereth smiling and embarrassed. He holdeth out his hand to you to shake, and — draweth it back again. He casually looketh in about dinner-time — when the table is full. He offereth to go away, seeing you have company, but is induced to stay. He filleth a chair, and your visitor's two children are accommodated at a side table. He never cometh upon opedays, when your wife says with some complacency, "My dear, perhaps Mr. —— will drop in to-day." He remembereth birthdays — and professeth he is fortunate to have stumbled upon one. He declareth against fish, the turbot being small — yet sufferethhimself to be importuned into a slice against his first resolution. He sticketh by the pot — yet will be prevailed upon to empty the remainder glass of claret, if a stranger presses it upon him. He is a puzzle to the servant who are fearful of being too obsequious, or not civil enough, to him. The guests think "they have seen him before." Everyone speculateth upon his condition; and the most part take him to be — a tide waiter. He calleth you by your Christian name, to impl that his other is the same with your own He is too familiar by half, yet you wish he had less diffidence. With half the familiarity he might pass for a casual dependent; with more boldness he would be in no danger of being taken for what he is. He is too humble for a friend, yet taketh on him more state than befits a client. He is a worse guest than a country tenant, inasmuch as he bringeth us no rent — yet 'tis odds, from his garb and demeanor, that your guests take him for one. He is asked to make one at the whist table; refuseth on the score of poverty, and — resents being left out. When the company break up he proffereth to go for a coach — and lets the servant go. He recollects your grandfather; and will thrust in some mean and quite unimportant anecdote of —

[1] Agathocles was the son of a potter. He became the ruler of Sicily.

the family. He knew it when it was not quite so flourishing as "he is blest in seeing it now." He reviveth past situations to institute what he calleth — favorable comparisons. With a reflecting sort of congratulation, he will inquire the price of your furniture: and insults you with a special commendation of your window-curtains. He is of opinion that the urn is the more elegant shape, but, after all, there was something more comfortable about the old tea-kettle — which you must remember. He dare say you must find a great convenience in having a carriage of your own, and appealeth to your lady if it is not so. Inquireth if you have had your arms done on vellum yet; and did not know, till lately, that such-and-such had been the crest of the family. His memory is unseasonable; his compliments perverse; his talk a trouble; his stay pertinacious; and when he goeth away, you dismiss his chair into a corner, as precipitately as possible, and feel fairly rid of two nuisances.

There is a worse evil under the sun, and that is — a female Poor Relation. You may do something with the other; you may pass him off tolerably well; but your indigent sherelative is hopeless. "He is an old humorist," you may say, "and affects to go threadbare. His circumstances are better than folks would take them to be. You are fond of having a Character at your table, and truly he is one." But in the indications of female poverty there can be no disguise. No woman dresses below herself from caprice. The truth must out without shuffling. "She is plainly related to the L——s; or what does she at their house?" She is, in all probability, your wife's cousin. Nine times out of ten, at least, this is the case. Her garb is something between a gentlewoman and a beggar, yet the former evidently predominates. She is most provokingly humble, and ostentatiously sensible to her inferiority. He may require to be repressed sometimes — *aliquando sufflaminandus erat*[1] — but there is no raising her. You send her soup at dinner, and she begs to be helped — after the gentlemen. Mr. —— requests the honor of taking wine with her; she hesitates between Port and Madeira, and chooses the former — because he does. She calls the servant *Sir;* and insists on not troubling him to hold her plate. The housekeeper patronizes her. The children's governess takes upon her to correct her, when she has mistaken the piano for harpsichord.

1 Sometimes he had to be restrained.

Richard Amlet, Esq.,[1] in the play, is a noticeable instance of the disadvantages to which this chimerical notion of *affinity constituting a claim to an acquaintance*, may subject the spirit of a gentleman. A little foolish blood is all that is betwixt him and a lady with a great estate. His stars are perpetually crossed by the malignant maternity of an old woman, who persists in calling him "her son Dick." But she has wherewithal in the end to recompense his indignities, and float him again upon the brilliant surface, under which it had been her seeming business and pleasure all along to sink him. All men, besides, are not of Dick's temperament. I knew an Amlet in real life, who wanting Dick's buoyancy, sank indeed. Poor W——[2] was of my own standing at Christ's, a fine classic, and a youth of promise. If he had a blemish, it was too much pride; but its quality was inoffensive; it was not of that sort which hardens the heart, and serves to keep inferiors at a distance; it only sought to ward off derogation from itself. It was the principle of self-respect carried as far as it could go, without infringing upon that respect, which he would have every one else equally maintain for himself. He would have you to think alike with him on this topic. Many a quarrel have I had with him, when we were rather older boys, and our tallness made us more obnoxious to observation in the blue clothes, because I would not thread the alleys and blind ways of the town with him to elude notice, when we have been out together on a holiday in the streets of this sneering and prying metropolis. W—— went, sore with these notions, to Oxford, where the dignity and sweetness of a scholar's life, meeting with the alloy of a humble introduction, wrought in him a passionate devotion to the place, with a profound aversion to the society. The servitor's gown (worse than his school array) clung to him with Nessian venom.[3] He thought himself ridiculous in a garb, under which Latimer must have walked erect; and in which Hooker, in his young days, possibly flaunted in a vein of no discommendable vanity. In the depths of college shades, or in his lonely chamber, the poor student shrunk from observation. He found shelter among books, which insult not; and studies, that ask no questions of a youth's

1 In Vanbrugh's *The Confederacy.*

2 Favell, referred to in *Christ's Hospital.* "Favell left Cambridge because he was ashamed of his father who was a house-painter there." (Lamb's note.)

3 A reference to "the shirt of Nessus," by which Hercules was poisoned.

finances. He was lord of his library, and seldom cared for looking out beyond his domains. The healing influence of studious pursuits was upon him, to soothe and to abstract. He was almost a healthy man; when the waywardness of his fate broke out against him with a second and worse malignity. The father of W—— had hitherto exercised the humble profession of house-painter at N——, near Oxford. A supposed interest with some of the heads of colleges had now induced him to take up his abode in that city, with the hope of being employed upon some public works which were talked of. From that moment I read in the countenance of the young man, the determination which at length tore him from academical pursuits for ever. To a person unacquainted with our Universities, the distance between the gownsmen and the townsmen, as they are called — the trading part of the latter especially — is carried to an excess that would appear harsh and incredible. The temperament of W——'s father was diametrically the reverse of his own. Old W—— was a little, busy, cringing tradesman, who, with his son upon his arm, would stand bowing and scraping, cap in hand, to anything that wore the semblance of a gown — insensible to the winks and opener remonstrances of the young man, to whose chamber-fellow, or equal in standing, perhaps, he was thus obsequiously and gratuitously ducking. Such a state of things could not last. W—— must change the air of Oxford or be suffocated. He chose the former; and let the sturdy moralist, who strains the point of the filial duties as high as they can bear, censure the dereliction; he cannot estimate the struggle. I stood with W——, the last afternoon I ever saw him, under the eaves of his paternal dwelling. It was in the fine lane leading from the High Street to the back of —— college, where W—— kept his rooms. He seemed thoughtful, and more reconciled. I ventured to rally him — finding him in a better mood — upon a representation of the Artist Evangelist, which the old man, whose affairs were beginning to flourish, had caused to be set up in a splendid sort of frame over his really handsome shop, either as a token of prosperity, or badge of gratitude to his saint. W—— looked up at the Luke, and, like Satan, "knew his mounted sign — and fled." A letter on his father's table the next morning, announced that he had accepted a commission in a regiment about to embark for Portugal. He was among the first who perished before the walls of St. Sebastian.[1]

I do not know how, upon a subject which began with treating half seriously, I should have fallen upon a recital so eminently painful; but this theme of poor relationship replete with so much matter for tragic as well as comic associations, that it is difficult to keep the account distinct without blending. The earliest impressions which I conceived on this matter, are certainly not attended with anything painful, or very humiliating, in the recalling. At my father's table (no very splendid one) was to be found, every Saturday, the mysterious figure of an aged gentleman, clothed in neat black, of a sad yet comely appearance. His deportment was the essence of gravity; his words few or none; and I was not to make a noise in his presence. I had little inclination to have done so; for my cue was to admire in silence. A particular elbow chair was appropriated to him, which was in no case to be violated. A particular sort of sweet pudding, which appeared on no other occasion, distinguished the day of his coming. I used to think him a prodigiously rich man. All I could make out of him was, that he and my father had been schoolfellows a world ago at Lincoln, and that he came from the Mint. The Mint I knew to be a place where all the money was coined — and I thought he was the owner of all the money. Awful ideas of the Tower twinkled themselves about his presence. He seemed above human infirmities and passions. A sort of melancholy grandeur invested him. From some inexplicable doom I fancied him obliged to go about in an eternal suit of mourning; a captive — a stately being, let out of the Tower on Saturdays. Often have I wondered at the temerity of my father, who, in spite of an habitual general respect which we all in common manifested towards him, would venture now and then to stand up against him in some argument, touching their youthful days. The houses of the ancient city of Lincoln are divided (as most of my readers know) between the dwellers on the hill, and in the valley. This marked distinction formed an obvious division between the boys who lived above (however brought together in a common school) and the boys whose paternal residence was on the plain — a sufficient cause of hostility in the code of these young Grotiuses. My father had been a leading Mountaineer; and would still maintain the general superiority, in skill and

[1] In its siege by Wellington in 1813.

hardihood, of the *Above Boys* (his own faction) over the *Below Boys* (so were they called), of which party his contemporary had been a chieftain. Many and hot were the skirmishes on this topic — the only one upon which the old gentleman was ever brought out — and bad blood bred; even sometimes almost to the recommencement (so I expected) of actual hostilities. But my father, who scorned to insist upon advantages, generally contrived to turn the conversation upon some adroit by-commendation of the old Minster; in the general preference of which, before all other cathedrals in the island, the dweller on the hill, and the plain-born, could meet on a conciliating level, and lay down their less important differences. Once only I saw the old gentleman really ruffled, and I remembered with anguish the thought that came over me: "Perhaps he will never come here again." He had been pressed to take another plate of the viand, which I have already mentioned as the indispensable concomitant of his visits. He had refused with a resistance amounting to rigor, when my aunt — an old Lincolnian, but who had something of this in common with my cousin Bridget, that she would sometimes press civility out of season — uttered the following memorable application — "Do take another slice, Mr. Billet, for you do not get pudding every day." The old gentleman said nothing at the time — but he took occasion in the course of the evening, when some argument had intervened between them, to utter with an emphasis which chilled the company, and which chills me now as I write it — "Woman, you are superannuated." John Billet did not survive long, after the digesting of this affront: but he survived long enough to assure me that peace was actually restored! and, if I remember aright, another pudding was discreetly substituted in the place of that which had occasioned the offence. He died at the Mint (anno 1781) where he had long held, what he accounted, a comfortable independence; and with five pounds, fourteen shillings, and a penny, which were found in his escritoire after his decease, left the world, blessing God that he had enough to bury him, and that he had never been obliged to any man for a sixpence. This was — a Poor Relation.

## A CHARACTER OF THE LATE ELIA

BY A FRIEND

This bit of self-portraiture was published in the *London Magazine* for January, 1823, shortly after the publication of the first collection of *Essays of Elia*. In abbreviated form it was used as a preface to the volume, *Last Essays of Elia*, in 1833.

This gentleman, who for some months past had been in a declining way, hath at length paid his final tribute to nature. He just lived long enough (it was what he wished) to see his papers collected into a volume. The pages of the *London Magazine* will henceforth know him no more.

Exactly at twelve last night, his queer spirit departed; and the bells of Saint Bride's rang him out with the old year. The mournful vibrations were caught in the dining-room of his friends T. and H., and the company, assembled there to welcome in another First of January, checked their carousals in midmirth, and were silent. Janus wept. The gentle P——r, in a whisper, signified his intention of devoting an elegy; and Allan C., nobly forgetful of his countrymen's wrongs, vowed a memoir to his *manes* full and friendly as a *Tale of Lyddalcross*.

To say truth, it is time he were gone. The humor of the thing, if there was ever much in it, was pretty well exhausted; and a two years' and a half existence has been a tolerable duration for a phantom.

I am now at liberty to confess, that much which I have heard objected to my late friend's writings was well-founded. Crude they are, I grant you — a sort of unlicked, incondite things — villanously pranked in an affected array of antique modes and phrases. They had not been *his*, if they had been other than such; and better it is, that a writer should be natural in a self-pleasing quaintness, than to affect a naturalness (so called) that should be strange to him. Egotistical they have been pronounced by some who did not know, that what he tells us, as of himself, was often true only (historically) of another; as in a former Essay (to save many instances) — where under the *first person* (his favorite figure) he shadows forth the forlorn estate of a country-boy placed at a London school, far from his friends and connexions — in direct opposition to his own early history. If it be egotism to imply and twine with his own identity the griefs

and affections of another — making himself many, or reducing many unto himself — then is the skilful novelist, who all along brings in his hero, or heroine, speaking of themselves, the greatest egotist of all; who yet has never, therefore, been accused of that narrowness. And how shall the intenser dramatist escape being faulty, who doubtless, under cover of passion uttered by another, oftentimes gives blameless vent to his most inward feelings, and expresses his own story modestly?

My late friend was in many respects a singular character. Those who did not like him, hated him; and some, who once liked him, afterwards became his bitterest haters. The truth is, he gave himself too little concern what he uttered, and in whose presence. He observed neither time nor place, and would e'en out with what came uppermost. With the severe religionist he would pass for a free-thinker; while the other faction set him down for a bigot, or persuaded themselves that he belied his sentiments. Few understood him; and I am not certain that at all times he quite understood himself. He too much affected that dangerous figure — irony. He sowed doubtful speeches, and reaped plain, unequivocal hatred. — He would interrupt the gravest discussion with some light jest; and yet, perhaps, not quite irrelevant in ears that could understand it. Your long and much talkers hated him. The informal habit of his mind, joined to an inveterate impediment of speech, forbade him to be an orator; and he seemed determined that no one else should play that part when he was present. He was *petit* and ordinary in his person and appearance. I have seen him sometimes in what is called good company, but where he has been a stranger, sit silent, and be suspected for an odd fellow; till some unlucky occasion provoking it, he would stutter out some senseless pun (not altogether senseless perhaps, if rightly taken) which has stamped his character for the evening. It was hit or miss with him; but nine times out of ten, he contrived by this device to send away a whole company his enemies. His conceptions rose kindlier than his utterance, and his happiest *impromptus* had the appearance of effort. He has been accused of trying to be witty, when in truth he was but struggling to give his poor thoughts articulation. He chose his companions for some individuality of character which they manifested. — Hence, not many persons of science, and few professed *literati*, were of his councils. They were, for the most part, pe sons of an uncertain fortune; and, as to suc people commonly nothing is more obnoxiou than a gentleman of settled (though mode ate) income, he passed with most of them f a great miser. To my knowledge this was mistake. His *intimados*,[1] to confess a truth were in the world's eye a ragged regimen He found them floating on the surface of s ciety; and the color, or something else, the weed pleased him. The burrs stuck him — but they were good and loving bur for all that. He never greatly cared for th society of what are called good people. any of these were scandalized (and offence were sure to arise), he could not help i When he has been remonstrated with for no making more concessions to the feelings good people, he would retort by asking, wha one point did these good people ever concec to him? He was temperate in his meals an diversions, but always kept a little on th side of abstemiousness. Only in the use the Indian weed he might be thought a litt excessive. He took it, he would say, as solvent of speech. Marry — as the friend vapor ascended, how his prattle would cu up sometimes with it! the ligaments, whic tongue-tied him, were loosened, and th stammerer proceeded a statist!

I do not know whether I ought to bemoa or rejoice that my old friend is departed. H jests were beginning to grow obsolete, an his stories to be found out. He felt the a proaches of age; and while he pretended t cling to life, you saw how slender were th ties left to bind him. Discoursing with hi latterly on this subject, he expressed himse with a pettishness, which I thought u worthy of him. In our walks about his sul urban retreat (as he called it) at Shacklewel some children belonging to a school of i dustry had met us, and bowed and cur seyed, as he thought, in an especial manne to *him*. "They take me for a visiting go ernor," he muttered earnestly. He had horror, which he carried to a foible, of lookir like anything important and parochial. H thought that he approached nearer to th stamp daily. He had a general aversic from being treated like a grave or respectab character, and kept a wary eye upon the a vances of age that should so entitle him. H herded always, while it was possible, wit people younger than himself. He did n conform to the march of time, but w dragged along in the procession. His ma

1 intimates.

ners lagged behind his years. He was too much of the boy-man. The *toga virilis* [1] never sate gracefully on his shoulders. The impressions of infancy had burnt into him, and he resented the impertinence of manhood. These were weaknesses; but such as they were, they are a key to explicate some of his writings.

[He left little property behind him. Of course, the little that is left (chiefly in India bonds) devolves upon his cousin Bridget. A few critical dissertations were found in his *escritoire*, which have been handed over to the editor of this magazine, in which it is to be hoped they will shortly appear, retaining his accustomed signature.

He has himself not obscurely hinted that his employment lay in a public office. The gentlemen in the export department of the East India House will forgive me if I acknowledge the readiness with which they assisted me in the retrieval of his few manuscripts. They pointed out in a most obliging manner the desk at which he had been planted for forty years; showed me ponderous tomes of figures, in his own remarkably neat hand, which, more properly than his few printed tracts, might be called his "Works." They seemed affectionate to his memory, and universally commended his expertness in book-keeping. It seems he was the inventor of some ledger which should combine the precision and certainty of the Italian double entry (I think they called it) with the brevity and facility of some newer German system; but I am not able to appreciate the worth of the discovery. I have often heard him express a warm regard for his associates in office, and how fortunate he considered himself in having his lot thrown in amongst them. "There is more sense, more discourse, more shrewdness, and even talent, among these clerks," he would say, "than in twice the number of authors by profession that I have conversed with." He would brighten up sometimes upon the "old days of the India House," when he consorted with Woodroffe and Wissett, and Peter Corbet (a descendant and worthy representative, bating the point of sanctity, of old facetious Bishop Corbet); and Hoole, who translated Tasso; and Bartlemy Brown, whose father (God assoil him therefor!) modernized Walton; and sly, warm-hearted old Jack Cole (King Cole they called him in those days) and Campe and Fombelle, and a world of choice spirits, more than I can remember to name, who associated in those days with Jack Burrell (the *bon-vivant* of the South-Sea House); and little Eyton (said to be a facsimile of Pope, — he was a miniature of a gentleman), that was cashier under him; and Dan Voight of the Custom-house, that left the famous library.

Well, Elia is gone, — for aught I know, to be re-united with them, — and these poor traces of his pen are all we have to show for it. How little survives of the wordiest authors! Of all they said or did in their lifetime, a few glittering words only! His Essays found some favorers, as they appeared separately; they shuffled their way in the crowd well enough singly; how they will *read*, now they are brought together, is a question for the publishers, who have thus ventured to draw out into one piece his "weaved-up follies."]

PHIL-ELIA.

1 The Roman dress of manhood.

## WILLIAM HAZLITT (1778–1830)

The father of William Hazlitt was a Unitarian clergyman, settled for a time at Maidstone, where in 1778 his second son, William, was born. The family moved to the United States in 1783, but returned to England in 1786. William was sent to a theological college at Hackney, but most of his education was the result of his own reading. In 1798, when the Hazlitts were living at Wem, in Shropshire, began the connection with Coleridge, narrated in *First Acquaintance with Poets*. He spent some time in Paris 1802–03, trying to become a painter. Returning to London he wrote on philosophy, politics, economics, and grammar. In 1808 he married Sarah Stoddard, who had a small estate at Winterslow near Salisbury, where they spent a number of years. In 1812 Hazlitt delivered a series of lectures on Modern Philosophy, but soon turned his attention to literature and dramatic criticism. He became dramatic critic of the *Morning Chronicle*, and delivered series of lectures on Shakespeare's characters and the *Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth*, as well as on *The English Poets* and *The English Comic Writers*. His enduring fame, however, rests on the essays which he wrote for Hunt's *Examiner*, the *London Magazine*, and others, and which were collected under the titles, *The Round Table*, *Table Talk*, *The Plain Speaker*.

A series of criticisms on leading contemporary figures, called *The Spirit of the Age*, appeared in 1825. He also published a *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*, 1828–30. He died in 1830.

Hazlitt was a friend of Charles Lamb, and a member of his circle, but no two men could have been more opposed in character and attitude toward life. Lamb was kindness itself, a perfect friend, drawing men to himself and to each other. Hazlitt was harsh and bitter, quarreling fiercely with his many enemies and sometimes with his few friends. As the result of his youth within a small dissenting body and his irregular education he felt a sense of exclusion from normal society. This became real when he espoused the cause of the French Revolution and Napoleon Bonaparte, with whom his country was at war. He is said to have been one of four men in London to whom the British victory of Waterloo was a tragedy. His pro-French views were the cause of bitter hostility by the Tory reviews, the *Quarterly* and *Blackwood's*, which attacked his literary work without mercy. He responded with the ferocious *Letter to William Gifford*, the Editor of the *Quarterly*, in *The Spirit of the Age*. Hazlitt suffered keenly from his social maladjustment though he carried it off with a kind of defiant bohemianism. He was a sensitive spirit. His sensibility and his complete freedom of speech are the chief qualities of his criticism. He felt keenly both beauty and deformity, and he expressed his feeling with gusto. This quality is still more notable in his essays upon life, such as *On Going a Journey*, or *The Fight*. But with Hazlitt life and literature were not separate. His reading and his writing were important parts of his experience, and hence his attitude toward literature whether critical or creative remains extraordinarily vital.

Hazlitt's works have been collected in twelve volumes edited by Waller and Glover with an introductory essay by William Ernest Henley (1902–04). *Memoirs of William Hazlitt* (1867) and *Lamb and Hazlitt* (1900), both by his grandson, W. C. Hazlitt, are first-hand sources of information. A short biography by Augustine Birrell (1912) in the English Men of Letters series and a very complete life by P. P. Howe, both partake of the interest of their subject.

## MY FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH POETS

This essay appeared in *The Liberal*, in 1823. Its substance was given in a letter in *The Examiner* in 1817. It throws light on the life of Coleridge and Wordsworth at Nether Stowey described in *Biographia Literaria*, chap. x. (See page 753.)

My father was a Dissenting Minister at W——m [1] in Shropshire; and in the year 1798 (the figures that compose that date are to me like the "dreaded name of Demogorgon" [2]) Mr. Coleridge came to Shrewsbury, to succeed Mr. Rowe in the spiritual charge of a Unitarian congregation there. He did not come till late on the Saturday afternoon before he was to preach; and Mr. Rowe, who himself went down to the coach in a state of anxiety and expectation, to look for the arrival of his successor, could find no one at all answering the description but a round-faced man in a short black coat (like a shooting jacket) which hardly seemed to have been made for him, but who seemed to be talking at a great rate to his fellow-passengers. Mr. Rowe had scarce returned to give an account of his disappointment, when the round-faced man in black entered, and dissipated all doubts on the subject, by beginning to talk. He did not cease while he staid; nor has he since, that I know of. He held the good town of Shrewsbury in delightful suspense for three weeks that he remained there "fluttering the *proud Salopians* [1] like an eagle in a dove-cote"; and the Welsh mountains that skirt the horizon with their tempestuous confusion, agree to have heard no such mystic sounds since the days of

"High-born Hoel's harp or soft Llewellyn's lay!"

As we passed along between W——m and Shrewsbury, and I eyed their blue tops seen through the wintry branches, or the red rustling leaves of the sturdy oak-trees by the roadside, a sound was in my ears as of a Siren's song; I was stunned, startled with it, as from deep sleep; but I had no notion then that I should ever be able to express my admiration to others in motley imagery or quaint allusion, till the light of his genius shone into my soul, like the sun's rays glittering in the puddles of the road. I was at that time dumb, inarticulate, helpless, like a worm by the wayside, crushed, bleeding, lifeless; but now bursting from the deadly bands that bound them,

"With Styx nine times round them,"

my ideas float on winged words, and as the expand their plumes, catch the golden light of other years. My soul has indeed remained in its original bondage, dark, obscure, with longings infinite and unsatisfied; my heart, shut up in the prison-house of thi

1 Wem. 2 *Paradise Lost*, II, 964.

1 People of Shropshire.

rude clay, has never found, nor will it ever find, a heart to speak to; but that my understanding also did not remain dumb and brutish, or at length found a language to express itself, I owe to Coleridge. But this is not to my purpose.

My father lived ten miles from Shrewsbury, and was in the habit of exchanging visits with Mr. Rowe, and with Mr. Jenkins of Whitchurch (nine miles farther on) according to the custom of Dissenting Ministers in each other's neighborhood. A line of communication is thus established, by which the flame of civil and religious liberty is kept alive, and nourishes its smouldering fire unquenchable, like the fires in the Agamemnon of Æschylus, placed at different stations, that waited for ten long years to announce with their blazing pyramids the destruction of Troy. Coleridge had agreed to come over to see my father, according to the courtesy of the country, as Mr. Rowe's probable successor; but in the meantime I had gone to hear him preach the Sunday after his arrival. A poet and a philosopher getting up into a Unitarian pulpit to preach the Gospel, was a romance in these degenerate days, a sort of revival of the primitive spirit of Christianity, which was not to be resisted.

It was in January, 1798, that I rose one morning before daylight, to walk ten miles in the mud, and went to hear this celebrated person preach. Never, the longest day I have to live, shall I have such another walk as this cold, raw, comfortless one, in the winter of the year 1798. *Il y a des impressions que ni le tems ni les circonstances peuvent effacer. Dusse-je vivre des siècles entiers, le doux tems de ma jeunesse ne peut renaître pour moi, ni s'effacer jamais dans ma mémoire.*[1] When I got there, the organ was playing the 100th psalm, and, when it was done, Mr. Coleridge rose and gave out his text, "And he went up into the mountain to pray, HIMSELF, ALONE." As he gave out this text, his voice "rose like a steam of rich distilled perfumes," and when he came to the two last words, which he pronounced loud, deep, and distinct, it seemed to me, who was then young, as if the sounds had echoed from the bottom of the human heart, and as if that prayer might have floated in solemn silence through the universe. The idea of St. John came into mind, "of one crying in the wilderness, who had his loins girt about, and whose food was locusts and wild honey." The preacher then launched into his subject, like an eagle dallying with the wind. The sermon was upon peace and war; upon church and state — not their alliance, but their separation — on the spirit of the world and the spirit of Christianity, not as the same, but as opposed to one another. He talked of those who had "inscribed the cross of Christ on banners dripping with human gore." He made a poetical and pastoral excursion, — and to shew the fatal effects of war, drew a striking contrast between the simple shepherd boy, driving his team afield, or sitting under the hawthorn, piping to his flock, "as though he should never be old," and the same poor country-lad, crimped, kidnapped, brought into town, made drunk at an alehouse, turned into a wretched drummer-boy, with his hair sticking on end with powder and pomatum, a long cue at his back, and tricked out in the loathsome finery of the profession of blood.

"Such were the notes our once-loved poet sung."

And for myself, I could not have been more delighted if I had heard the music of the spheres. Poetry and Philosophy had met together. Truth and Genius had embraced, under the eye and with the sanction of Religion. This was even beyond my hopes. I returned home well satisfied. The sun that was still laboring pale and wan through the sky, obscured by thick mists, seemed an emblem of the *good cause* [1]; and the cold dank drops of dew that hung half melted on the beard of the thistle, had something genial and refreshing in them; for there was a spirit of hope and youth in all nature, that turned everything into good. The face of nature had not then the brand of JUS DIVINUM [2] on it:

"Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe."

On the Tuesday following, the half-inspired speaker came. I was called down into the room where he was, and went half-hoping, half-afraid. He received me very graciously, and I listened for a long time without uttering a word. I did not suffer in his opinion by my silence. "For those two hours," he afterwards was pleased to say, "he was conversing with W. H.'s forehead!" His appearance was different from

1 There are impressions which neither time nor circumstances can efface. If I should live entire centuries, the sweet time of youth cannot return or efface itself from my memory.

1 The cause of freedom, emphasized by the French Revolution.

2 Divine right (of kings).

what I had anticipated from seeing him before. At a distance, and in the dim light of the chapel, there was to me a strange wildness in his aspect, a dusky obscurity, and I thought him pitted with the small-pox. His complexion was at that time clear, and even bright —

"As are the children of yon azure sheen."

His forehead was broad and high, light as if built of ivory, with large projecting eyebrows, and his eyes rolling beneath them like a sea with darkened lustre. "A certain tender bloom his face o'erspread," a purple tinge as we see it in the pale thoughtful complexions of the Spanish portrait-painters, Murillo and Velasquez. His mouth was gross, voluptuous, open, eloquent; his chin good-humored and round; but his nose, the rudder of the face, the index of the will, was small, feeble, nothing — like what he has done. It might seem that the genius of his face as from a height surveyed and projected him (with sufficient capacity and huge aspiration) into the world unknown of thought and imagination, with nothing to support or guide his veering purpose, as if Columbus had launched his adventurous course for the New World in a scallop, without oars or compass. So at least I comment on it after the event. Coleridge in his person was rather above the common size, inclining to the corpulent, or like Lord Hamlet, "somewhat fat and pursy." His hair (now, alas! grey) was then black and glossy as the raven's, and fell in smooth masses over his forehead. This long pendulous hair is peculiar to enthusiasts, to those whose minds tend heavenward; and is traditionally inseparable (though of a different color) from the pictures of Christ. It ought to belong, as a character, to all who preach *Christ crucified*, and Coleridge was at that time one of those!

It was curious to observe the contrast between him and my father, who was a veteran in the cause, and then declining into the vale of years. He had been a poor Irish lad, carefully brought up by his parents, and sent to the University of Glasgow (where he studied under Adam Smith) to prepare him for his future destination. It was his mother's proudest wish to see her son a Dissenting Minister. So if we look back to past generations (as far as eye can reach) we see the same hopes, fears, wishes, followed by the same disappointments, throbbing in the human heart; and so we may see them (if we look forward) rising up for ever, and disappearing, like vaporish bubbles, in the huma breast! After being tossed about from con gregation to congregation in the heats of th Unitarian controversy, and squabbles abou the American war, he had been relegated t an obscure village, where he was to spen the last thirty years of his life, far from th only converse that he loved, the talk abou disputed texts of Scripture and the cause o civil and religious liberty. Here he passe his days, repining but resigned, in the stud of the Bible, and the perusal of the Com mentators, — huge folios, not easily go through, one of which would outlast a win ter! Why did he pore on these from morn t night (with the exception of a walk in th fields or a turn in the garden to gather broc coli-plants or kidney-beans of his own rear ing, with no small degree of pride and pleas ure)? Here were "no figures nor no fan tasies" — neither poetry nor philosophy — nothing to dazzle, nothing to excite moder curiosity; but to his lack-lustre eyes ther appeared, within the pages of the ponderous unwieldy, neglected tomes, the sacred nam of JEHOVAH in Hebrew capitals: presse down by the weight of the style, worn to th last fading thinness of the understanding there were glimpses, glimmering notions o the patriarchal wanderings, with palm-tree hovering in the horizon, and processions o camels at the distance of three thousan years; there was Moses with the Burnin Bush, the number of the Twelve Tribes types, shadows, glosses on the law and th prophets; there were discussions (dul enough) on the age of Methuselah, a mighty speculation! there were outlines, rude guesse at the shape of Noah's Ark and of the riche of Solomon's Temple; questions as to th date of the creation, predictions of the en of all things; the great lapses of time, th strange mutations of the globe were unfolde with the voluminous leaf, as it turned over and though the soul might slumber with a hieroglyphic veil of inscrutable mysterie drawn over it, yet it was in a slumber ill exchanged for all the sharpened realities o sense, wit, fancy, or reason. My father' life was comparatively a dream; but it was a dream of infinity and eternity, of death, th resurrection, and a judgment to come!

No two individuals were ever more unlike than were the host and his guest. A poet was to my father a sort of nondescript: yet whatever added grace to the Unitarian cause was to him welcome. He could hardly have been more surprised or pleased, if our visitor

had worn wings. Indeed, his thoughts had wings; and as the silken sounds rustled round our little wainscoted parlor, my father threw back his spectacles over his forehead, his white hairs mixing with its sanguine hue; and a smile of delight beamed across his rugged cordial face, to think that Truth had found a new ally in Fancy![1] Besides, Coleridge seemed to take considerable notice of me, and that of itself was enough. He talked very familiarly, but agreeably, and glanced over a variety of subjects. At dinner-time he grew more animated, and dilated in a very edifying manner on Mary Wolstonecraft and Mackintosh.[2] The last, he said, he considered (on my father's speaking of his *Vindiciæ Gallicæ* as a capital performance) as a clever scholastic man — a master of the topics, — or as the ready warehouseman of letters, who knew exactly where to lay his hand on what he wanted, though the goods were not his own. He thought him no match for Burke, either in style or matter. Burke was a metaphysician, Mackintosh a mere logician. Burke was an orator (almost a poet) who reasoned in figures, because he had an eye for nature: Mackintosh, on the other hand, was a rhetorician, who had only an eye to commonplaces. On this I ventured to say that I had always entertained a great opinion of Burke, and that (as far as I could find) the speaking of him with contempt might be made the test of a vulgar democratical mind. This was the first observation I ever made to Coleridge, and he said it was a very just and striking one. I remember the leg of Welsh mutton and the turnips on the table that day had the finest flavor imaginable. Coleridge added that Mackintosh and Tom Wedgwood (of whom, however, he spoke highly) had expressed a very indifferent opinion of his friend Mr. Wordsworth, on which he remarked to them — "He strides on so far before you, that he dwindles in the distance!" Godwin[3] had once boasted to him of having carried on an argument with Mackintosh for three hours with dubious success; Coleridge told him — "If there had been a man of genius in the room, he would have settled the question in five minutes." He asked me if I had ever seen Mary Wolstonecraft, and I said, I had once for a few moments, and that she seemed to me to turn off Godwin's objections to something she advanced with quite a playful, easy air. He replied, that "this was only one instance of the ascendancy which people of imagination exercised over those of mere intellect." He did not rate Godwin very high[1] (this was caprice or prejudice, real or affected) but he had a great idea of Mrs. Wolstonecraft's powers of conversation, none at all of her talent for bookmaking. We talked a little about Holcroft.[2] He had been asked if he was not much struck *with* him, and he said, he thought himself in more danger of being struck *by* him. I complained that he would not let me get on at all, for he required a definition of every the commonest word, exclaiming, "What do you mean by a *sensation*, Sir? What do you mean by an *idea?*" This, Coleridge said, was barricading the road to truth: — it was setting up a turnpike-gate at every step we took. I forget a great number of things, many more than I remember; but the day passed off pleasantly, and the next morning Mr. Coleridge was to return to Shrewsbury. When I came down to breakfast, I found that he had just received a letter from his friend T. Wedgwood, making him an offer of £150 a-year if he chose to wave his present pursuit, and devote himself entirely to the study of poetry and philosophy. Coleridge seemed to make up his mind to close with this proposal in the act of tying on one of his shoes. It threw an additional damp on his departure. It took the wayward enthusiast quite from us to cast him into Deva's winding vales, or by the shores of old romance. Instead of living at ten miles distance, of being the pastor of a Dissenting congregation at Shrewsbury, he was henceforth to inhabit the Hill of Parnassus, to be a Shepherd on the Delectable Mountains. Alas! I knew not the way thither, and felt very little gratitude for Mr. Wedgwood's bounty. I was presently relieved from the dilemma; for Mr. Coleridge, asking for a pen and ink, and going to a table to write something on a bit of card, advanced

1 My father was one of those who mistook his talent after all. He used to be very much dissatisfied that I preferred his Letters to his Sermons. The last were forced and dry; the first came naturally from him. For ease, half-plays on words, and a supine, monkish, indolent pleasantry, I have never seen them equalled. (Hazlitt's note.)

2 Mary Wollstonecraft and Sir James Mackintosh were both sympathizers with the French Revolution. The former married William Godwin and was the mother of Mary Godwin, the wife of Shelley. Mackintosh answered Burke's attack on the French Revolution in *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, 1793.

3 William Godwin (1756–1836), a radical, author of *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, 1793.

1 He complained in particular of the presumption of attempting to establish the future immortality of man, "without" (as he said) "knowing what Death was or what Life was" — and the tone in which he pronounced these two words seemed to convey a complete image of both. (Hazlitt's note.)

2 Thomas Holcroft (1745–1809), a dramatist and novelist, also one of the radicals of the time.

towards me with undulating step, and giving me the precious document, said that that was his address, *Mr. Coleridge, Nether Stowey, Somersetshire;* and that he should be glad to see me there in a few weeks' time, and, if I chose, would come half-way to meet me. I was not less surprised than the shepherd-boy (this simile is to be found in Cassandra) when he sees a thunder-bolt fall close at his feet. I stammered out my acknowledgments and acceptance of this offer (I thought Mr. Wedgwood's annuity a trifle to it) as well as I could; and this mighty business being settled, the poet-preacher took leave, and I accompanied him six miles on the road. It was a fine morning in the middle of winter, and he talked the whole way. The scholar in Chaucer is described as going

——"sounding on his way."[1]

So Coleridge went on his. In digressing, in dilating, in passing from subject to subject, he appeared to me to float in air, to slide on ice. He told me in confidence (going along) that he should have preached two sermons before he accepted the situation at Shrewsbury, one on Infant Baptism, the other on the Lord's Supper, shewing that he could not administer either, which would have effectually disqualified him for the object in view. I observed that he continually crossed me on the way by shifting from one side of the footpath to the other. This struck me as an odd movement; but I did not at that time connect it with any instability of purpose or involuntary change of principle, as I have done since. He seemed unable to keep on in a straight line. He spoke slightingly of Hume (whose *Essay on Miracles* he said was stolen from an objection started in one of South's sermons — *Credat Judæus Apella!*)[2] I was not very much pleased at this account of Hume, for I had just been reading, with infinite relish, that completest of all metaphysical *chokepears*, his *Treatise on Human Nature*, to which the *Essays*, in point of scholastic subtlety and close reasoning, are mere elegant trifling, light summer-reading. Coleridge even denied the excellence of Hume's general style, which I think betrayed a want of taste or candor. He however made me amends by the manner in which he spoke of Berkeley. He dwelt particularly on his *Essay on Vision* as a masterpiece of analytical reasoning. S it undoubtedly is. He was exceedingl angry with Dr. Johnson for striking the ston with his foot, in allusion to this author' *Theory of Matter and Spirit*, and saying "Thus I confute him, Sir." Coleridge dre a parallel (I don't know how he brough about the connection) between Bishop Berk eley and Tom Paine. He said the one wa an instance of a subtle, the other of an acut mind, than which no two things could b more distinct. The one was a shop-boy' quality, the other the characteristic of philosopher. He considered Bishop Butle as a true philosopher, a profound and con scientious thinker, a genuine reader of nature and of his own mind. He did not speak o his *Analogy*, but of his *Sermons at the Rolls Chapel*, of which I had never heard. Cole ridge somehow always contrived to prefe the *unknown* to the *known*. In this instanc he was right. The *Analogy* is a tissue o sophistry, of wire-drawn, theological special pleading; the *Sermons* (with the Preface t them) are in a fine vein of deep, matured reflection, a candid appeal to our observation of human nature, without pedantry and with out bias. I told Coleridge I had written a few remarks, and was sometimes foolish enough to believe that I had made a discovery on the same subject (the *Natural Disinterestedness of the Human Mind*) — and I tried to explain my view of it to Coleridge, who listened with great willingness, but I did not succeed in making myself understood. I sat down to the task shortly afterwards for the twentieth time, got new pens and paper, determined to make clear work of it, wrote a few meagre sentences in the skeleton-style of a mathematical demonstration, stopped half way down the second page; and, after trying in vain to pump up any words, images, notions, apprehensions, facts, or observations, from that gulph of abstraction in which I had plunged myself for four or five years preceding, gave up the attempt as labor in vain, and shed tears of helpless despondency on the blank unfinished paper. I can write fast enough now. Am I better than I was then? Oh no! One truth discovered, one pang of regret at not being able to express it, is better than all the fluency and flippancy in the world. Would that I could go back to what I then was! Why can we not revive past times as we can revisit old places? If I had the quaint Muse of Sir Philip Sidney to assist me, I would write a *Sonnet to the Road between W——m and*

1 Hazlitt confuses Chaucer's word "sowning," inclining to, with Wordsworth's use of "sounding," *Excursion*, III, 71:
"Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way."

2 Let the Jew Apella believe it.
HORACE, *Satires*, I, 5, 100.

*Shrewsbury*, and immortalize every step of it by some fond enigmatical conceit. I would swear that the very milestones had ears, and that Harmer-hill stooped with all its pines, to listen to a poet, as he passed! I remember but one other topic of discourse in this walk. He mentioned Paley, praised the naturalness and clearness of his style, but condemned his sentiments, thought him a mere time-serving casuist, and said that "the fact of his work on *Moral and Political Philosophy* being made a text-book in our Universities was a disgrace to the national character." We parted at the six-mile stone; and I returned homeward, pensive but much pleased. I had met with unexpected notice from a person, whom I believed to have been prejudiced against me. "Kind and affable to me had been his condescension, and should be honored ever with suitable regard." He was the first poet I had known, and he certainly answered to that inspired name. I had heard a great deal of his powers of conversation, and was not disappointed. In fact, I never met with any thing at all like them, either before or since. I could easily credit the accounts which were circulated of his holding forth to a large party of ladies and gentlemen, an evening or two before, on the Berkeleian Theory, when he made the whole material universe look like a transparency of fine words; and another story (which I believe he has somewhere told himself) of his being asked to a party at Birmingham, of his smoking tobacco and going to sleep after dinner on a sofa, where the company found him to their no small surprise, which was increased to wonder when he started up of a sudden, and rubbing his eyes, looked about him, and launched into a three-hours' description of the third heaven, of which he had had a dream, very different from Mr. Southey's *Vision of Judgment*,[1] and also from that other Vision of Judgment, which Mr. Murray, the Secretary of the Bridge-street Junto,[2] has taken into his especial keeping!

On my way back, I had a sound in my ears, it was the voice of Fancy: I had a light before me, it was the face of Poetry. The one still lingers there, the other has not quitted my side! Coleridge in truth met me half-way on the ground of philosophy, or I should not have been won over to his imaginative creed. I had an uneasy, pleasurable sensation all the time, till I was to visit him. During those months the chill breath of winter gave me a welcoming; the vernal air was balm and inspiration to me. The golden sun-sets, the silver star of evening, lighted me on my way to new hopes and prospects. *I was to visit Coleridge in the spring*. This circumstance was never absent from my thoughts, and mingled with all my feelings. I wrote to him at the time proposed, and received an answer postponing my intended visit for a week or two, but very cordially urging me to complete my promise then. This delay did not damp, but rather increased my ardor. In the meantime I went to Llangollen Vale, by way of initiating myself in the mysteries of natural scenery; and I must say I was enchanted with it. I had been reading Coleridge's description of England, in his fine *Ode on the Departing Year*, and I applied it, *con amore*, to the objects before me. That valley was to me (in a manner) the cradle of a new existence: in the river that winds through it, my spirit was baptized in the waters of Helicon!

I returned home, and soon after set out on my journey with unworn heart and untired feet. My way lay through Worcester and Gloucester, and by Upton, where I thought of Tom Jones[1] and the adventure of the muff. I remember getting completely wet through one day, and stopping at an inn (I think it was at Tewkesbury) where I sat up all night to read *Paul and Virginia*. Sweet were the showers in early youth that drenched my body, and sweet the drops of pity that fell upon the books I read! I recollect a remark of Coleridge's upon this very book, that nothing could shew the gross indelicacy of French manners and the entire corruption of their imagination more strongly than the behavior of the heroine in the last fatal scene, who turns away from a person on board the sinking vessel, that offers to save her life, because he has thrown off his clothes to assist him in swimming. Was this a time to think of such a circumstance? I once hinted to Wordsworth, as we were sailing in his boat on Grasmere lake, that I thought he had borrowed the idea of his *Poems on the Naming of Places* from the local inscriptions of the same kind in *Paul and Virginia*. He did not own the obligation, and stated some distinction without a difference, in defence of his claim to originality. Any the slightest variation would be sufficient for this purpose

[1] Southey's *Vision of Judgment* was a poem celebrating the reception of George III into heaven. Byron's satire upon it appeared in the *Liberal*.

[2] Murray was Byron's publisher, and also of the Tory *Quarterly Review*. His office was in Bridge Street, London.

[1] In Fielding's *Tom Jones*, Book X, Chapter V.

in his mind; for whatever *he* added or omitted would inevitably be worth all that any one else had done, and contain the marrow of the sentiment. I was still two days before the time fixed for my arrival, for I had taken care to set out early enough. I stopped these two days at Bridgewater, and when I was tired of sauntering on the banks of its muddy river, returned to the inn, and read *Camilla*.[1] So have I loitered my life away, reading books, looking at pictures, going to plays, hearing, thinking, writing on what pleased me best. I have wanted only one thing to make me happy; but wanting that, have wanted everything!

I arrived, and was well received. The country about Nether Stowey is beautiful, green and hilly, and near the sea-shore. I saw it but the other day, after an interval of twenty years, from a hill near Taunton. How was the map of my life spread out before me, as the map of the country lay at my feet! In the afternoon Coleridge took me over to All-Foxden, a romantic old family-mansion of the St. Aubins, where Wordsworth lived. It was then in the possession of a friend of the poet's, who gave him the free use of it. Somehow that period (the time just after the French Revolution) was not a time when *nothing was given for nothing*. The mind opened, and a softness might be perceived coming over the heart of individuals, beneath "the scales that fence" our self-interest. Wordsworth himself was from home, but his sister kept house, and set before us a frugal repast; and we had free access to her brother's poems, the *Lyrical Ballads*, which were still in manuscript, or in the form of *Sybilline Leaves*.[2] I dipped into a few of these with great satisfaction, and with the faith of a novice. I slept that night in an old room with blue hangings, and covered with the round-faced family-portraits of the age of George I. and II. and from the wooded declivity of the adjoining park that overlooked my window, at the dawn of day, could

—— "hear the loud stag speak."

In the outset of life (and particularly at this time I felt it so) our imagination has a body to it. We are in a state between sleeping and waking, and have indistinct but glorious glimpses of strange shapes, and there is always something to come better than what we see. As in our dreams the fulness of the blood gives warmth and reality to the coinage of the brain, so in youth our ideas are clothed, and fed, and pampered with our good spirits; we breathe thick with thought, less happiness, the weight of future years presses on the strong pulses of the heart, and we repose with undisturbed faith in truth and good. As we advance, we exhaust our fund of enjoyment and of hope. We are no longer wrapped in *lamb's-wool*, lulled in Elysium. As we taste the pleasures of life, their spirit evaporates, the sense palls; and nothing is left but the phantoms, the lifeless shadow of what *has been!*

That morning, as soon as breakfast was over, we strolled out into the park, and seating ourselves on the trunk of an old ash-tree that stretched along the ground, Coleridge read aloud with a sonorous and musical voice the ballad of *Betty Foy*. I was not critically or sceptically inclined. I saw touches of truth and nature, and took the rest for granted. But in the *Thorn*, the *Mad Mother* and the *Complaint of a Poor Indian Woman* I felt that deeper power and pathos which have been since acknowledged,

"In spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,"

as the characteristics of this author; and the sense of a new style and a new spirit in poetry came over me. It had to me something of the effect that arises from the turning up of the fresh soil, or of the first welcome breath of Spring:

"While yet the trembling year is unconfirmed.

Coleridge and myself walked back to Stowey that evening, and his voice sounded high

"Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate
Fixed fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute,

as we passed through echoing grove, by fairy stream or waterfall, gleaming in the summer moonlight! He lamented that Wordsworth was not prone enough to believe in the traditional superstitions of the place, and that there was a something corporeal, a *matter-of-factness*, a clinging to the palpable, or often to the petty, in his poetry, in consequence. His genius was not a spirit that descended to him through the air; it sprung out of the ground like a flower, or unfolded itself from a green spray, on which the gold-finch sang. He said, however, (if I remember right) that this objection must be confined to his descriptive pieces, that his philosophic poetry had a grand and comprehensive spirit in it so that his soul seemed to inhabit the uni-

1 A novel by Frances Burney, 1796.
2 Coleridge published a volume of verse under this title in 1817.

verse like a palace, and to discover truth by intuition, rather than by deduction. The next day Wordsworth arrived from Bristol at Coleridge's cottage. I think I see him now. He answered in some degree to his friend's description of him, but was more gaunt and Don Quixote-like. He was quaintly dressed (according to the costume of that unconstrained period) in a brown fustian jacket and striped pantaloons. There was something of a roll, a lounge in his gait, not unlike his own Peter Bell.[1] There was a severe, worn pressure of thought about his temples, a fire in his eye (as if he saw something in objects more than the outward appearance), an intense high narrow forehead, a Roman nose, cheeks furrowed by strong purpose and feeling, and a convulsive inclination to laughter about the mouth, a good deal at variance with the solemn, stately expression of the rest of his face. Chantry's bust wants the marking traits; but he was teazed into making it regular and heavy: Haydon's head of him, introduced into the *Entrance of Christ into Jerusalem*,[2] is the most like his drooping weight of thought and expression. He sat down and talked very naturally and freely, with a mixture of clear gushing accents in his voice, a deep guttural intonation, and a strong tincture of the northern *burr*, like the crust on wine. He instantly began to make havoc of the half of a Cheshire cheese on the table, and said triumphantly that "his marriage with experience had not been so unproductive as Mr. Southey's in teaching him a knowledge of the good things of this life." He had been to see the *Castle Spectre*,[3] by Monk Lewis, while at Bristol, and described it very well. He said "it fitted the taste of the audience like a glove." This *ad captandum*[4] merit was however by no means a recommendation of it, according to the severe principles of the new school, which reject rather than court popular effect. Wordsworth, looking out of the low, latticed window, said, "How beautifully the sun sets on that yellow bank!" I thought within myself, "With what eyes these poets see nature!" and ever after, when I saw the sun-set stream upon the objects facing it, conceived I had made a discovery, or thanked Mr. Wordsworth for having made one for me! We went over to All-Foxden again the day following, and Wordsworth read us the story of Peter Bell in the open air; and the comment made upon it by his face and voice was very different from that of some later critics! Whatever might be thought of the poem, "his face was a book where men might read strange matters," and he announced the fate of his hero in prophetic tones. There is a *chaunt* in the recitation both of Coleridge and Wordsworth, which acts as a spell upon the hearer, and disarms the judgment. Perhaps they have deceived themselves by making habitual use of this ambiguous accompaniment. Coleridge's manner is more full, animated, and varied; Wordsworth's more equable, sustained, and internal. The one might be termed more *dramatic*, the other more *lyrical*. Coleridge has told me that he himself liked to compose in walking over uneven ground, or breaking through the straggling branches of a copse-wood; whereas Wordsworth always wrote (if he could) walking up and down a straight gravel-walk, or in some spot where the continuity of his verse met with no collateral interruption. Returning that same evening, I got into a metaphysical argument with Wordsworth, while Coleridge was explaining the different notes of the nightingale to his sister, in which we neither of us succeeded in making ourselves perfectly clear and intelligible. Thus I passed three weeks at Nether Stowey and in the neighborhood, generally devoting the afternoons to a delightful chat in an arbor made of bark by the poet's friend Tom Poole,[1] sitting under two fine elm-trees, and listening to the bees humming round us, while we quaffed our *flip*. It was agreed, among other things, that we should make a jaunt down the Bristol-Channel, as far as Linton. We set off together on foot, Coleridge, John Chester, and I. This Chester was a native of Nether Stowey, one of those who were attracted to Coleridge's discourse as flies are to honey, or bees in swarming-time to the sound of a brass pan. He "followed in the chace like a dog who hunts, not like one that made up the cry." He had on a brown cloth coat, boots, and corduroy breeches, was low in stature, bow-legged, had a drag in his walk like a drover, which he assisted by a hazel switch, and kept on a sort of trot by the side of Coleridge, like a running footman by a

1 The hero of Wordsworth's poem by this name, published in 1819.

2 Benjamin Robert Haydon (1786–1846), a painter, introduced a portrait of Wordsworth into an historical picture on this subject.

3 A drama produced in 1797, by M. G. Lewis (1775–1818), whose earlier tale, *The Monk*, had given him the nickname.

4 Power of captivating.

1 A friend of Coleridge who was responsible for his settlement at Nether Stowey.

state coach, that he might not lose a syllable or sound, that fell from Coleridge's lips. He told me his private opinion, that Coleridge was a wonderful man. He scarcely opened his lips, much less offered an opinion the whole way: yet of the three, had I to chuse during that journey, I would be John Chester. He afterwards followed Coleridge into Germany, where the Kantean philosophers were puzzled how to bring him under any of their categories. When he sat down at table with his idol, John's felicity was complete; Sir Walter Scott's, or Mr. Blackwood's, when they sat down at the same table with the King, was not more so. We passed Dunster on our right, a small town between the brow of a hill and the sea. I remember eying it wistfully as it lay below us: contrasted with the woody scene around, it looked as clear, as pure, as *embrowned* and ideal as any landscape I have seen since, of Gaspar Poussin's or Domenichino's. We had a long day's march — (our feet kept time to the echoes of Coleridge's tongue) — through Minehead and by the Blue Anchor, and on to Linton, which we did not reach till near midnight, and where we had some difficulty in making a lodgment. We however knocked the people of the house up at last, and we were repaid for our apprehensions and fatigue by some excellent rashers of fried bacon and eggs. The view in coming along had been splendid. We walked for miles and miles on dark brown heaths overlooking the channel, with the Welsh hills beyond, and at times descended into little sheltered valleys close by the sea-side, with a smuggler's face scowling by us, and then had to ascend conical hills with a path winding up through a coppice to a barren top, like a monk's shaven crown, from one of which I pointed out to Coleridge's notice the bare masts of a vessel on the very edge of the horizon and within the red-orbed disk of the setting sun, like his own spectre-ship in the *Ancient Mariner*. At Linton the character of the sea-coast becomes more marked and rugged. There is a place called the *Valley of Rocks* (I suspect this was only the poetical name for it) bedded among precipices overhanging the sea, with rocky caverns beneath, into which the waves dash, and where the sea-gull forever wheels its screaming flight. On the tops of these are huge stones thrown transverse, as if an earthquake had tossed them there, and behind these is a fretwork of perpendicular rocks, something like the *Giant's Causeway*. A thunderstorm came on while we were at the inn, and Coleridge was runnin out bareheaded to enjoy the commotion the elements in the *Valley of Rocks*, but as in spite, the clouds only muttered a few angr sounds, and let fall a few refreshing drop Coleridge told me that he and Wordswort were to have made this place the scene of prose-tale, which was to have been in th manner of, but far superior to, the *Death Abel*,[1] but they had relinquished the desig In the morning of the second day, we breal fasted luxuriously in an old-fashioned parlo on tea, toast, eggs, and honey, in the ver sight of the bee-hives from which it had bee taken, and a garden full of thyme and wil flowers that had produced it. On this occ sion Coleridge spoke of Virgil's Georgics, bu not well. I do not think he had much feelin for the classical or elegant. It was in th room that we found a little worn-out copy the *Seasons*, lying in a window seat, on whic Coleridge exclaimed, "*That* is true fame He said Thomson was a great poet, rath than a good one; his style was as meretricio as his thoughts were natural. He spoke Cowper as the best modern poet. He said t *Lyrical Ballads* were an experiment about t be tried by him and Wordsworth, to see ho far the public taste would endure poetr written in a more natural and simple sty than had hitherto been attempted; totall discarding the artifices of poetical dictio and making use only of such words as ha probably been common in the most ordinar language since the days of Henry II. Som comparison was introduced between Shak speare and Milton. He said "he hardl knew which to prefer. Shakespeare appeare to him a mere stripling in the art; he was tall and as strong, with infinitely more acti ity than Milton, but he never appeared have come to man's estate; or if he had, h would not have been a man, but a monster. He spoke with contempt of Gray, and wit intolerance of Pope. He did not like th versification of the latter. He observed tha "the ears of these couplet-writers might l charged with having short memories, tha could not retain the harmony of whole pa sages." He thought little of Junius as writer; he had a dislike of Dr. Johnson; an a much higher opinion of Burke as an orat and politician, than of Fox or Pitt. He how ever thought him very inferior in richness style and imagery to some of our elder pros writers, particularly Jeremy Taylor. H

1 By the Swiss poet Solomon Gessner, published i 1758.

liked Richardson, but not Fielding; nor could I get him to enter into the merits of *Caleb Williams*.[1] In short, he was profound and discriminating with respect to those authors whom he liked, and where he gave his judgment fair play; capricious, perverse, and prejudiced in his antipathies and distastes. We loitered on the "ribbed sea-sands," in such talk as this, a whole morning, and I recollect met with a curious sea-weed, of which John Chester told us the country name! A fisherman gave Coleridge an account of a boy that had been drowned the day before, and that they had tried to save him at the risk of their own lives. He said "he did not know how it was that they ventured, but, Sir, we have a *nature* towards one another." This expression, Coleridge remarked to me, was a fine illustration of that theory of disinterestedness which I (in common with Butler) had adopted. I broached to him an argument of mine to prove that *likeness* was not mere association of ideas. I said that the mark in the sand put one in mind of a man's foot, not because it was part of a former impression of a man's foot (for it was quite new) but because it was like the shape of a man's foot. He assented to the justness of this distinction (which I have explained at length elsewhere, for the benefit of the curious) and John Chester listened; not from any interest in the subject, but because he was astonished that I should be able to suggest anything to Coleridge that he did not already know. We returned on the third morning, and Coleridge remarked the silent cottage-smoke curling up the valleys where, a few evenings before, we had seen the lights gleaming through the dark.

In a day or two after we arrived at Stowey, we set out, I on my return home, and he for Germany. It was a Sunday morning, and he was to preach that day for Dr. Toulmin of Taunton. I asked him if he had prepared anything for the occasion? He said he had not even thought of the text, but should as soon as we parted. I did not go to hear him, — this was a fault, — but we met in the evening at Bridgewater. The next day we had a long day's walk to Bristol, and sat down, I recollect, by a well-side on the road, to cool ourselves and satisfy our thirst, when Coleridge repeated to me some descriptive lines from his tragedy of *Remorse;* which I must say became his mouth and that occasion better than they, some years after, did Mr. Elliston's[1] and the Drury-lane boards,

"Oh memory! shield me from the world's poor strife,
And give those scenes thine everlasting life."

I saw no more of him for a year or two, during which period he had been wandering in the Hartz Forest in Germany; and his return was cometary, meteorous, unlike his setting out. It was not till some time after that I knew his friends Lamb and Southey. The last always appears to me (as I first saw him) with a commonplace-book under his arm, and the first with a *bon-mot* in his mouth. It was at Godwin's that I met him with Holcroft and Coleridge, where they were disputing fiercely which was the best — *Man as he was, or man as he is to be.* "Give me," says Lamb, "man as he is *not* to be." This saying was the beginning of a friendship between us, which I believe still continues. — Enough of this for the present.

"But there is matter for another rhyme,
And I to this may add a second tale."

## ON GOING A JOURNEY

First published in the *New Monthly Magazine* in 1822. It was reprinted in *Table Talk*, 1821–22.

One of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey; but I like to go by myself. I can enjoy society in a room; but out of doors, nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone.

"The fields his study, nature was his book."

I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country. I am not for criticizing hedge-rows and black cattle. I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it. There are those who for this purpose go to watering-places, and carry the metropolis with them. I like more elbowroom and fewer encumbrances. I like solitude, when I give myself up to it, for the sake of solitude; nor do I ask for

— "a friend in my retreat,
Whom I may whisper solitude is sweet."

1 He had no idea of pictures, of Claude or Raphael, and at this time I had as little as he. He sometimes gives a striking account at present of the Cartoons at Pisa, by Buffamalco and others; of one in particular where Death is seen in the air brandishing his scythe, and the great and mighty of the earth shudder at his approach, while the beggars and the wretched kneel to him as their deliverer. He would of course understand so broad and fine a moral as this at any time. (Hazlitt's note.)

1 Robert William Elliston (1774–1831), a favorite actor.

The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel, do just as one pleases. We go a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconveniences; to leave ourselves behind, much more to get rid of others. It is because I want a little breathing-space to muse on indifferent matters, where Contemplation

"May plume her feathers and let grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd,"

that I absent myself from the town for a while, without feeling at a loss the moment I am left by myself. Instead of a friend in a post-chaise or in a Tilbury, to exchange good things with, and vary the same stale topics over again, for once let me have a truce with impertinence. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner — and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy. From the point of yonder rolling cloud I plunge into my past being, and revel there, as the sun-burnt Indian plunges headlong into the wave that wafts him to his native shore. Then long-forgotten things, like "sunken wrack and sumless treasuries," burst upon my eager sight, and I begin to feel, think, and be myself again. Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull commonplaces, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence. No one likes puns, alliterations, antitheses, argument, and analysis better than I do; but I sometimes had rather be without them. "Leave, oh, leave me to my repose!" I have just now other business in hand, which would seem idle to you, but is with me "very stuff o' the conscience." Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better then keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder craggy point, and from thence onward to the far-distant horizon? I should be but bad company all that way, and therefore prefer being alone. I have heard it said that you may, when the moody fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself, and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, a neglect of others, and you are thinking all the tim that you ought to rejoin your party. "Ou upon such half-faced fellowship," say I. like to be either entirely to myself, or er tirely at the disposal of others; to talk or b silent, to walk or sit still, to be sociable o solitary. I was pleased with an observatio of Mr. Cobbett's, that "he thought it a ba French custom to drink our wine with ou meals, and that an Englishman ought to d only one thing at a time." So I cannot tal and think, or indulge in melancholy musin and lively conversation by fits and start "Let me have a companion of my way," say Sterne, "were it but to remark how th shadows lengthen as the sun declines." is beautifully said; but in my opinion, th continual comparing of notes interferes wit the involuntary impression of things upo the mind, and hurts the sentiment. If yo only hint what you feel in a kind of dum show, it is insipid: if you have to explain i it is making a toil of a pleasure. You canno read the book of nature without being pe petually put to the trouble of translating for the benefit of others. I am for the sy thetical method on a journey in preferenc to the analytical. I am content to lay in stock of ideas then, and to examine an anatomize them afterwards. I want to se my vague notions float like the down of th thistle before the breeze, and not to hav them entangled in the briars and thorns c controversy. For once, I like to have it a my own way; and this is impossible unle you are alone, or in such company as I d not covet. I have no objection to argue point with any one for twenty miles of mea ured road, but not for pleasure. If yo remark the scent of a bean-field crossing th road, perhaps your fellow-traveller has r smell. If you point to a distant object, pe haps he is shortsighted, and has to take ou his glass to look at it. There is a feeling i the air, a tone in the color of a cloud, whic hits your fancy, but the effect of which yo are unable to account for. There is then n sympathy, but an uneasy craving after i and a dissatisfaction which pursues you c the way, and in the end probably produc ill humor. Now I never quarrel with mysel and take all my own conclusions for grante till I find it necessary to defend them again objections. It is not merely that you ma not be of accord on the objects and circun stances that present themselves before yo — these may recall a number of objects, an lead to associations too delicate and refine

to be possibly communicated to others. Yet these I love to cherish, and sometimes still fondly clutch them, when I can escape from the throng to do so. To give way to our feelings before company, seems extravagance or affectation; and on the other hand, to have to unravel this mystery of our being at every turn, and to make others take an equal interest in it (otherwise the end is not answered) is a task to which few are competent. We must "give it an understanding, but no tongue." My old friend C——,[1] however, could do both. He could go on in the most delightful explanatory way over hill and dale, a summer's day, and convert a landscape into a didactic poem or a Pindaric ode. "He talked far above singing." If I could so clothe my ideas in sounding and flowing words, I might perhaps wish to have some one with me to admire the swelling theme; or I could be more content, were it possible for me still to hear his echoing voice in the woods of All-Foxden. They had "that fine madness in them which our first poets had;" and if they could have been caught by some rare instrument, would have breathed such strains as the following:

— "Here be woods as green
As any, air likewise as fresh and sweet
As when smooth Zephyrus plays on the fleet
Face of the curled stream, with flow'rs as many
As the young spring gives, and as choice as any;
Here be all new delights, cool streams and wells,
Arbors o'ergrown with woodbine, caves and dells;
Choose where thou wilt, whilst I sit by and sing,
Or gather rushes to make many a ring
For thy long fingers; tell thee tales of love,
How the pale Phœbe, hunting in a grove,
First saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes
She took eternal fire that never dies;
How she conveyed him softly in a sleep,
His temples bound with poppy, to the steep
Head of old Latmos, where she stoops each night,
Gilding the mountain with her brother's light,
To kiss her sweetest."

(*Faithful Shepherdess*)

Had I words and images at command like these, I would attempt to wake the thoughts that lie slumbering on golden ridges in the evening clouds; but at the sight of nature my fancy, poor as it is, droops and closes up its leaves, like flowers at sunset. I can make nothing out on the spot: I must have time to collect myself.

In general, a good thing spoils out-of-door prospects: it should be reserved for Table-talk. L——[1] is for this reason, I take it, the worst company in the world out of doors; because he is the best within. I grant there is one subject on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey, and that is, what one shall have for supper when we get to our inn at night. The open air improves this sort of conversation or friendly altercation, by setting a keener edge on appetite. Every mile of the road heightens the flavor of the viands we expect at the end of it. How fine it is to enter some old town, walled and turreted, just at the approach of nightfall, or to come to some straggling village, with the lights streaming through the surrounding gloom; and then after inquiring for the best entertainment that the place affords, to "take one's ease at one's inn!" These eventful moments in our lives' history are too precious, too full of solid, heartfelt happiness to be frittered and dribbled away in imperfect sympathy. I would have them all to myself, and drain them to the last drop: they will do to talk of or to write about afterwards. What a delicate speculation it is, after drinking whole goblets of tea —

"The cups that cheer, but not inebriate —"

and letting the fumes ascend into the brain, to sit considering what we shall have for supper — eggs and a rasher, a rabbit smothered in onions, or an excellent veal-cutlet! Sancho[2] in such a situation once fixed upon cow-heel; and his choice, though he could not help it, is not to be disparaged. Then, in the intervals of pictured scenery and Shandean contemplation, to catch the preparation and the stir in the kitchen. — *Procul, O procul este profani!*[3] These hours are sacred to silence and to musing, to be treasured up in the memory, and to feed the source of smiling thoughts hereafter. I would not waste them in idle talk; or if I must have the integrity of fancy broken in upon, I would rather it were by a stranger than a friend. A stranger takes his hue and character from the time and place; he is a part of the furniture and costume of an inn. If he is a Quaker, or from the West Riding of Yorkshire, so much the better. I do not even try to sympathize with him, and he breaks no squares. I associate nothing with my travelling companion but present objects and passing events. In his ignorance of me and my affairs, I in a manner forget myself.

1 Coleridge.

1 Charles Lamb.
2 Sancho Panza in *Don Quixote*.
3 "Avaunt! avaunt! ye unhallowed!" VIRGIL, *Æneid*, VI, 258.

But a friend reminds one of other things, rips up old grievances, and destroys the abstraction of the scene. He comes in ungraciously between us and our imaginary character. Something is dropped in the course of conversation that gives a hint of your profession and pursuits; or from having some one with you that knows the less sublime portions of your history, it seems that other people do. You are no longer a citizen of the world; but your "unhoused free condition is put into circumscription and confine." The *incognito* of an inn is one of its striking privileges — "lord of one's self, uncumbered with a name." Oh! it is great to shake off the trammels of the world and of public opinion — to lose our importunate, tormenting, everlasting personal identity in the elements of nature, and become the creature of the moment, clear of all ties — to hold to the universe only by a dish of sweetbreads, and to owe nothing but the score of the evening — and no longer seeking for applause and meeting with contempt, to be known by no other title than *the Gentleman in the parlor!* One may take one's choice of all characters in this romantic state of uncertainty as to one's real pretensions, and become indefinitely respectable and negatively right-worshipful. We baffle prejudice and disappoint conjecture; and from being so to others, begin to be objects of curiosity and wonder even to ourselves. We are no more those hackneyed common-places that we appear in the world; an inn restores us to the level of nature, and quits scores with society! I have certainly spent some enviable hours at inns — sometimes when I have been left entirely to myself, and have tried to solve some metaphysical problem, as once at Witham-Common, where I found out the proof that likeness is not a case of the association of ideas — at other times, when there have been pictures in the room, as at St. Neot's[1] (I think it was) where I first met with Gribelin's engravings of the Cartoons,[2] into which I entered at once, and at a little inn on the borders of Wales, where there happened to be hanging some of Westall's drawings, which I compared triumphantly (for a theory that I had, not for the admired artist) with the figure of a girl who had ferried me over the Severn, standing up in the boat between me and the twilight — at other times I might mention luxuriating in books, with a peculiar interest in this way, as I remember sitting up half the night to re *Paul and Virginia*, which I picked up at inn at Bridgewater, after being drenched the rain all day; and at the same place I g through two volumes of Madame D'Arbla *Camilla*. It was on the 10th of April, 17 that I sat down to a volume of the *N Eloise*, at the inn at Llangollen, over a bot of sherry and a cold chicken. The letter chose was that in which St. Preux descrit his feelings as he first caught a glimpse fr the heights of the Jura of the Pays de Va which I had brought with me as a *bon bouch* to crown the evening with. It was my birt day, and I had for the first time come from place in the neighborhood to visit this d lightful spot. The road to Llangollen tur off between Chirk and Wrexham; and passing a certain point you come all at on upon the valley, which opens like an ampl theatre, broad, barren hills rising in majes state on either side, with "green upla swells that echo to the bleat of flocks" belo and the river Dee babbling over its stony b in the midst of them. The valley at t time "glittered green with sunny showers and a budding ash-tree dipped its tend branches in the chiding stream. How prou how glad I was to walk along the high ro that overlooks the delicious prospect, repea ing the lines which I have just quoted fro Mr. Coleridge's poems! But besides t prospect which opened beneath my fe another also opened to my inward sight, heavenly vision, on which were written, letters large as Hope could make them, the four words, LIBERTY, GENIUS, LOVE, VIRTU which have since faded into the light common day, or mock my idle gaze.

"The beautiful is vanished, and returns not.

Still I would return some time or other this enchanted spot; but I would return it alone. What other self could I find share that influx of thoughts, of regret, a delight, the fragments of which I cou hardly conjure up to myself, so much ha they been broken and defaced! I cou stand on some tall rock, and overlook t precipice of years that separates me fro what I then was. I was at that time goi shortly to visit the poet whom I have abo named. Where is he now? Not only myself have changed; the world, which w then new to me, has become old and inco rigible. Yet will I turn to thee in though O sylvan Dee, in joy, in youth and gladne

1 A small town near Peterborough.
2 Raphael's cartoons.

1 tidbit.

as thou then wert; and thou shalt always be to me the river of Paradise, where I will drink of the waters of life freely!

There is hardly anything that shows the shortsightedness or capriciousness of the imagination more than travelling does. With change of place we change our ideas; nay, our opinions and feelings. We can by an effort indeed transport ourselves to old and long-forgotten scenes, and then the picture of the mind revives again; but we forget those that we have just left. It seems that we can think but of one place at a time. The canvas of the fancy is but of a certain extent, and if we paint one set of objects upon it, they immediately efface every other. We cannot enlarge our conceptions, we only shift our point of view. The landscape bares its bosom to the enraptured eye, we take our fill of it, and seem as if we could form no other image of beauty or grandeur. We pass on, and think no more of it: the horizon that shuts it from our sight also blots it from our memory like a dream. In travelling through a wild barren country I can form no idea of a woody and cultivated one. It appears to me that all the world must be barren, like what I see of it. In the country we forget the town, and in town we despise the country. "Beyond Hyde Park," says Sir Fopling Flutter, "all is a desert."[1] All that part of the map that we do not see before us is a blank. The world in our conceit of it is not much bigger than a nutshell. It is not one prospect expanded into another, county joined to county, kingdom to kingdom, lands to seas, making an image voluminous and vast; — the mind can form no larger idea of space than the eye can take in at a single glance. The rest is a name written in a map, a calculation of arithmetic. For instance, what is the true signification of that immense mass of territory and population known by the name of China to us? An inch of pasteboard on a wooden globe, of no more account than a China orange! Things near us are seen of the size of life: things at a distance are diminished to the size of the understanding. We measure the universe by ourselves, and even comprehend the texture of our own being only piecemeal. In this way, however, we remember an infinity of things and places. The mind is like a mechanical instrument that plays a great variety of tunes, but it must play them in succession. One idea recalls another, but it at the same time excludes all others. In trying to renew old recollections, we cannot as it were unfold the whole web of our existence; we must pick out the single threads. So in coming to a place where we have formerly lived, and with which we have intimate associations, every one must have found that the feeling grows more vivid the nearer we approach the spot, from the mere anticipation of the actual impression: we remember circumstances, feelings, persons, faces, names, that we had not thought of for years; but for the time all the rest of the world is forgotten! — To return to the question I have quitted above.

I have no objection to go to see ruins, aqueducts, pictures, in company with a friend or a party, but rather the contrary, for the former reason reversed. They are intelligible matters, and will bear talking about. The sentiment here is not tacit, but communicable and overt. Salisbury Plain is barren of criticism, but Stonehenge will bear a discussion antiquarian, picturesque, and philosophical. In setting out on a party of pleasure, the first consideration always is where we shall go to: in taking a solitary ramble, the question is what we shall meet with by the way. "The mind is its own place;" nor are we anxious to arrive at the end of our journey. I can myself do the honors indifferently well to works of art and curiosity. I once took a party to Oxford with no mean *éclat* — shewed them that seat of the Muses at a distance,

> "With glistering spires and pinnacles adorned" —

descanted on the learned air that breathes from the grassy quadrangles and stone walls of halls and colleges — was at home in the Bodleian; and at Blenheim quite superseded the powdered Cicerone that attended us, and that pointed in vain with his wand to commonplace beauties in matchless pictures. — As another exception to the above reasoning, I should not feel confident in venturing on a journey in a foreign country without a companion. I should want at intervals to hear the sound of my own language. There is an involuntary antipathy in the mind of an Englishman to foreign manners and notions that requires the assistance of social sympathy to carry it off. As the distance from home increases, this relief, which was at first a luxury, becomes a passion and an appetite. A person would almost feel stifled to find himself in the deserts of Arabia without friends and countrymen: there must be allowed to be something in the view of

[1] From Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676).

Athens or old Rome that claims the utterance of speech; and I own that the Pyramids are too mighty for any single contemplation. In such situations, so opposite to all one's ordinary train of ideas, one seems a species by one's-self, a limb torn off from society, unless one can meet with instant fellowship and support. — Yet I did not feel this want or craving very pressing once, when I first set my foot on the laughing shores of France. Calais was peopled with novelty and delight. The confused, busy murmur of the place was like oil and wine poured into my ears; nor did the mariners' hymn, which was sung from the top of an old crazy vessel in the harbor, as the sun went down, send an alien sound into my soul. I only breathed the air of general humanity. I walked over "the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France," erect and satisfied; for the image of man was not cast down and chained to the foot of arbitrary thrones: I was at no loss for language, for that of all the great schools of painting was open to me. The whole is vanished like a shade. Pictures, heroes, glory, freedom, all are fled: nothing remains but the Bourbons and the French people! — There is undoubtedly a sensation in travelling into foreign parts that is to be had nowhere else; but it is more pleasing at the time than lasting. It is too remote from our habitual associations to be a common topic of discourse or reference, and, like a dream or another state of existence, does not piece into our daily modes of life. It is an animated but a momentary hallucination. It demands an effort to exchange our actual for our ideal identity; and to feel the pulse of our old transports revive very keenly, we must "jump"[1] all our present comforts and connections. Our romantic and itinerant character is not to be domesticated. Dr. Johnson remarked how little foreign travel added to the facilities of conversation in those who had been abroad. In fact, the time we have spent there is both delightful, and in one sense instructive; but it appears to be cut out of our substantial, downright existence, and never to join kindly on to it. We are not the same, but another, and perhaps more enviable individual, all the time we are out of our own country. We are lost to ourselves, as well as our friends. So the poet somewhat quaintly sings:

"Out of my country and myself I go."

Those who wish to forget painful thoughts, do well to absent themselves for a while from the ties and objects that recall them; but we can be said only to fulfil our destiny in the place that gave us birth. I should on this account like well enough to spend the whole of my life in travelling abroad, if I could anywhere borrow another life to spend afterwards at home!

## THE FIGHT

*The Fight* was published in the *New Monthly Magazine* for February, 1822. The famous battle had occurred on December 11, 1821.

"—— The *fight*, the *fight's* the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king."

*Where there's a will, there's a way.* — I said so to myself, as I walked down Chancery-lane, about half-past six o'clock on Monday the 10th of December, to inquire at Jack Randall's where the fight the next day was to be; and I found "the proverb" nothing "musty" in the present instance. I was determined to see this fight, come what would, and see it I did, in great style. It was my *first fight*, yet it more than answered my expectations. Ladies! it is to you I dedicate this description; nor let it seem out of character for the fair to notice the exploits of the brave. Courage and modesty are the old English virtues; and may they never look cold and askance on one another! Think, ye fairest of the fair, loveliest of the lovely kind, ye practisers of soft enchantment, how many more ye kill with poisoned baits than ever fell in the ring; and listen with subdued air and without shuddering, to a tale tragic only in appearance, and sacred to the Fancy![1]

I was going down Chancery-lane, thinking to ask at Jack Randall's where the fight was to be, when looking through the glass-door of the *Hole in the Wall*, I heard a gentleman asking the same question *at* Mrs. Randall, as the author of Waverley would express it. Now Mrs. Randall stood answering the gentleman's question, with the authenticity of the lady of the Champion of the Light Weights. Thinks I, I'll wait till this person comes out, and learn from him how it is. For to say a truth, I was not fond of going into this house of call for heroes and philosophers, ever since the owner of it (for Jack is no gentleman) threatened once upon a time to kick me out of doors for wanting a mutton chop at his hospitable board, when the conqueror in thirteen battles was more full o

1 risk.

1 A slang term for the supporters of the sport of pugilism.

*blue ruin* than of good manners. I was the more mortified at this repulse, inasmuch as I had heard Mr. James Simpkins, hosier in the Strand, one day when the character of the *Hole in the Wall* was brought in question, observe —— "The house is a very good house, and the company quite genteel: I have been there myself!" Remembering this unkind treatment of mine host, to which mine hostess was also a party, and not wishing to put her in unquiet thoughts at a time jubilant like the present, I waited at the door, when, who should issue forth but my friend Jo. Toms, and turning suddenly up Chancery-lane with that quick jerk and impatient stride which distinguishes a lover of the Fancy, I said, "I'll be hanged if that fellow is not going to the fight, and is on his way to get me to go with him." So it proved in effect, and we agreed to adjourn to my lodgings to discuss measures with that cordiality which makes old friends like new, and new friends like old, on great occasions. We are cold to others only when we are dull in ourselves, and have neither thoughts nor feelings to impart to them. Give a man a topic in his head, a throb of pleasure in his heart, and he will be glad to share it with the first person he meets. Toms and I, though we seldom meet, were an *alter idem* on this memorable occasion, and had not an idea that we did not candidly impart; and "so carelessly did we fleet the time," that I wish no better, when there is another fight, than to have him for a companion on my journey down, and to return with my friend Jack Pigott, talking of what was to happen or of what did happen, with a noble subject always at hand, and liberty to digress to others whenever they offered. Indeed, on my repeating the lines from Spenser in an involuntary fit of enthusiasm,

> "What more felicity can fall to creature,
> Than to enjoy delight with liberty?"

my last-named ingenious friend stopped me by saying that this, translated into the vulgate, meant "*Going to see a fight.*"

Jo. Toms and I could not settle about the method of going down. He said there was a caravan, he understood, to start from Tom Belcher's at two, which would go there *right out* and back again the next day. Now I never travel all night, and said I should get a cast to Newbury by one of the mails. Jo. swore the thing was impossible, and I could only answer that I had made up my mind to it. In short, he seemed to me to waver, said he only came to see if I was going, had letters to write, a cause coming on the day after, and faintly said at parting (for I was bent on setting out that moment) — "Well, we meet at Philippi!" I made the best of my way to Piccadilly. The mail coach stand was bare. "They are all gone," said I — "this is always the way with me — in the instant I lose the future — if I had not stayed to pour out that last cup of tea, I should have been just in time" — and cursing my folly and ill-luck together, without inquiring at the coach-office whether the mails were gone or not, I walked on in despite, and to punish my own dilatoriness and want of determination. At any rate, I would not turn back: I might get to Hounslow, or perhaps farther, to be on my road the next morning. I passed Hyde Park Corner (my Rubicon), and trusted to fortune. Suddenly I heard the clattering of a Brentford stage, and the fight rushed full upon my fancy. I argued (not unwisely) that even a Brentford coachman was better company than my own thoughts (such as they were just then), and at his invitation mounted the box with him. I immediately stated my case to him — namely, my quarrel with myself for missing the Bath or Bristol mail, and my determination to get on in consequence as well as I could, without any disparagement or insulting comparison between longer or shorter stages. It is a maxim with me that stage-coaches, and consequently stage-coachmen, are respectable in proportion to the distance they have to travel: so I said nothing on that subject to my Brentford friend. Any incipient tendency to an abstract proposition, or (as he might have construed it) to a personal reflection of this kind, was however nipped in the bud; for I had no sooner declared indignantly that I had missed the mails, than he flatly denied that they were gone along, and lo! at the instant three of them drove by in rapid, provoking, orderly succession, as if they would devour the ground before them. Here again I seemed in the contradictory situation of the man in Dryden who exclaims,

> "I follow Fate, which does too hard pursue!"

If I had stopped to inquire at the White Horse Cellar, which would not have taken me a minute, I should now have been driving down the road in all the dignified unconcern and *ideal* perfection of mechanical conveyance. The Bath mail I had set my mind upon, and I had missed it, as I missed every

thing else, by my own absurdity, in putting the will for the deed, and aiming at ends without employing means. "Sir," said he of the Brentford, "the Bath mail will be up presently, my brother-in-law drives it, and I will engage to stop him if there is a place empty." I almost doubted my good genius; but, sure enough, up it drove like lightning, and stopped directly at the call of the Brentford Jehu. I would not have believed this possible, but the brother-in-law of a mail-coach driver is himself no mean man. I was transferred without loss of time from the top of one coach to that of the other, desired the guard to pay my fare to the Brentford coachman for me as I had no change, was accommodated with a great coat, put up my umbrella to keep off a drizzling mist, and we began to cut through the air like an arrow. The mile-stones disappeared one after another, the rain kept off; Tom Turtle,[1] the trainer, sat before me on the coach-box, with whom I exchanged civilities as a gentleman going to the fight; the passion that had transported me an hour before was subdued to pensive regret and conjectural musing on the next day's battle; I was promised a place inside at Reading, and upon the whole, I thought myself a lucky fellow. Such is the force of imagination! On the outside of any other coach on the 10th of December, with a Scotch mist drizzling through the cloudy moonlight air, I should have been cold, comfortless, impatient, and, no doubt, wet through; but seated on the Royal mail, I felt warm and comfortable, the air did me good, the ride did me good, I was pleased with the progress we had made, and confident that all would go well through the journey. When I got inside at Reading, I found Turtle and a stout valetudinarian, whose costume bespoke him one of the Fancy, and who had risen from a three months' sick bed to get into the mail to see the fight. They were intimate, and we fell into a lively discourse. My friend the trainer was confined in his topics to fighting dogs and men, to bears and badgers; beyond this he was "quite chap-fallen," had not a word to throw at a dog, or indeed very wisely fell asleep, when any other game was started. The whole art of training (I, however, learnt from him), consists in two things, exercise and abstinence, abstinence and exercise, repeated alternately and without end. A yolk of an egg with a spoonful of rum in it is the first thing in a morning, and then a walk of six miles till breakfast. This meal consists of a plentiful supply of tea and toast and beefsteaks. Then another six or seven miles till dinner-time, and another supply of solid beef or mutton with a pint of porter, and perhaps, at the utmost, a couple of glasses of sherry. Martin trains on water, but this increases his infirmity on another very dangerous side. The Gas-man takes now and then a chirping glass (under the rose) to console him, during a six weeks' probation, for the absence of Mrs. Hickman — an agreeable woman, with (I understand) a pretty fortune of two hundred pounds. How matter presses on me! What stubborn things are facts! How inexhaustible is nature and art! "It is well," as I once heard Mr. Richmond observe, "to see a variety." He was speaking of cockfighting as an edifying spectacle. I cannot deny but that one learns more of what *is* (I do not say of what *ought to be*) in this desultory mode of practical study, than from reading the same book twice over, even though it should be a moral treatise. Where was I? I was sitting at dinner with the candidate for the honors of the ring, "where good digestion waits on appetite, and health on both." Then follows an hour of social chat and native glee; and afterwards, to another breathing over heathy hill or dale. Back to supper, and then to bed, and up by six again — Our hero

> "Follows so the ever-running sun
> With profitable *ardor*" ——

to the day that brings him victory or defeat in the green fairy circle. Is not this life more sweet than mine? I was going to say; but I will not libel any life by comparing it to mine, which is (at the date of these presents) bitter as coloquintida and the dregs of aconitum!

The invalid in the Bath mail soared a pitch above the trainer, and did not sleep so sound, because he had "more figures and more fantasies." We talked the hours away merrily. He had faith in surgery, for he had had three ribs set right, that had been broken in a *turn-up* at Belcher's, but thought physicians old women, for they had no antidote in their catalogue for brandy. An indigestion is an excellent common-place for two people that never met before. By way of ingratiating myself, I told him the story of my doctor who, on my earnestly representing to him that I thought his regimen had done me harm, assured me that the whole pharmacopeia contained nothing comparable to the prescription he had given me; and, as a proo

[1] John Thurtell, to wit. (Hazlitt's note.)

of its undoubted efficacy, said, that, "he had had one gentleman with my complaint under his hands for the last fifteen years." This anecdote made my companion shake the rough sides of his three great coats with boisterous laughter; and Turtle, starting out of his sleep, swore he knew how the fight would go, for he had had a dream about it. Sure enough the rascal told us how the three first rounds went off, but "his dream," like others, "denoted a foregone conclusion." He knew his men. The moon now rose in silver state, and I ventured, with some hesitation, to point out this object of placid beauty, with the blue serene beyond, to the man of science, to which his ear he "seriously inclined," the more as it gave promise *d'un beau jour* for the morrow, and showed the ring undrenched by envious showers, arrayed in sunny smiles. Just then, all going on well, I thought on my friend Toms, whom I had left behind, and said innocently, "There was a blockhead of a fellow I left in town, who said there was no possibility of getting down by the mail, and talked of going by a caravan from Belcher's at two in the morning, after he had written some letters." "Why," said he of the lapells, "I should not wonder if that was the very person we saw running about like mad from one coach-door to another, and asking if any one had seen a friend of his, a gentleman going to the fight, whom he had missed stupidly enough by staying to write a note." "Pray, Sir," said my fellow-traveller, "had he a plaid-cloak on?" — "Why, no," said I, "not at the time I left him, but he very well might afterwards, for he offered to lend me one." The plaid-cloak and the letter decided the thing. Joe, sure enough, was in the Bristol mail, which preceded us by about fifty yards. This was droll enough. We had now but a few miles to our place of destination, and the first thing I did on alighting at Newbury, both coaches stopping at the same time, was to call out, "Pray, is there a gentleman in that mail of the name of Toms?" "No," said Joe, borrowing something of the vein of Gilpin, "for I have just got out." "Well!" says he, "this is lucky; but you don't know how vexed I was to miss you; for," added he, lowering his voice, "do you know when I left you I went to Belcher's to ask about the caravan, and Mrs. Belcher said very obligingly, she couldn't tell about that, but there were two gentlemen who had taken places by the mail and were gone on in a landau, and she could frank us. It's a pity I didn't meet with you; we could then have got down for nothing. But *mum's the word.*" It's the devil for any one to tell me a secret, for it's sure to come out in print. I do not care so much to gratify a friend, but the public ear is too great a temptation to me.

Our present business was to get beds and a supper at an inn; but this was no easy task. The public-houses were full, and where you saw a light at a private house, and people poking their heads out of the casement to see what was going on, they instantly put them in and shut the window, the moment you seemed advancing with a suspicious overture for accommodation. Our guard and coachman thundered away at the outer gate of the Crown for some time without effect — such was the greater noise within; — and when the doors were unbarred, and we got admittance, we found a party assembled in the kitchen round a good hospitable fire, some sleeping, others drinking, others talking on politics and on the fight. A tall English yeoman (something like Matthews in the face, and quite as great a wag) —

"A lusty man to ben an abbot able," —

was making such a prodigious noise about rent and taxes, and the price of corn now and formerly, that he had prevented us from being heard at the gate. The first thing I heard him say was to a shuffling fellow who wanted to be off a bet for a shilling glass of brandy and water — "Confound it, man, don't be *insipid!*" Thinks I, that is a good phrase. It was a good omen. He kept it up so all night, nor flinched with the approach of morning. He was a fine fellow, with sense, wit, and spirit, a hearty body and a joyous mind, free-spoken, frank, convivial — one of that true English breed that went with Harry the Fifth to the siege of Harfleur — "standing like greyhounds in the slips," &c. We ordered tea and eggs (beds were soon found to be out of the question) and this fellow's conversation was *sauce piquante.* It did one's heart good to see him brandish his oaken towel and to hear him talk. He made mince-meat of a drunken, stupid, red-face, quarrelsome, *frowsy* farmer, whose nose "he moralized into a thousand similies," making it out a firebrand like Bardolph's.[1] "I'll tell you what my friend," says he, "the landlady has only to keep you here to save fire and candle. If one was to touch your nose, it would go off like a piece of charcoal." At this the other only grinned like an idiot,

1 In Shakespeare's *Henry IV.*

the sole variety in his purple face being his little peering grey eyes and yellow teeth; called for another glass, swore he would not stand it; and after many attempts to provoke his humorous antagonist to single combat, which the other turned off (after working him up to a ludicrous pitch of choler) with great adroitness, he fell quietly asleep with a glass of liquor in his hand, which he could not lift to his head. His laughing persecutor made a speech over him, and turning to the opposite side of the room, where they were all sleeping in the midst of this "loud and furious fun," said, "There's a scene, by G—d, for Hogarth to paint. I think he and Shakespeare were our two best men at copying life." This confirmed me in my good opinion of him. Hogarth, Shakespeare, and Nature, were just enough for him (indeed for any man) to know. I said, "You read Cobbett, don't you? At least," says I, "you talk just as well as he writes." He seemed to doubt this. But I said, "We have an hour to spare: if you'll get pen, ink, and paper, and keep on talking, I'll write down what you say; and if it doesn't make a capital *Political Register*,[1] I'll forfeit my head. You have kept me alive to-night, however. I don't know what I should have done without you." He did not dislike this view of the thing, nor my asking if he was not about the size of Jem Belcher; and told me soon afterwards, in the confidence of friendship, that "the circumstance which had given him nearly the greatest concern in his life, was Cribb's beating Jem after he had lost his eye by racket-playing." — The morning dawns; that dim but yet clear light appears, which weighs like solid bars of metal on the sleepless eyelids; the guests drop down from their chambers one by one — but it was too late to think of going to bed now (the clock was on the stroke of seven), we had nothing for it but to find a barber's (the pole that glittered in the morning sun lighted us to his shop), and then a nine miles march to Hungerford. The day was fine, the sky was blue, the mists were retiring from the marshy ground, the path was tolerably dry, the sitting-up all night had not done us much harm — at least the cause was good; we talked of this and that with amicable difference, roving and sipping of many subjects, but still invariably we returned to the fight. At length, a mile to the left of Hungerford, on a gentle eminence, we saw the ring surrounded by covered carts, gigs, and carriages, of which hundreds had passed us on the road; Toms gave a youthful shout, and we hastened down a narrow lane to the scene of action.

Reader, have you ever seen a fight? If not, you have a pleasure to come, at least if it is a fight like that between the Gas-man and Bill Neate. The crowd was very great when we arrived on the spot; open carriages were coming up, with streamers flying and music playing, and the country-people were pouring in over hedge and ditch in all directions, to see their hero beat or be beaten. The odds were still on Gas, but only about five to four. Gully had been down to try Neate, and had backed him considerably, which was a damper to the sanguine confidence of the adverse party. About two hundred thousand pounds were pending. The Gas says, he has lost three thousand pounds which were promised him by different gentlemen if he had won. He had presumed too much on himself, which had made others presume on him. This spirited and formidable young fellow seems to have taken for his motto the old maxim, that "there are three things necessary to success in life — *Impudence! Impudence! Impudence!*" It is so in matters of opinion, but not in the *Fancy*, which is the most practical of all things, though even here confidence is half the battle, but only half. Our friend had vapored and swaggered too much, as if he wanted to grin and bully his adversary out of the fight. "Alas! the Bristol man was not so tamed!" — "This is *the grave-digger*" (would Tom Hickman exclaim in the moments of intoxication from gin and success, shewing his tremendous right hand), "this will send many of them to their long homes I haven't done with them yet!" Why should he — though he had licked four of the best men within the hour, yet why should he threaten to inflict dishonorable chastisemen on my old master Richmond, a veteran going off the stage, and who has borne his sable honors meekly? Magnanimity, by dear Tom, and bravery, should be inseparable Or why should he go up to his antagonist the first time he ever saw him at the Five-Court, and measuring him from head to foo with a glance of contempt, as Achilles surveyed Hector, say to him, "What, are yo Bill Neate? I'll knock more blood out o that great carcase of thine, this day fort night, than you ever knock'd out of a bul lock's!" It was not manly, 'twas no fighter-like. If he was sure of the victor (as he was not), the less said about it th

1 A periodical published by William Cobbett.

better. Modesty should accompany the *Fancy* as its shadow. The best men were always the best behaved. Jem Belcher, the Game Chicken (before whom the Gas-man could not have lived) were civil, silent men. So is Cribb, so is Tom Belcher, the most elegant of sparrers, and not a man for every one to take by the nose. I enlarged on this topic in the mail (while Turtle was asleep), and said very wisely (as I thought) that impertinence was a part of no profession. A boxer was bound to beat his man, but not to thrust his fist, either actually or by implication, in every one's face. Even a highwayman, in the way of trade, may blow out your brains, but if he uses foul language at the same time, I should say he was no gentleman. A boxer, I would infer, need not be a blackguard or a coxcomb, more than another. Perhaps I pressed this point too much on a fallen man — Mr. Thomas Hickman has by this time learnt that first of all lessons, "That man was made to mourn." He has lost nothing by the late fight but his presumption; and that every man may do as well without! By an over-display of this quality, however, the public had been prejudiced against him, and the *knowing-ones* were taken in. Few but those who had bet on him wished Gas to win. With my own prepossessions on the subject, the result of the 11th of December appeared to me as fine a piece of poetical justice as I had ever witnessed. The difference of weight between the two combatants (14 stone to 12) was nothing to the sporting men. Great, heavy, clumsy, long-armed Bill Neate kicked the beam in the scale of the Gas-man's vanity. The amateurs were frightened at his big words, and thought that they would make up for the difference of six feet and five feet nine. Truly, the *Fancy* are not men of imagination. They judge of what has been, and cannot conceive of any thing that is to be. The Gas-man had won hitherto; therefore he must beat a man half as big again as himself — and that to a certainty. Besides, there are as many feuds, factions, prejudices, pedantic notions in the *Fancy* as in the state or in the schools. Mr. Gully is almost the only cool, sensible man among them, who exercises an unbiassed discretion, and is not a slave to his passions in these matters. But enough of reflections, and to our tale. The day, as I have said, was fine for a December morning. The grass was wet, and the ground miry, and ploughed up with multitudinous feet, except that, within the ring itself, there was a spot of virgin-green closed in and unprofaned by vulgar tread, that shone with dazzling brightness in the mid-day sun. For it was now noon, and we had an hour to wait. This is the trying time. It is then the heart sickens, as you think what the two champions are about, and how short a time will determine their fate. After the first blow is struck, there is no opportunity for nervous apprehensions; you are swallowed up in the immediate interest of the scene — but

> "Between the acting of a dreadful thing
> And the first motion, all the interim is
> Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream."

I found it so as I felt the sun's rays clinging to my back, and saw the white wintry clouds sink below the verge of the horizon. "So, I thought, my fairest hopes have faded from my sight! — so will the Gas-man's glory, or that of his adversary, vanish in an hour." The *swells* were parading in their white box-coats, the outer ring was cleared with some bruises on the heads and shins of the rustic assembly (for the *cockneys* had been distanced by the sixty-six miles); the time drew near, I had got a good stand; a bustle, a buzz, ran through the crowd, and from the opposite side entered Neate, between his second and bottle-holder. He rolled along, swathed in his loose great coat, his knock-knees bending under his huge bulk; and, with a modest cheerful air, threw his hat into the ring. He then just looked round, and began quietly to undress; when from the other side there was a similar rush and an opening made, and the Gas-man came forward with a conscious air of anticipated triumph, too much like the cock-of-the-walk. He strutted about more than became a hero, sucked oranges with a supercilious air, and threw away the skin with a toss of his head, and went up and looked at Neate, which was an act of supererogation. The only sensible thing he did was, as he strode away from the modern Ajax, to fling out his arms, as if he wanted to try whether they would do their work that day. By this time they had stripped, and presented a strong contrast in appearance. If Neate was like Ajax, "with Atlantean shoulders, fit to bear" the pugilistic reputation of all Bristol, Hickman might be compared to Diomed, light, vigorous, elastic, and his back glistened in the sun, as he moved about, like a panther's hide. There was now a dead pause — attention was awe-struck. Who at that moment, big with a great event, did not draw his breath short — did not feel

his heart throb? All was ready. They tossed up for the sun, and the Gas-man won. They were led up to the *scratch* — shook hands, and went at it.

In the first round every one thought it was all over. After making play a short time, the Gas-man flew at his adversary like a tiger, struck five blows in as many seconds, three first, and then following him as he staggered back, two more, right and left, and down he fell, a mighty ruin. There was a shout, and I said, "There is no standing this." Neate seemed like a lifeless lump of flesh and bone, round which the Gas-man's blows played with the rapidity of electricity or lightning, and you imagined he would only be lifted up to be knocked down again. It was as if Hickman held a sword or a fire in that right hand of his, and directed it against an unarmed body. They met again, and Neate seemed, not cowed, but particularly cautious. I saw his teeth clenched together and his brows knit close against the sun. He held out both his arms at full length straight before him, like two sledgehammers, and raised his left an inch or two higher. The Gas-man could not get over this guard — they struck mutually and fell, but without advantage on either side. It was the same in the next round; but the balance of power was thus restored — the fate of the battle was suspended. No one could tell how it would end. This was the only moment in which opinion was divided; for, in the next, the Gas-man aiming a mortal blow at his adversary's neck, with his right hand, and failing from the length he had to reach, the other returned it with his left at full swing, planted a tremendous blow on his cheek-bone and eyebrow, and made a red ruin of that side of his face. The Gas-man went down, and there was another shout — a roar of triumph as the waves of fortune rolled tumultuously from side to side. This was a settler. Hickman got up, and "grinned horrible a ghastly smile," yet he was evidently dashed in his opinion of himself; it was the first time he had ever been so punished; all one side of his face was perfect scarlet, and his right eye was closed in dingy blackness, as he advanced to the fight, less confident, but still determined. After one or two rounds, not receiving another such remembrancer, he rallied and went at it with his former impetuosity. But in vain. His strength had been weakened, — his blows could not tell at such a distance, — he was obliged to fling himself at his adversary, and could not strike from his feet; and almost as regularly as he flew at him with his right hand, Neate warded the blow, or drew back out of its reach, and felled him with the return of his left. There was little cautious sparring — no half-hits — no tapping and trifling, none of the *petit-maitreship* of the art — they were almost all knock-down blows: — the fight was a good stand-up fight. The wonder was the half-minute time. If there had been a minute or more allowed between each round, it would have been intelligible how they should by degrees recover strength and resolution; but to see two men smashed to the ground, smeared with gore, stunned, senseless, the breath beaten out of their bodies; and then, before you recover from the shock, to see them rise up with new strength and courage, stand steady to inflict or receive mortal offense, and rush upon each other "like two clouds over the Caspian" — this is the most astonishing thing of all: — this is the high and heroic state of man! From this time forward the event became more certain every round; and about the twelfth it seemed as if it must have been over. Hickman generally stood with his back to me; but in the scuffle, he had changed positions, and Neate just then made a tremendous lunge at him, and hit him full in the face. It was doubtful whether he would fall backwards or forwards; he hung suspended for a second or two, and then fell back, throwing his hands in the air, and with his face lifted up to the sky. I never saw any thing more terrific than his aspect just before he fell. All traces of life, of natural expression, were gone from him. His face was like a human skull, a death's head, spouting blood. The eyes were filled with blood, the nose streamed with blood, the mouth gaped blood. He was no like an actual man, but like a preternatural spectral appearance, or like one of the figure in Dante's *Inferno*. Yet he fought on afte this for several rounds, still striking the firs desperate blow, and Neate standing on th defensive, and using the same cautious guar to the last, as if he had still all his work to do and it was not till the Gas-man was s stunned in the seventeenth or eighteent round, that his senses forsook him, and h could not come to time, that the battle wa declared over.[1] Ye who despise the Fancy

1 Scroggins said of the Gas-man, that he thought he was man of that courage, that if his hands were cut off, he woul still fight on with the stumps — like that of Widrington, — "in doleful dumps,
Who, when his legs were smitten off
Still fought upon his stumps."
(Hazlitt's note

lo something to shew as much *pluck*, or as nuch self-possession as this, before you ssume a superiority which you have never given a single proof of by any one action in he whole course of your lives! — When the Gas-man came to himself, the first words he ittered were, "Where am I? What is the matter?" "Nothing is the matter, Tom, — ou have lost the battle, but you are the ravest man alive." And Jackson whispered o him, "I am collecting a purse for you, Tom." — Vain sounds, and unheard at that moment! Neate instantly went up and hook him cordially by the hand, and seeing ome old acquaintance, began to flourish with his fists, calling out, "Ah you always aid I couldn't fight — What do you think ow?" But all in good humor, and without ny appearance of arrogance; only it was vident Bill Neate was pleased that he had von the fight. When it was over, I asked Cribb if he did not think it was a good one? He said, "*Pretty well!*" The carrier-pigeons ow mounted into the air, and one of them lew with the news of her husband's victory o the bosom of Mrs. Neate. Alas, for Mrs. lickman!

*Mais au revoir*, as Sir Fopling Flutter says. went down with Toms; I returned with ack Pigott, whom I met on the ground. Toms is a rattle brain; Pigott is a senti- nentalist. Now, under favor, I am a senti- nentalist too — therefore I say nothing, but hat the interest of the excursion did not flag s I came back. Pigott and I marched along he causeway leading from Hungerford to Newbury, now observing the effect of a brilliant sun on the tawny meads or moss- colored cottages, now exulting in the fight, now digressing to some topic of general and legant literature. My friend was dressed in haracter for the occasion, or like one of the *Fancy;* that is, with a double portion of great oats, clogs, and overhauls: and just as we had agreed with a couple of country-lads to carry his superfluous wearing-apparel to the next town, we were overtaken by a return post-chaise, into which I got, Pigott prefer- ing a seat on the bar. There were two strangers already in the chaise, and on their observing they supposed I had been to the fight, I said I had, and concluded they had done the same. They appeared, however, a little shy and sore on the subject; and it was not till after several hints dropped, and ques- tions put, that it turned out that they had missed it. One of these friends had under- taken to drive the other there in his gig: they had set out, to make sure work, the day before at three in the afternoon. The owner of the one-horse vehicle scorned to ask his way, and drove right on to Bagshot, instead of turning off at Hounslow: there they stopped all night, and set off the next day across the country to Reading, from whence they took coach, and got down within a mile or two of Hungerford, just half an hour after the fight was over. This might be safely set down as one of the miseries of human life. We parted with these two gentlemen who had been to see the fight, but had returned as they went, at Wolhampton, where we were promised beds (an irresistible temptation, for Pigott had passed the preceding night at Hungerford as we had done at Newbury), and we turned into an old bow-windowed parlor with a carpet and a snug fire; and after devouring a quantity of tea, toast, and eggs, sat down to consider, during an hour of philosophic leisure, what we should have for supper. In the midst of an Epicurean de- liberation between a roasted fowl and mutton chops with mashed potatoes, we were inter- rupted by an inroad of Goths and Vandals — *O procul este profani* — not real flash-men, but interlopers, noisy pretenders, butchers from Tothill-fields, brokers from White- chapel, who called immediately for pipes and tobacco, hoping it would not be disagreeable to the gentlemen, and began to insist that it was *a cross*. Pigott withdrew from the smoke and noise into another room, and left me to dispute the point with them for a couple of hours *sans intermission* by the dial. The next morning we rose refreshed; and on observing that Jack had a pocket volume in his hand, in which he read in the intervals of our discourse, I inquired what it was, and learned to my particular satisfaction that it was a volume of the *New Eloise*. Ladies, after this, will you contend that a love for the *Fancy* is incompatible with the cultivation of sentiment? — We jogged on as before, my friend setting me up in a genteel drab great coat and green silk handkerchief (which I must say became me exceedingly), and after stretching our legs for a few miles, and seeing Jack Randall, Ned Turner, and Scroggins, pass on the top of one of the Bath coaches, we engaged with the driver of the second to take us to London for the usual fee. I got inside, and found three other passengers. One of them was an old gentleman with an aquiline nose, powdered hair, and a pigtail, and who looked as if he had played many a rubber at the Bath rooms. I said to myself,

he is very like Mr. Windham. I wish he would enter into conversation, that I might hear what fine observations would come from those finely-turned features. However, nothing passed, till, stopping to dine at Reading, some inquiry was made by the company about the fight, and I gave (as the reader may believe) an eloquent and animated description of it. When we got into the coach again, the old gentleman, after a graceful exordium, said, he had, when a boy, been to a fight between the famous Broughton and George Stevenson, who was called the *Fighting Coachman*, in the year 1770, with the late Mr. Windham. This beginning flattered the spirit of prophecy within me and rivetted my attention. He went on — "George Stevenson was coachman to a friend of my father's. He was an old man when I saw him some years afterwards. He took hold of his own arm and said, 'there was muscle here once, but now it is no more than this young gentleman's.' He added, 'well, no matter; I have been here long, I am willing to go hence, and I hope I have done no more harm than another man.' Once," said my unknown companion, "I asked him if he had ever beat Broughton? He said Yes; that he had fought with him three times, and the last time he fairly beat him, though the world did not allow it. 'I'll tell you how it was, master. When the seconds lifted us up in the last round, we were so exhausted that neither of us could stand, and we fell upon one another, and as Master Broughton fell uppermost, the mob gave it in his favor, and he was said to have won the battle. But,' says he, 'the fact was, that as his second (John Cuthbert) lifted him up, he said to him, "I'll fight no more, I've had enough;" which,' says Stevenson, 'you know gave me the victory. And to prove to you that this was the case, when John Cuthbert was on his death-bed, and they asked him if there was any thing on his mind which he wished to confess, he answered, "Yes, that there was one thing he wished to set right, for that certainly Master Stevenson won that last fight with Master Broughton; for he whispered him as he lifted him up in the last round of all, that he had had enough."' This," said the Bath gentleman, "was a bit of human nature;" and I have written this account of the fight on purpose that it might not be lost to the world. He also stated as a proof of the candor of mind in this class of men, that Stevenson acknowledged that Broughton could have beat him in his best day; but tha he (Broughton) was getting old in their la rencounter. When we stopped in Piccadill I wanted to ask the gentleman some que tions about the late Mr. Windham, but ha not courage. I got out, resigned my co and green silk handkerchief to Pigott (lot to part with these ornaments of life), an walked home in high spirits.

P.S. Toms called upon me the next da to ask me if I did not think the fight was complete thing? I said I thought it wa I hope he will relish my account of it.

## A FAREWELL TO ESSAY-WRITING

Written at Winterslow. Published in th *London Weekly Review* for March 29, 1828. Th essay reflects Hazlitt's temperament, his inte est in life, and his relations with his friend Lamb and Leigh Hunt. The latter was edit of the *Examiner*, in which many of Hazlitt essays were published.

"This life is best, if quiet life is best."

Food, warmth, sleep, and a book; the are all I at present ask — the *ultima Thul* of my wandering desires. Do you not th wish for

"A friend in your retreat,
Whom you may whisper, solitude is sweet?"

Expected, well enough: — gone, still bett Such attractions are strengthened by di tance. Nor a mistress? "Beautiful mas I know thee!" When I can judge of t heart from the face, of the thoughts from t lips, I may again trust myself. Instead these give me the robin redbreast, pecking t crumbs at the door, or warbling on the lea less spray, the same glancing form that h followed me wherever I have been, and "do its spiriting gently;" or the rich notes of t thrush that startle the ear of winter, a seem to have drunk up the full draught of j from the very sense of contrast. To thes adhere, and am faithful, for they are true me; and, dear in themselves, are dearer f the sake of what is departed, leading me ba (by the hand) to that dreaming world, in t innocence of which they sat and made swe music, waking the promise of future yea and answered by the eager throbbings of n own breast. But now "the credulous hope mutual minds is o'er," and I turn back fr the world that has deceived me, to natu that lent it a false beauty, and that keeps

1 Farthest north.

the illusion of the past. As I quaff my libations of tea in a morning, I love to watch the clouds sailing from the west, and fancy that "the spring comes slowly up this way." In this hope, while "fields are dank and ways are mire," I follow the same direction to a neighboring wood, where, having gained the dry, level greensward, I can see my way for a mile before me, closed in on each side by copse-wood, and ending in a point of light more or less brilliant, as the day is bright or cloudy. What a walk is this to me! I have no need of book or companion — the days, the hours, the thoughts of my youth are at my side, and blend with the air that fans my cheek. Here I can saunter for hours, bending my eye forward, stopping and turning to look back, thinking to strike off into some less trodden path, yet hesitating to quit the one I am in, afraid to snap the brittle threads of memory. I remark the shining trunks and slender branches of the birch trees, waving in the idle breeze; or a pheasant springs up on whirring wing; or I recall the spot where I once found a wood-pigeon at the foot of a tree, weltering in its gore, and think how many seasons have flown since "it left its little life in air." Dates, names, faces come back — to what purpose? Or why think of them now? Or rather why not think of them oftener? We walk through life, as through a narrow path, with a thin curtain drawn around it; behind are ranged rich portraits, airy harps are strung — yet we will not stretch forth our hands and lift aside the veil, to catch glimpses of the one, or sweep the chords of the other. As in a theatre, when the old-fashioned green curtain drew up, groups of figures, fantastic dresses, laughing faces, rich banquets, stately columns, gleaming vistas appeared beyond; so we have only at any time to "peep through the blanket of the past," to possess ourselves at once of all that has regaled our senses, that is stored up in our memory, that has struck our fancy, that has pierced our hearts: — yet to all this we are indifferent, insensible, and seem intent only on the present vexation, the future disappointment. If there is a Titian hanging up in the room with me, I scarcely regard it: how then should I be expected to strain the mental eye so far, or to throw down, by the magic spells of the will, the stone-walls that enclose it in the Louvre? There is one head there of which I have often thought, when looking at it, that nothing should ever disturb me again, and I would become the character it represents — such perfect calmness and self possession reigns in it! Why do I not hang an image of this in some dusky corner of my brain, and turn an eye upon it ever and anon, as I have need of some such talisman to calm my troubled thoughts? The attempt is fruitless, if not natural; or, like that of the French, to hang garlands on the grave, and to conjure back the dead by miniature pictures of them while living! It is only some actual coincidence or local association that tends, without violence, to "open all the cells where memory slept." I can easily, by stooping over the long-sprent grass and clay cold clod, recall the tufts of primroses, or purple hyacinths, that formerly grew on the same spot, and cover the bushes with leaves and singing-birds, as they were eighteen summers ago; or prolonging my walk and hearing the sighing gale rustle through a tall, straight wood at the end of it, can fancy that I distinguish the cry of hounds, and the fatal group issuing from it, as in the tale of *Theodore and Honoria.*[1] A moaning gust of wind aids the belief; I look once more to see whether the trees before me answer to the idea of the horror-stricken grove, and an air-built city towers over their grey tops.

"Of all the cities in Romanian lands,
The chief and most renown'd Ravenna stands."

I return home resolved to read the entire poem through, and, after dinner, drawing my chair to the fire, and holding a small print close to my eyes, launch into the full tide of Dryden's couplets (a stream of sound), comparing his didactic and descriptive pomp with the simple pathos and picturesque truth of Boccaccio's story, and tasting with a pleasure, which none but an habitual reader can feel, some quaint examples of pronunciation in this accomplished versifier.

"Which when Honoria viewed,
The fresh *impulse* her former fright renew'd."
(*Theodore and Honoria.*)

"And made th' *insult*, which in his grief appears,
The means to mourn thee with my pious tears."
(*Sigismonde and Guiscardo.*)

These trifling instances of the wavering and unsettled state of the language give double effect to the firm and stately march of the verse, and make me dwell with a sort of tender interest on the difficulties and doubts of an earlier period of literature. They pronounced words then in a manner which we should laugh at now; and they wrote verse in a manner which we can do anything but

1 Dryden's version of a story from Boccaccio.

laugh at. The pride of a new acquisition seems to give fresh confidence to it; to impel the rolling syllables through the molds provided for them, and to overflow the envious bounds of rhyme into time-honored triplets. I am much pleased with Leigh Hunt's mention of Moore's involuntary admiration of Dryden's free, unshackled verse, and of his repeating *con amore*,[1] and with an Irish spirit and accent, the fine lines —

> "Let honor and preferment go for gold.
> But glorious beauty isn't to be sold."

What sometimes surprises me in looking back to the past is, with the exception already stated, to find myself so little changed in the time. The same images and trains of thought stick by me: I have the same tastes, likings, sentiments, and wishes that I had then. One great ground of confidence and support has, indeed, been struck from under my feet; but I have made it up to myself by proportionable pertinacity of opinion. The success of the great cause,[2] to which I had vowed myself, was to me more than all the world: I had a strength in its strength, a resource which I knew not of, till it failed me for the second time.

> "Fall'n was Glenartny's stately tree!
> Oh! ne'er to see Lord Ronald more!"

It was not till I saw the axe laid to the root that I found the full extent of what I had to lose and suffer. But my conviction of the right was only established by the triumph of the wrong; and my earliest hopes will be my last regrets. One source of this unbendingness (which some may call obstinacy) is that, though living much alone, I have never worshipped the Echo. I see plainly enough that black is not white, that the grass is green, that kings are not their subjects; and, in such self-evident cases, do not think it necessary to collate my opinions with the received prejudices. In subtler questions, and matters that admit of doubt, as I do not impose my opinion on others without a reason, so I will not give up mine to them without a better reason; and a person calling me names, or giving himself airs of authority, does not convince me of his having taken more pains to find out the truth than I have, but the contrary. Mr. Gifford[3] once said, that "while I was sitting over my gin and tobacco-pipes, I fancied myself a Leibnitz." He did not so much as know that I had ever read a metaphysical book: — was I, therefore, out of complaisance or deference to him, to forget whether I had or not? I am rather disappointed, both on my own account and his, that Mr. Hunt has missed the opportunity of explaining the character of a friend as clearly as he might have done. He is puzzled to reconcile the shyness of my pretensions with the inveteracy and sturdiness of my principles. I should have thought they were nearly the same thing. Both from disposition and habit, I can *assume* nothing in word, look, or manner. I cannot steal a march upon public opinion in any way. My standing upright, speaking loud, entering a room gracefully, proves nothing; therefore I neglect these ordinary means of recommending myself to the good graces and admiration of strangers (and, as it appears, even of philosophers and friends). Why? Because I have other resources, or, at least, am absorbed in other studies and pursuits. Suppose this absorption to be extreme, and even morbid — that I have brooded over an idea till it has become a kind of substance in my brain, that I have reasons for a thing which I have found out with much labor and pains, and to which I can scarcely do justice without the utmost violence of exertion (and that only to a few persons) — is this a reason for my playing off my out-of-the-way notions in all companies, wearing a prim and self-complacent air, as if I were "the admired of all observers?" or is it not rather an argument (together with a want of animal spirits), why I should retire into myself, and perhaps acquire a nervous and uneasy look, from a consciousness of the disproportion between the interest and conviction I feel on certain subjects, and my ability to communicate what weighs upon my own mind to others? If my ideas, which I do not avouch, but suppose, lie below the surface, why am I to be always attempting to dazzle superficial people with them, or smiling, delighted, at my own want of success?

What I have here stated is only the excess of the common and well-known English and scholastic character. I am neither a buffoon, a fop, nor a Frenchman, which Mr. Hunt would have me to be. He finds it odd that I am a close reasoner and a loose dresser. I have been (among other follies) a hard liver as well as a hard thinker; and the consequences of that will not allow me to dress as I please. People in real life are not like players on a stage, who put on a certain look

1 with delight.

2 The cause of liberty, typified by the French Revolution.

3 William Gifford, Editor of the *Quarterly Review* (Tory) and a bitter enemy of Hazlitt.

or costume, merely for effect. I am aware, indeed, that the gay and airy pen of the author does not seriously probe the errors or misfortunes of his friends — he only glances at their seeming peculiarities, so as to make them odd and ridiculous; for which forbearance few of them will thank him. Why does he assert that I was vain of my hair when it was black, and am equally vain of it now it is grey, when this is true in neither case? This transposition of motives makes me almost doubt whether Lord Byron was thinking so much of the rings on his fingers as his biographer was.[1] These sort of criticisms should be left to women. I am made to wear a little hat, stuck on the top of my head the wrong way. Nay, I commonly wear a large slouching hat over my eyebrows; and if ever I had another, I must have twisted it about in any shape to get rid of the annoyance. This probably tickled Mr. Hunt's fancy and retains possession of it, to the exclusion of the obvious truism that I naturally wear "a melancholy hat."

I am charged with using strange gestures and contortions of features in argument, in order to "look energetic." One would rather suppose that the heat of the argument produces the extravagance of the gestures, as I am said to be calm at other times. It is like saying that a man in a passion clenches his teeth, not because he is, but in order to seem, angry. Why should everything be construed into air and affectation? With Hamlet, I may say, "I know not *seems*."

Again, my old friend and pleasant "Companion" remarks it, as an anomaly in my character, that I crawl about the fives-court like a cripple till I get the racket in my hand, when I start up as if I was possessed with a devil. I have then a motive for exertion; I lie by for difficulties and extreme cases. *Aut Cæsar aut nullus.* I have no notion of doing nothing with an air of importance, nor should I ever take a liking to the game of battledore and shuttlecock. I have only seen by accident a page of the unpublished manuscript relating to the present subject, which I dare say is, on the whole, friendly and just, and which has been suppressed as being too favorable, considering certain prejudices against me.

In matters of taste and feeling, one proof that my conclusions have not been quite shallow or hasty, is the circumstance of their having been lasting. I have the same favorite books, pictures, passages that I ever had: I may, therefore, presume that they will last me my life — nay, I may indulge a hope that my thoughts will survive me. This continuity of impression is the only thing on which I pride myself. Even L——,[1] whose relish of certain things is as keen and earnest as possible, takes a surfeit of admiration, and I should be afraid to ask about his select authors or particular friends, after a lapse of ten years. As to myself, anyone knows where to have me. What I have once made up my mind to, I abide by to the end of the chapter. One cause of my independence of opinion is, I believe, the liberty I give to others, or the very diffidence and distrust of making converts. I should be an excellent man on a jury. I might say little, but should starve "the other eleven obstinate fellows" out. I remember Mr. Godwin writing to Mr. Wordsworth, that "his tragedy of ANTONIO could not fail of success." It was damned past all redemption. I said to Mr. Wordsworth that I thought this a natural consequence; for how could anyone have a dramatic turn of mind who judged entirely of others from himself? Mr. Godwin might be convinced of the excellence of his work, but how could he know that others would be convinced of it, unless by supposing that they were as wise as himself, and as infallible critics of dramatic poetry — so many Aristotles sitting in judgment on Euripides! This shows why pride is connected with shyness and reserve; for the really proud have not so high an opinion of the generality as to suppose that they can understand them, or that there is any common measure between them. So Dryden exclaims of his opponents with bitter disdain —

> "Nor can I think what thoughts they can conceive."

I have not sought to make partisans, still less did I dream of making enemies; and have therefore kept my opinions myself, whether they were currently adopted or not. To get others to come into our ways of thinking, we must go over to theirs; and it is necessary to follow, in order to lead. At the time I lived here formerly, I had no suspicion that I should ever become a voluminous writer, yet I had just the same confidence in my feelings before I had ventured to air them in public as I have now. Neither the outcry *for* or *against* moves me a jot: I do not say that the one is not more agreeable than the other.

1 Leigh Hunt wrote *Lord Byron and Some of his Contemporaries* (1828).

1 Lamb.

Not far from the spot where I write, I first read Chaucer's *Flower and Leaf*,[1] and was charmed with that young beauty, shrouded in her bower, and listening with ever-fresh delight to the repeated song of the nightingale close by her — the impression of the scene, the vernal landscape, the cool of the morning, the gushing notes of the songstress,

"And ayen methought she sung close by mine ear,"

is as vivid as if it had been of yesterday; and nothing can persuade me that that is not a fine poem. I do not find this impression conveyed in Dryden's version, and therefore nothing can persuade me that that is as fine. I used to walk out at this time with Mr. and Miss L——[2] of an evening, to look at the Claude Lorraine skies over our heads melting from azure into purple and gold, and to gather mushrooms, that sprung up at our feet, to throw into our hashed mutton at supper. I was at that time an enthusiastic admirer of Claude, and could dwell for ever on one or two of the finest prints from him hung round my little room; the fleecy flocks, the bending trees, the winding streams, the groves, the nodding temples, the air-wove hills, and distant sunny vales; and tried to translate them into their lovely living hues. People then told me that Wilson was much superior to Claude: I did not believe them. Their pictures have since been seen together at the British Institution, and all the world have come into my opinion. I have not, on that account, given it up. I will not compare our hashed mutton with Amelia's;[1] but it put us in mind of it, and led to a discussion sharply seasoned and well sustained, till midnight, the result of which appeared some years after in the *Edinburgh Review*. Have I a better opinion of those criticisms on that account, or should I therefore maintain them with greater vehemence and tenaciousness? Oh no; both rather with less, now that they are before the public, and it is for them to make their election.

It is in looking back to such scenes that I draw my best consolation for the future. Later impressions come and go, and serve to fill up the intervals; but these are my standing resource, my true classics. If I have had few real pleasures or advantages, my ideas, from their sinewy texture, have been to me in the nature of realities; and if I should not be able to add to the stock, I can live by husbanding the interest. As to my speculations, there is little to admire in them but my admiration of others; and whether they have an echo in time to come or not, I have learned to set a grateful value on the past and am content to wind up the account of what is personal only to myself and the immediate circle of objects in which I have moved, with an act of easy oblivion,

"And curtain close such scene from every future view."

1 Hazlitt is wrong in attributing this poem to Chaucer.
2 Charles and Mary Lamb.

1 Fielding's *Amelia*, Book X, Chapter V.

## THOMAS DE QUINCEY (1785–1859)

Thomas De Quincey was born at Manchester, August 15, 1785, the son of a prosperous merchant. He was sent to the Manchester Grammar School, from which he ran away when seventeen years old and spent a summer wandering in Wales. In the autumn he made his way to London, where he continued to lead a vagrant existence until his family reclaimed him and sent him to Oxford. He became acquainted with Coleridge, whose family he accompanied to Grasmere where, after 1809, he lived for some twenty years, in association with the Lake poets. Like Coleridge he had become addicted to the use of opium. His first important publication was an account of his use of the drug and the dreams that it brought him, *The Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, published in the *London Magazine* for 1821. In 1830 he removed with his family to Edinburgh where he resided until his death in 1859.

De Quincey's writings are of a highly miscellaneous nature, being chiefly contributions to magazines on philosophy, political economy, history and literary criticism. His best known work was autobiographical, the famous *Confessions* and its sequel *Suspiria de Profundis* which describes the dreams induced by opium. *The English Mail Coach* is likewise an autobiographical experience with its attendant *Dream-Fugue*. This last and the *Suspiria* are the best examples of what De Quincey called impassioned prose, or prose having some of the imaginative and technical qualities of poetry, especially in the choice of words and sustained rhythms. In this respect De Quincey revived the poetic prose of the seventeenth century. He thus recovered for English

terature certain resources which had been lost sight of in the eighteenth century, and became a reat influence on English prose style.

De Quincey's works have been edited by David Masson in fourteen volumes. A volume of elections edited by M. H. Turk is included in the Athenæum Press series. The best life is by Masson in the English Men of Letters series. There are critical essays by George Saintsbury n *Essays on English Literature*, and Sir Leslie Stephen in *Hours in a Library*.

## SUSPIRIA DE PROFUNDIS

### 1845

This title (*Sighs from the Depths*) covered hree articles in *Blackwood's Magazine*, which ormed a continuation of the *Confessions*. The hird, which is given here, is an account of reams experienced under the influence of pium, and is the most famous of all the xamples of De Quincey's prose poetry.

#### LEVANA AND OUR LADIES OF SORROW

Oftentimes at Oxford I saw Levana in my lreams. I knew her by her Roman symbols. Who is Levana? Reader, that do not pre- end to have leisure for very much scholar- hip, you will not be angry with me for telling ou. Levana was the Roman goddess that erformed for the newborn infant the earliest ffice of ennobling kindness — typical, by ts mode, of that grandeur which belongs to nan everywhere, and of that benignity in owers invisible, which even in Pagan worlds ometimes descends to sustain it. At the ery moment of birth, just as the infant asted for the first time the atmosphere of ur troubled planet, it was laid on the ground. *That* might bear different interpretations. But immediately, lest so grand a creature hould grovel there for more than one in- tant, either the paternal hand, as proxy for he goddess Levana, or some near kinsman, s proxy for the father, raised it upright, ade it look erect as the king of all this world, nd presented its forehead to the stars, say- ng, perhaps, in his heart — "Behold what is reater than yourselves!" This symbolic ct represented the function of Levana. And hat mysterious lady, who never revealed er face (except to me in dreams), but al- ways acted by delegation, had her name rom the Latin verb (as still it is the Italian erb) *levare*, to raise aloft.

This is the explanation of Levana. And ence it has arisen that some people have nderstood by Levana the tutelary power hat controls the education of the nursery. he, that would not suffer at his birth even prefigurative or mimic degradation for her wful ward, far less could be supposed to uffer the real degradation attaching to the on-development of his powers. She there- fore watches over human education. Now, the word *edŭco*, with the penultimate short, was derived (by a process often exemplified in the crystallization of languages) from the word *edūco*, with the penultimate long. Whatsoever *edūces* or develops — *educates*. By the education of Levana, therefore, is meant — not the poor machinery that moves by spelling-books and grammars, but that mighty system of central forces hidden in the deep bosom of human life, which by passion, by strife, by temptation, by the energies of resistance, works for ever upon children — resting not day or night, any more than the mighty wheel of day and night themselves, whose moments, like rest- less spokes, are glimmering for ever as they revolve.

If, then, these are the ministries by which Levana works, how profoundly must she reverence the agencies of grief! But you, reader, think — that children generally are not liable to grief such as mine. There are two senses in the word *generally* — the sense of Euclid where it means *universally* (or in the whole extent of the *genus*), and a foolish sense of this world where it means *usually*. Now I am far from saying that children universally are capable of grief like mine. But there are more than you ever heard of, who die of grief in this island of ours. I will tell you a common case. The rules of Eton require that a boy on the *Foundation* should be there twelve years: he is superannuated at eighteen, consequently he must come at six. Children torn away from mothers and sisters at that age not unfrequently die. I speak of what I know. The complaint is not entered by the registrar as grief; but *that* it is. Grief of that sort, and at that age, has killed more than ever have been counted amongst its martyrs.

Therefore it is that Levana often com- munes with the powers that shake man's heart: therefore it is that she dotes upon grief. "These ladies," said I softly to myself, on seeing the ministers with whom Levana was conversing, "these are the Sorrows; and they are three in number, as the *Graces* are three, who dress man's life with beauty; the *Parcæ* are three, who weave the dark arras of man's life in their mysterious loom always

with colors sad in part, sometimes angry with tragic crimson and black; the *Furies* are three, who visit with retributions called from the other side of the grave offences that walk upon this; and once even the *Muses* were but three, who fit the harp, the trumpet, or the lute, to the great burdens of man's impassioned creations. These are the Sorrows, all three of whom I know." The last words I say *now;* but in Oxford I said — "one of whom I know, and the others too surely I *shall* know." For already, in my fervent youth, I saw (dimly relieved upon the dark background of my dreams) the imperfect lineaments of the awful sisters. These sisters — by what name shall we call them?

If I say simply — "The Sorrows," there will be a chance of mistaking the term; it might be understood of individual sorrow — separate cases of sorrow, — whereas I want a term expressing the mighty abstractions that incarnate themselves in all individual sufferings of man's heart; and I wish to have these abstractions presented as impersonations, that is, as clothed with human attributes of life, and with functions pointing to flesh. Let us call them, therefore, *Our Ladies of Sorrow.* I know them thoroughly, and have walked in all their kingdoms. Three sisters they are, of one mysterious household; and their paths are wide apart; but of their dominion there is no end. Them I saw often conversing with Levana, and sometimes about myself. Do they talk, then? Oh, no! Mighty phantoms like these disdain the infirmities of language. They may utter voices through the organs of man when they dwell in human hearts, but amongst themselves is no voice nor sound — eternal silence reigns in *their* kingdoms. *They* spoke not as they talked with Levana. *They* whispered not. *They* sang not. Though oftentimes methought they *might* have sung; for I upon earth had heard their mysteries oftentimes deciphered by harp and timbrel, by dulcimer and organ. Like God, whose servants they are, they utter their pleasure, not by sounds that perish, or by words that go astray, but by signs in heaven — by changes on earth — by pulses in secret rivers — heraldries painted on darkness — and hieroglyphics written on the tablets of the brain. *They* wheeled in mazes; *I* spelled the steps. *They* telegraphed from afar; *I* read the signals. *They* conspired together; and on the mirrors of darkness *my* eye traced the plots. *Theirs* were the symbols, — *mine* are the words.

What is it the sisters are? What is it that they do? Let me describe their form, and their presence; if form it were that still fluctuated in its outline; or presence it were that for ever advanced to the front, or for ever receded amongst shades.

The eldest of the three is named *Mater Lachrymarum,* Our Lady of Tears. She it is that night and day raves and moans, calling for vanished faces. She stood in Rama when a voice was heard of lamentation — Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted. She it was that stood in Bethlehem on the night when Herod's sword swept its nurseries of Innocents, and the little feet were stiffened for ever, which heard at times as they tottered along floors overhead, woke pulses of love in household hearts that were not unmarked in heaven.

Her eyes are sweet and subtle, wild and sleepy by turns; oftentimes rising to the clouds; oftentimes challenging the heavens. She wears a diadem round her head. And I knew by childish memories that she could glide abroad upon the winds, when she heard the sobbing of litanies or the thundering of organs, and when she beheld the musterings of summer clouds. This sister, the elder, it is that carries keys more than papal at her girdle, which open every cottage and every palace. She, to my knowledge, sate all last summer by the bedside of the blind beggar him that so often and so gladly I talked with whose pious daughter, eight years old, with the sunny countenance, resisted the temptations of play and village mirth to travel all day long on dusty roads with her afflicted father. For this did God send her a great reward. In the spring-time of the year, and whilst yet her own spring was budding, He recalled her to Himself. But her blind father mourns for ever over *her;* still he dreams at midnight that the little guiding hand is locked within his own; and still he wakens to a darkness that is *now* within a second and a deeper darkness. This *Mater Lachrymarum* also has been sitting all this winter of 1844–within the bedchamber of the Czar, bringing before his eyes a daughter (not less pious that vanished to God not less suddenly, and left behind her a darkness not less profound. By the power of her keys it is that Our Lady of Tears glides a ghostly intruder into the chambers of sleepless men, sleepless women, sleepless children, from Ganges to the Nile, from Nile to Mississippi. And her, because she is the first-born of her house, and has the widest empire, let us honor with the title of "Madonna."

The second sister is called *Mater Suspiriorum*, Our Lady of Sighs. She never scales the clouds, nor walks abroad upon the winds. She wears no diadem. And her eyes, if they were ever seen, would be neither sweet nor subtle; no man could read their story; they would be found filled with perishing dreams, and with wrecks of forgotten delirium. But she raises not her eyes; her head, on which sits a dilapidated turban, droops for ever; for ever fastens on the dust. She weeps not. She groans not. But she sighs inaudibly at intervals. Her sister, Madonna, is oftentimes stormy and frantic; raging in the highest against heaven; and demanding back her darlings. But Our Lady of Sighs never clamors, never defies, dreams not of rebellious aspirations. She is humble to abjectness. Hers is the meekness that belongs to the hopeless. Murmur she may, but it is in her sleep. Whisper she may, but it is to herself in the twilight. Mutter she does at times, but it is in solitary places that are desolate as she is desolate, in ruined cities, and when the sun has gone down to his rest. This sister is the visitor of the Pariah, of the Jew, of the bondsman to the oar in Mediterranean galleys, of the English criminal in Norfolk Island, blotted out from the books of remembrance in sweet far-off England, of the baffled penitent reverting his eye for ever upon a solitary grave, which to him seems the altar overthrown of some past and bloody sacrifice, on which altar no oblations can now be availing, whether towards pardon that he might implore, or towards reparation that he might attempt. Every slave that at noonday looks up to the tropical sun with timid reproach, as he points with one hand to the earth, our general mother, but for *him* stepmother, as he points with the other hand to the Bible, our general teacher, but against *him* sealed and sequestered; — every woman sitting in darkness, without love to shelter her head, or hope to illumine her solitude, because the heaven-born instincts kindling in her nature germs of holy affections, which God implanted in her womanly bosom, having been stifled by social necessities, now burn sullenly to waste, like sepulchral lamps amongst the ancients; — every one defrauded of her unreturning May-time by wicked kinsmen, whom God will judge; — every captive in every dungeon; — all that are betrayed, and all that are rejected; outcasts by traditionary law, and children of *hereditary* disgrace — all these walk with Our Lady of Sighs. She also carries a key; but she needs it little. For her kingdom is chiefly amongst the tents of Shem, and the houseless vagrant of every clime. Yet in the very highest ranks of man she finds chapels of her own; and even in glorious England there are some that, to the world, carry their heads as proudly as the reindeer, who yet secretly have received her mark upon their foreheads.

But the third sister, who is also the youngest —— Hush! whisper, whilst we talk of *her!* Her kingdom is not large, or else no flesh should live; but within that kingdom all power is hers. Her head, turreted like that of Cybele, rises almost beyond the reach of sight. She droops not; and her eyes rising so high, *might* be hidden by distance. But being what they are, they cannot be hidden; through the treble veil of crape which she wears, the fierce light of a blazing misery, that rests not for matins or for vespers — for noon of day or noon of night — for ebbing or for flowing tide — may be read from the very ground. She is the defier of God. She also is the mother of lunacies, and the suggestress of suicides. Deep lie the roots of her power; but narrow is the nation that she rules. For she can approach only those in whom a profound nature has been upheaved by central convulsions; in whom the heart trembles and the brain rocks under conspiracies of tempest from without and tempest from within. Madonna moves with uncertain steps, fast or slow, but still with tragic grace. Our Lady of Sighs creeps timidly and stealthily. But this youngest sister moves with incalculable motions, bounding, and with a tiger's leaps. She carries no key; for, though coming rarely amongst men, she storms all doors at which she is permitted to enter at all. And *her* name is *Mater Tenebrarum* — Our Lady of Darkness.

These were the *Semnai Theai*, or Sublime Goddesses — these were the *Eumenides*, or Gracious Ladies (so called by antiquity in shuddering propitiation) — of my Oxford dreams. Madonna spoke. She spoke by her mysterious hand. Touching my head, she beckoned to Our Lady of Sighs; and *what* she spoke, translated out of the signs which (except in dreams) no man reads, was this:

"Lo! here is he, whom in childhood I dedicated to my altars. This is he that once I made my darling. Him I led astray, him I beguiled, and from heaven I stole away his young heart to mine. Through me did he be-

come idolatrous; and through me it was, by languishing desires, that he worshipped the worm, and prayed to the wormy grave. Holy was the grave to him; lovely was its darkness; saintly its corruption. Him, this young idolater, I have seasoned for thee, dear gentle Sister of Sighs! Do thou take him now to *thy* heart, and season him for our dreadful sister. And thou" — turning to the *Mater Tenebrarum*, she said — "wicked sister, that temptest and hatest, do thou take him from *her*. See that thy sceptre lie heavy on his head. Suffer not woman and her tenderness to sit near him in his darkness. Banish the frailties of hope — wither the relentings of love — scorch the fountains of tears: curse him as only thou canst curse. So shall he be accomplished in the furnace — so shall he see the things that ought *not* to be seen — sights that are abominable, and secrets that are unutterable. So shall he read elder truths, sad truths, grand truths, fearful truths. So shall he rise again *before* he dies. And so shall our commission be accomplished which from God we had — to plague his heart until we had unfolded the capacities of his spirit."

## THE ENGLISH MAIL COACH

### 1849

In October, 1849, *Blackwood's Magazine* contained an anonymous article entitled *The Glory of Motion*, giving an account of coaching experiences, particularly of the bearing of the news of the victory of Waterloo to all parts of the kingdom. In December appeared two more sections of what was then called *The English Mail Coach*. Later, for the collected edition of his works, De Quincey supplied the following introduction:

*The English Mail-Coach.* — This little paper, according to my original intention, formed part of the *Suspiria de Profundis;* from which, for a momentary purpose, I did not scruple to detach it, and to publish it apart, as sufficiently intelligible even when dislocated from its place in a larger whole. To my surprise, however, one or two critics, not carelessly in conversation, but deliberately in print, professed their inability to apprehend the meaning of the whole, or to follow the links of the connexion between its several parts. I am myself as little able to understand where the difficulty lies, or to detect any lurking obscurity, as these critics found themselves to unravel my logic. Possibly I may not be an indifferent and neutral judge in such a case. I will therefore sketch a brief abstract of the little paper according to my original design, and then leave the reader to judge how far this design is kept in sigl through the actual execution.

Thirty-seven years ago, or rather more, acc dent made me, in the dead of night, and of night memorably solemn, the solitary witness an appalling scene, which threatened instar death in a shape the most terrific to two your people whom I had no means of assisting, excep in so far as I was able to give them a mo hurried warning of their danger; but even *th* not until they stood within the very shadow the catastrophe, being divided from the mo frightful of deaths by scarcely more, if mo at all, than seventy seconds.

Such was the scene, such in its outline, fro which the whole of this paper radiates as natural expansion. This scene is circumstar tially narrated in Section the Second, entitle *The Vision of Sudden Death.*

But a movement of horror, and of spontan ous recoil from this dreadful scene, natural carried the whole of that scene, raised ar idealized, into my dreams, and very soon into rolling succession of dreams. The actual scen as looked down upon from the box of the ma was transformed into a dream, as tumult ous and changing as a musical fugue. Th troubled dream is circumstantially reported Section the Third, entitled *Dream-Fugue on t theme of Sudden Death.* What I had behe from my seat upon the mail, — the scenic strife of action and passion, of anguish and fea as I had there witnessed them moving ghostly silence, — this duel between life ar death narrowing itself to a point of such e quisite evanescence as the collision neared: these elements of the scene blended, under t law of association, with the previous and pe manent features of distinction investing t mail itself; which features at that time lay 1st, in velocity unprecedented, 2dly, in t power and beauty of the horses, 3dly, in t official connexion with the government of great nation, and, 4thly, in the function, almc a consecrated function, of publishing and diffu ing through the land the great political even and especially the great battles, during a co flict of unparalleled grandeur. These honora distinctions are all described circumstantially the First or introductory Section (*The Glory Motion*). The three first were distinctio maintained at all times; but the fourth a grandest belonged exclusively to the war wi Napoleon; and this it was which most natura introduced Waterloo into the dream. Wat loo, I understand, was the particular feature the *Dream-Fugue* which my censors were le able to account for. Yet surely Waterl which, in common with every other gr battle, it had been our special privilege to pu lish over all the land, most naturally enter the dream under the licence of our privile If not — if there be anything amiss — let t Dream be responsible. The Dream is a law itself; and as well quarrel with a rainbow

showing, or for *not* showing, a secondary arch. So far as I know, every element in the shifting movements of the Dream derived itself either primarily from the incidents of the actual scene, or from secondary features associated with the nail. For example, the cathedral aisle derived itself from the mimic combination of features which grouped themselves together at the point of approaching collision — viz. an arrow-like section of the road, six hundred yards long, under the solemn lights described, with lofty trees meeting overhead in arches. The guard's horn, again — a humble instrument in itself — was yet glorified as the organ of publication for so many great national events. And the incident of the Dying Trumpeter, who rises from a marble bas-relief, and carries a marble trumpet to his marble lips for the purpose of warning the female infant, was doubtless secretly suggested by my own imperfect effort to seize the guard's horn, and to blow the warning blast. But the Dream knows best; and the Dream, I say again, is the responsible party.

## Section II — The Vision of Sudden Death

What is to be taken as the predominant opinion of man, reflective and philosophic, upon SUDDEN DEATH? It is remarkable that, in different conditions of society, sudden death has been variously regarded as the consummation of an earthly career most fervently to be desired, or, again, as that consummation which is with most horror to be deprecated. Cæsar the Dictator, at his last dinner-party (*cœna*), on the very evening before his assassination, when the minutes of his earthly career were numbered, being asked what death, in *his* judgment, might be pronounced the most eligible, replied "that which should be most sudden." On the other hand, the divine Litany of our English Church, when breathing forth supplications, as if in some representative character, for the whole human race prostrate before God, places such a death in the very van of horrors: "From lightning and tempest; from plague, pestilence, and famine; from battle and murder, and from SUDDEN DEATH — *Good Lord, deliver us.*" Sudden death is here made to crown the climax in a grand ascent of calamities; it is ranked among the last of curses; and yet by the noblest of Romans it was ranked as the first of blessings. In that difference most readers will see little more than the essential difference between Christianity and Paganism. But this, on consideration, I doubt. The Christian Church may be right in its estimate of sudden death; and it is a natural feeling, though after all it may also be an infirm one, to wish for a quiet dismissal from life, as that which *seems* most reconcilable with meditation, with penitential retrospects, and with the humilities of farewell prayer. There does not, however, occur to me any direct scriptural warrant for this earnest petition of the English Litany, unless under a special construction of the word "sudden." It seems a petition indulged rather and conceded to human infirmity than exacted from human piety. It is not so much a doctrine built upon the eternities of the Christian system as a plausible opinion built upon special varieties of physical temperament. Let that, however, be as it may, two remarks suggest themselves as prudent restraints upon a doctrine which else *may* wander, and *has* wandered, into an uncharitable superstition. The first is this: that many people are likely to exaggerate the horror of a sudden death from the disposition to lay a false stress upon words or acts simply because by an accident they have become *final* words or acts. If a man dies, for instance, by some sudden death when he happens to be intoxicated, such a death is falsely regarded with peculiar horror; as though the intoxication were suddenly exalted into a blasphemy. But *that* is unphilosophic. The man was, or he was not, *habitually* a drunkard. If not, if his intoxication were a solitary accident, there can be no reason for allowing special emphasis to this act simply because through misfortune it became his final act. Nor, on the other hand, if it were no accident, but one of his *habitual* transgressions, will it be the more habitual or the more a transgression because some sudden calamity, surprising him, has caused this habitual transgression to be also a final one. Could the man have had any reason even dimly to foresee his own sudden death, there would have been a new feature in his act of intemperance — a feature of presumption and irreverence, as in one that, having known himself drawing near to the presence of God, should have suited his demeanor to an expectation so awful. But this is no part of the case supposed. And the only new element in the man's act is not any element of special immorality, but simply of special misfortune.

The other remark has reference to the meaning of the word *sudden*. Very possibly Cæsar and the Christian Church do not differ in the way supposed, — that is, do not differ by any difference of doctrine as between Pagan and Christian views of the moral temper appropriate to death; but perhaps

they are contemplating different cases. Both contemplate a violent death, a *Βιαθανατος* — death that is *βιαιος*, or, in other words, death that is brought about, not by internal and spontaneous change, but by active force having its origin from without. In this meaning the two authorities agree. Thus far they are in harmony. But the difference is that the Roman by the word "sudden" means *unlingering*, whereas the Christian Litany by "sudden death" means a death *without warning*, consequently without any available summons to religious preparation. The poor mutineer who kneels down to gather into his heart the bullets from twelve firelocks of his pitying comrades dies by a most sudden death in Cæsar's sense; one shock, one mighty spasm, one (possibly *not* one) groan, and all is over. But, in the sense of the Litany, the mutineer's death is far from sudden: his offence originally, his imprisonment, his trial, the interval between his sentence and its execution, having all furnished him with separate warnings of his fate — having all summoned him to meet it with solemn preparation.

Here at once, in this sharp verbal distinction, we comprehend the faithful earnestness with which a holy Christian Church pleads on behalf of her poor departing children that God would vouchsafe to them the last great privilege and distinction possible on a deathbed, viz., the opportunity of untroubled preparation for facing this mighty trial. Sudden death, as a mere variety in the modes of dying where death in some shape is inevitable, proposes a question of choice which, equally in the Roman and the Christian sense, will be variously answered according to each man's variety of temperament. Meantime, one aspect of sudden death there is, one modification, upon which no doubt can arise, that of all martyrdoms it is the most agitating — viz., where it surprises a man under circumstances which offer (or which seem to offer) some hurrying, flying, inappreciably minute chance of evading it. Sudden as the danger which it affronts must be any effort by which such an evasion can be accomplished. Even *that*, even the sickening necessity for hurrying in extremity where all hurry seems destined to be vain, — even that anguish is liable to a hideous exasperation in one particular case: viz., where the appeal is made not exclusively to the instinct of self-preservation, but to the conscience, on behalf of some other life besides your own, accidentally thrown upon *your* protection. To fail, to collapse in a service merely your own, might seem comparatively venial though, in fact, it is far from venial. But to fail in a case where Providence has suddenly thrown into your hands the final interests of another, — a fellow-creature shuddering between the gates of life and death: this, to a man of apprehensive conscience, would mingle the misery of an atrocious criminality with the misery of a bloody calamity. You are called upon, by the case supposed, possibly to die, but to die at the very moment when, by any even partial failure or effeminate collapse of your energies you will be self-denounced as a murderer. You had but the twinkling of an eye for your effort, and that effort might have been unavailing; but to have risen to the level of such an effort would have rescued you though not from dying, yet from dying as a traitor to your final and farewell duty.

The situation here contemplated exposes a dreadful ulcer, lurking far down in the depths of human nature. It is not that men generally are summoned to face such awful trials. But potentially, and in shadowy outline, such a trial is moving subterraneously in perhaps all men's natures. Upon the secret mirror of our dreams such a trial is darkly projected, perhaps, to every one of us. That dream, so familiar to childhood, of meeting a lion, and, through languishing prostration in hope and the energies of hope, that constant sequel of lying down before the lion publishes the secret frailty of human nature — reveals its deep-seated falsehood to itself — records its abysmal treachery. Perhaps not one of us escapes that dream, perhaps, as by some sorrowful doom of man, that dream repeats for every one of us through every generation, the original temptation in Eden. Every one of us, in this dream, has a bait offered to the infirm place of his own individual will; once again a snare is presented for tempting him into captivity to a luxury of ruin; once again, as in aboriginal Paradise, the man falls by his own choice; again, by infinite iteration, the ancient earth groans to Heaven, through her secret caves, over the weakness of her child. "Nature," from her seat, sighing through all her works, again "gives signs of woe that all is lost"; and again the counter-sigh is repeated to the sorrowing heavens for the endless rebellion against God. It is not without probability that in the world of dreams every one of us ratifies for himself the original transgression. In dreams, perhaps under some secret conflic

of the midnight sleeper, lighted up to the consciousness at the time, but darkened to the memory as soon as all is finished, each several child of our mysterious race completes for himself the treason of the aboriginal fall.

The incident, so memorable in itself by its features of horror, and so scenical by its grouping for the eye, which furnished the text for this reverie upon *Sudden Death* occurred to myself in the dead of night, as a solitary spectator, when seated on the box of the Manchester and Glasgow mail, in the second or third summer after Waterloo. I find it necessary to relate the circumstances, because they are such as could not have occurred unless under a singular combination of accidents. In those days, the oblique and lateral communications with many rural post-offices were so arranged, either through necessity or through defect of system, as to make it requisite for the main north-western mail (*i.e.*, the *down* mail) on reaching Manchester to halt for a number of hours; how many, I do not remember; six or seven, I think; but the result was that, in the ordinary course, the mail recommenced its journey northwards about midnight. Wearied with the long detention at a gloomy hotel, I walked out about eleven o'clock at night for the sake of fresh air meaning to fall in with the mail and resume my seat at the post-office. The night, however, being yet dark, as the moon had scarcely risen, and the streets being at that hour empty, so as to offer no opportunities for asking the road, I lost my way, and did not reach the post-office until it was considerably past midnight; but, to my great relief (as it was important for me to be in Westmoreland by the morning), I saw in the huge saucer eyes of the mail, blazing through the gloom, an evidence that my chance was not yet lost. Past the time it was; but, by some rare accident, the mail was not even yet ready to start. I ascended to my seat on the box, where my cloak was still lying as it had lain at the Bridgewater Arms. I had left it there in imitation of a nautical discoverer, who leaves a bit of bunting on the shore of his discovery, by way of warning off the ground the whole human race, and notifying to the Christian and the heathen worlds, with his best compliments, that he has hoisted his pocket-handkerchief once and for ever upon that virgin soil: thenceforward claiming the *jus dominii* [1] to the top of the atmosphere above it, and also the right of driving shafts to the centre of the earth below it; so that all people found after this warning either aloft in upper chambers of the atmosphere, or groping in subterraneous shafts, or squatting audaciously on the surface of the soil, will be treated as trespassers — kicked, that is to say, or decapitated, as circumstances may suggest, by their very faithful servant, the owner of the said pocket-handkerchief. In the present case, it is probable that my cloak might not have been respected, and the *jus gentium* [1] might have been cruelly violated in my person — for, in the dark, people commit deeds of darkness, gas being a great ally of morality; but it so happened that on this night there was no other outside passenger; and thus the crime, which else was but too probable, missed fire for want of a criminal.

Having mounted the box, I took a small quantity of laudanum, having already travelled two hundred and fifty miles — viz., from a point seventy miles beyond London. In the taking of laudanum there was nothing extraordinary. But by accident it drew upon me the special attention of my assessor on the box, the coachman. And in *that* also there was nothing extraordinary. But by accident, and with great delight, it drew my own attention to the fact that this coachman was a monster in point of bulk, and that he had but one eye. In fact, he had been foretold by Virgil as

> "Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum." [2]

He answered to the conditions in every one of the items: — 1, a monster he was; 2, dreadful; 3, shapeless; 4, huge; 5, who had lost an eye. But why should *that* delight me? Had he been one of the Calenders [3] in the *Arabian Nights*, and had paid down his eye as the price of his criminal curiosity, what right had *I* to exult in his misfortune? I did *not* exult; I delighted in no man's punishment, though it were even merited. But these personal distinctions (Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) identified in an instant an old friend of mine whom I had known in the south for some years as the most masterly of mail-coachmen. He was the man in all Europe that could (if *any* could) have driven six-in-hand full gallop over *Al Sirat* [4] — that dreadful bridge of Mahomet,

1 law of ownership.

1 law of nations.

2 *Æneid*, III, 658. "A horrible monster, misshapen, immense, and bereft of eyesight." Polyphemus, one of the Cyclops, whose eye was put out by Ulysses, is described

3 A Calender is one of an order of Dervishes, founded in the fourteenth century, who live by alms.

4 According to Mahomet, the bridge over Hades, over which souls must pass to Paradise.

with no side battlements, and of *extra* room not enough for a razor's edge — leading right across the bottomless gulf. Under this eminent man, whom in Greek I cognominated Cyclops *Diphrélates* (Cyclops the Charioteer), I, and others known to me, studied the diphrelatic art. Excuse, reader, a word too elegant to be pedantic. As a pupil, though I paid extra fees, it is to be lamented that I did not stand high in his esteem. It showed his dogged honesty (though, observe, not his discernment) that he could not see my merits. Let us excuse his absurdity in this particular by remembering his want of an eye. Doubtless *that* made him blind to my merits. In the art of conversation, however, he admitted that I had the whip-hand of him. On the present occasion great joy was at our meeting. But what was Cyclops doing here? Had the medical men recommended northern air, or how? I collected, from such explanations as he volunteered, that he had an interest at stake in some suit-at-law now pending at Lancaster; so that probably he had got himself transferred to this station for the purpose of connecting with his professional pursuits an instant readiness for the calls of his lawsuit.

Meantime, what are we stopping for? Surely we have now waited long enough. Oh, this procrastinating mail, and this procrastinating post-office! Can't they take a lesson upon that subject from *me?* Some people have called *me* procrastinating. Yet you are witness, reader, that I was here kept waiting for the post-office. Will the post-office lay its hand on its heart, in its moments of sobriety, and assert that ever it waited for me? What are they about? The guard tells me that there is a large extra accumulation of foreign mails this night, owing to irregularities caused by war, by wind, by weather, in the packet service, which as yet does not benefit at all by steam. For an *extra* hour, it seems, the post-office has been engaged in threshing out the pure wheaten correspondence of Glasgow, and winnowing it from the chaff of all baser intermediate towns. But at last all is finished. Sound your horn, guard! Manchester, good-bye! we've lost an hour by your criminal conduct at the post-office: which, however, though I do not mean to part with a serviceable ground of complaint, and one which really *is* such for the horses, to me secretly is an advantage, since it compels us to look sharply for this lost hour amongst the next eight or nine, and to recover it (if we can) at the rate of one mile extra per hour. Off we are at last, and a eleven miles an hour; and for the moment detect no changes in the energy or in the skil of Cyclops.

From Manchester to Kendal, which virtu ally (though not in law) is the capital of West moreland, there were at this time seven stage of eleven miles each. The first five of these counting from Manchester, terminate i Lancaster; which is therefore fifty-five mile north of Manchester, and the same distanc exactly from Liverpool. The first thre stages terminate in Preston (called, by way of distinction from other towns of that name *Proud* Preston); at which place it is that the separate roads from Liverpool and from Manchester to the North become confluent. Within these first three stages lay the founda tion, the progress, and termination of ou night's adventure. During the first stage, I found out that Cyclops was mortal: he wa liable to the shocking affection of sleep — a thing which previously I had never suspected If a man indulges in the vicious habit o sleeping, all the skill in aurigation of Apollo himself, with the horses of Aurora to execute his notions, avails him nothing. "Oh, Cyclops!" I exclaimed, "thou art mortal. My friend, thou snorest." Through the firs eleven miles, however, this infirmity — which I grieve to say that he shared with the whole Pagan Pantheon — betrayed itself only by brief snatches. On waking up, he made an apology for himself which, instead of mending matters, laid open a gloomy vista of coming disasters. The summer assizes, he reminded me, were now going on at Lancaster in consequence of which for three nights and three days he had not lain down on a bed During the day he was waiting for his own summons as a witness on the trial in which he was interested, or else, lest he should be missing at the critical moment, was drinking with the other witnesses under the pastoral surveillance of the attorneys. During the night, or that part of it which at sea would form the middle watch, he was driving. This explanation certainly accounted for his drowsiness, but in a way which made it much more alarming; since now, after several days' resistance to this infirmity, at length he was steadily giving way. Throughout the

1 Suppose a capital Y (the Pythagorean letter): Lancaster is at the foot of this letter; Liverpool at the top of the *right* branch; Manchester at the top of the *left;* Proud Preston at the centre, where the two branches unite. It is thirty-three miles along either of the two branches; it is twenty-two miles along the stem, — viz., from Preston in the middle to Lancaster at the root. There's a lesson in geography for the reader! (De Quincey's note.)

econd stage he grew more and more drowsy. n the second mile of the third stage he surendered himself finally and without a struggle to his perilous temptation. All his past esistance had but deepened the weight of his final oppression. Seven atmospheres of eep rested upon him; and, to consummate he case, our worthy guard, after singing "Love amongst the Roses" for perhaps hirty times, without invitation and without pplause, had in revenge moodily resigned imself to slumber — not so deep, doubtless, s the coachman's, but deep enough for mishief. And thus at last, about ten miles from 'reston, it came about that I found myself ft in charge of his Majesty's London and Glasgow mail, then running at the least welve miles an hour.

What made this negligence less criminal han else it must have been thought was the ondition of the roads at night during the ssizes. At that time, all the law business of opulous Liverpool, and also of populous Manchester, with its vast cincture of popuous rural districts, was called up by ancient sage to the tribunal of Lilliputian Lancaster.[1] o break up this old traditional usage reuired, 1, a conflict with powerful estabshed interests, 2, a large system of new arangements, and 3, a new parliamentary tatute. But as yet this change was merely n contemplation. As things were at present, wice in the year [2] so vast a body of business olled northwards from the southern quarter f the county that for a fortnight at least it ccupied the severe exertions of two judges n its despatch. The consequence of this as that every horse available for such a ervice, along the whole line of road, was exausted in carrying down the multitudes of eople who were parties to the different suits. y sunset, therefore, it usually happened hat, through utter exhaustion amongst men nd horses, the road sank into profound ilence. Except the exhaustion in the vast djacent county of York from a contested lection, no such silence succeeding to no such ery uproar was ever witnessed in England.

On this occasion the usual silence and olitude prevailed along the road. Not a oof nor a wheel was to be heard. And, to trengthen this false luxurious confidence in he noiseless roads, it happened also that the night was one of peculiar solemnity and peace. For my own part, though slightly alive to the possibilities of peril, I had so far yielded to the influence of the mighty calm as to sink into a profound reverie. The month was August; in the middle of which lay my own birthday — a festival to every thoughtful man suggesting solemn and often sighborn [1] thoughts. The county was my own native county — upon which, in its southern section, more than upon any equal area known to man past or present, had descended the original curse of labor in its heaviest form, not mastering the bodies only of men, as of slaves, or criminals in mines, but working through the fiery will. Upon no equal space of earth was, or ever had been, the same energy of human power put forth daily. At this particular season also of the assizes, that dreadful hurricane of flight and pursuit, as it might have seemed to a stranger, which swept to and from Lancaster all day long, hunting the county up and down, and regularly subsiding back into silence about sunset, could not fail (when united with this permanent distinction of Lancashire as the very metropolis and citadel of labor) to point the thoughts pathetically upon that countervision of rest, of saintly repose from strife and sorrow, towards which, as their secret haven, the profounder aspirations of man's heart are in solitude continually travelling. Obliquely upon our left we were nearing the sea; which also must, under the present circumstances, be repeating the general state of halcyon repose. The sea, the atmosphere, the light, bore each an orchestral part in this universal lull. Moonlight and the first timid tremblings of the dawn were by this time blending; and the blendings were brought into a still more exquisite state of unity by a slight silvery mist, motionless, and dreamy, that covered the woods and fields, but with a veil of equable transparency. Except the feet of our own horses, — which, running on a sandy margin of the road, made but little disturbance, — there was no sound abroad. In the clouds and on the earth prevailed the same majestic peace; and, in spite of all that the villain of a schoolmaster has done for the ruin of our sublimer thoughts, which are the thoughts of our infancy, we still believe in no such nonsense as a limited atmosphere. Whatever we may swear with our false feign-

[1] Lancaster, the county town of Lancashire, in which Liverpool and Manchester, newer and much larger cities, are situated.

[2] There were at that time only two assizes even in the most populous counties — viz., the Lent Assizes and the Summer Assizes. (De Quincey's note.)

[1] I owe the suggestion of this word to an obscure remembrance of a beautiful phrase in "Giraldus Cambrensis" — viz., *suspiriosæ cogitationes*. (De Quincey's note.) "*Giraldus Cambrensis*": Gerald de Barry (1146–1220), a Welsh historian.

ing lips, in our faithful hearts we still believe, and must forever believe, in fields of air traversing the total gulf between earth and the central heavens. Still, in the confidence of children that tread without fear *every* chamber in their father's house, and to whom no door is closed, we, in that Sabbatic vision which sometimes is revealed for an hour upon nights like this, ascend with easy steps from the sorrow-stricken fields of earth upwards to the sandals of God.

Suddenly, from thoughts like these I was awakened to a sullen sound, as of some motion on the distant road. It stole upon the air for a moment; I listened in awe; but then it died away. Once roused, however, I could not but observe with alarm the quickened motion of our horses. Ten years' experience had made my eye learned in the valuing of motion; and I saw that we were now running thirteen miles an hour. I pretend to no presence of mind. On the contrary, my fear is that I am miserably and shamefully deficient in that quality as regards action. The palsy of doubt and distraction hangs like some guilty weight of dark unfathomed remembrances upon my energies when the signal is flying for *action*. But, on the other hand, this accursed gift I have, as regards *thought*, that in the first step towards the possibility of a misfortune I see its total evolution; in the radix of the series I see too certainly and too instantly its entire expansion; in the first syllable of the dreadful sentence I read already the last. It was not that I feared for ourselves. *Us* our bulk and impetus charmed against peril in any collision. And I had ridden through too many hundreds of perils that were frightful to approach, that were matter of laughter to look back upon, the first face of which was horror, the parting face a jest — for any anxiety to rest upon *our* interests. The mail was not built, I felt assured, nor bespoke, that could betray *me* who trusted to its protection. But any carriage that we could meet would be frail and light in comparison of ourselves. And I remarked this ominous accident of our situation, — we were on the wrong side of the road. But then, it may be said, the other party, if other there was, might also be on the wrong side; and two wrongs might make a right. *That* was not likely. The same motive which had drawn *us* to the right-hand side of the road — viz., the luxury of the soft beaten sand as contrasted with the paved centre — would prove attractive to others. The two adverse carriages would therefore, to a certainty, be travelling on the same side; and from this side, [illegible] not being ours in law, the crossing over to the other would, of course, be looked for from *us*.[1] Our lamps, still lighted, would give the impression of vigilance on our part. And every creature that met us would rely upon *us* for quartering.[2] All this, and if the separate links of the anticipation had been a thousand times more, I saw, not discursively, or by effort, or by succession, but by one flash of horrid simultaneous intuition.

Under this steady though rapid anticipation of the evil which *might* be gathering ahead, ah! what a sullen mystery of fear, what a sigh of woe, was that which stole upon the air, as again the far-off sound of a wheel was heard! A whisper it was — a whisper from, perhaps, four miles off — secretly announcing a ruin that, being foreseen, was not the less inevitable; that, being known, was not therefore healed. What could be done — who was it that could do it — to check the storm-flight of these maniacal horses? Could I not seize the reins from the grasp of the slumbering coachman? You, reader, think that it would have been in *your* power to do so. And I quarrel not with your estimate of yourself. But, from the way in which the coachman's hand was viced between his upper and lower thigh, this was impossible. Easy was it? See, then, that bronze equestrian statue. The cruel rider has kept the bit in his horse's mouth for two centuries. Unbridle him for a minute, if you please, and wash his mouth with water. Easy was it? Unhorse me, then, that imperial rider; knock me those marble feet from those marble stirrups of Charlemagne.

The sounds ahead strengthened, and were now too clearly the sounds of wheels. Who and what could it be? Was it industry in a taxed cart? Was it youthful gaiety in a gig? Was it sorrow that loitered, or joy that raced? For as yet the snatches of sound were too intermitting, from distance, to decipher the character of the motion. Whoever were the travellers, something must be done to warn them. Upon the other party rests the active responsibility, but upon *us* — and, woe is me! that *us* was reduced to my frail opium-

1 It is true that, according to the law of the case as established by legal precedents, all carriages were required to give way before royal equipages, and therefore before the mail as one of them. But this only increased the danger, as being a regulation very imperfectly made known, very unequally enforced, and therefore often embarrassing the movements on both sides. (De Quincey's note.)

2 This is the technical word, and, I presume, derived from the French *cartayer*, to evade a rut or any obstacle. (De Quincey's note.)

shattered self — rejected the responsibility of warning. Yet, how should this be accomplished? Might I not sound the guard's horn? Already, on the first thought, I was making my way over the roof of the guard's seat. But this, from the accident which I have mentioned, of the foreign mails being piled upon the roof, was a difficult and even dangerous attempt to one cramped by nearly three hundred miles of outside travelling. And, fortunately, before I had lost much time in the attempt, our frantic horses swept round an angle of the road which opened upon us that final stage where the collision must be accomplished and the catastrophe sealed. All was apparently finished. The court was sitting; the case was heard; the judge had finished; and only the verdict was yet in arrear.

Before us lay an avenue straight as an arrow, six hundred yards, perhaps, in length; and the umbrageous trees, which rose in a regular line from either side, meeting high overhead, gave to it the character of a cathedral aisle. These trees lent a deeper solemnity to the early light; but there was still light enough to perceive, at the further end of this Gothic aisle, a frail reedy gig, in which were seated a young man, and by his side a young lady. Ah, young sir! what are you about? If it is requisite that you should whisper your communications to this young lady — though really I see nobody, at an hour and on a road so solitary, likely to overhear you — is it therefore requisite that you should carry your lips forward to hers? The little carriage is creeping on at one mile an hour; and the parties within it, being thus tenderly engaged, are naturally bending down their heads. Between them and eternity, to all human calculation, there is but a minute and a half. Oh heavens! what is it that I shall do? Speaking or acting, what help can I offer? Strange it is, and to a mere auditor of the tale might seem laughable, that I should need a suggestion from the *Iliad* to prompt the sole resource that remained. Yet so it was. Suddenly I remembered the shout of Achilles, and its effect. But could I pretend to shout like the son of Peleus, aided by Pallus? No: but then I needed not the shout that should alarm all Asia militant; such a shout would suffice as might carry terror into the hearts of two thoughtless young people and one gig-horse. I shouted — and the young man heard me not. A second time I shouted — and now he heard me, for now he raised his head.

Here, then, all had been done that, by me, *could* be done; more on *my* part was not possible. Mine had been the first step; the second was for the young man; the third was for God. If, said I, this stranger is a brave man, and if indeed he loves the young girl at his side — or, loving her not, if he feels the obligation, pressing upon every man worthy to be called a man, of doing his utmost for a woman confided to his protection — he will at least make some effort to save her. If *that* fails, he will not perish the more, or by a death more cruel, for having made it; and he will die as a brave man should, with his face to the danger, and with his arm about the woman that he sought in vain to save. But, if he makes no effort, — shrinking without a struggle from his duty, — he himself will not the less certainly perish for this baseness of poltroonery. He will die no less: and why not? Wherefore should we grieve that there is one craven less in the world? No; *let* him perish, without a pitying thought of ours wasted upon him; and, in that case, all our grief will be reserved for the fate of the helpless girl who now, upon the least shadow of failure in *him*, must by the fiercest of translations — must without time for a prayer — must within seventy seconds — stand before the judgment-seat of God.

Bur craven he was not: sudden had been the call upon him, and sudden was his answer to the call. He saw, he heard, he comprehended, the ruin that was coming down: already its gloomy shadow darkened above him; and already he was measuring his strength to deal with it. Ah! what a vulgar thing does courage seem when we see nations buying it and selling it for a shilling a-day: ah! what a sublime thing does courage seem when some fearful summons on the great deeps of life carries a man, as if running before a hurricane, up to the giddy crest of some tumultuous crisis from which lie two courses, and a voice says to him audibly, "One way lies hope; take the other, and mourn for ever!" How grand a triumph if, even then, amidst the raving of all around him, and the frenzy of the danger, the man is able to confront his situation — is able to retire for a moment into solitude with God, and to seek his counsel from *Him!*

For seven seconds, it might be, of his seventy, the stranger settled his countenance steadfastly upon us, as if to search and value every element in the conflict before him. For five seconds more of his seventy he sat immovably, like one that mused on some great purpose. For five more, perhaps, he sat with

eyes upraised, like one that prayed in sorrow, under some extremity of doubt, for light that should guide him to the better choice. Then suddenly he rose; stood upright; and, by a powerful strain upon the reins, raising his horse's fore-feet from the ground, he slewed him round on the pivot of his hind-legs, so as to plant the little equipage in a position nearly at right angles to ours. Thus far his condition was not improved; except as a first step had been taken towards the possibility of a second. If no more were done, nothing was done; for the carriage still occupied the very centre of our path, though in an altered direction. Yet even now it may not be too late: fifteen of the seventy seconds may still be unexhausted; and one almighty bound may avail to clear the ground. Hurry, then, hurry! for the flying moments — *they* hurry. Oh, hurry, hurry, my brave young man! for the cruel hoofs of our horses — *they* also hurry! Fast are the flying moments, faster are the hoofs of our horses. But fear not for *him*, if human energy can suffice; faithful was he that drove to his terrific duty; faithful was the horse to *his* command. One blow, one impulse given with voice and hand, by the stranger, one rush from the horse, one bound as if in the act of rising to a fence, landed the docile creature's forefeet upon the crown or arching centre of the road. The larger half of the little equipage had then cleared our overtowering shadow: *that* was evident even to my own agitated sight. But it mattered little that one wreck should float off in safety if upon the wreck that perished were embarked the human freightage. The rear part of the carriage — was *that* certainly beyond the line of absolute ruin? What power could answer the question? Glance of eye, thought of man, wing of angel, which of these had speed enough to sweep between the question and the answer, and divide the one from the other? Light does not tread upon the steps of light more indivisibly than did our all-conquering arrival upon the escaping efforts of the gig. *That* must the young man have felt too plainly. His back was now turned to us; not by sight could he any longer communicate with the peril; but, by the dreadful rattle of our harness, too truly had his ear been instructed that all was finished as regarded any effort of *his*. Already in resignation he had rested from his struggle; and perhaps in his heart he was whispering, "Father, which art in heaven, do Thou finish above what I on earth have attempted." Faster than ever millrace we ran past them in our inexorable flight. Oh, raving of hurricanes that must have sounded in their young ears at the moment of our transit! Even in that moment the thunder of collision spoke aloud. Either with the swinglebar, or with the haunch of our near leader, we had struck the off-wheel of the little gig; which stood rather obliquely, and not quite so far advanced as to be accurately parallel with the near-wheel. The blow, from the fury of our passage, resounded terrifically. I rose in horror, to gaze upon the ruins we might have caused. From my elevated station I looked down, and looked back upon the scene; which in a moment told its own tale, and wrote all its records on my heart for ever.

Here was the map of the passion that now had finished. The horse was planted immovably, with his fore-feet upon the paved crest of the central road. He of the whole party might be supposed untouched by the passion of death. The little cany carriage — partly, perhaps, from the violent torsion of the wheels in its recent movement, partly from the thundering blow we had given to it — as if it sympathized with human horror, was all alive with tremblings and shiverings. The young man trembled not, nor shivered. He sat like a rock. But *his* was the steadiness of agitation frozen into rest by horror. As yet he dared not to look round; for he knew that, if anything remained to do, by him it could no longer be done. And as yet he knew not for certain if their safety were accomplished. But the lady ——

But the lady ——! Oh, heavens! will that spectacle ever depart from my dreams, as she rose and sank upon her seat, sank and rose, threw up her arms wildly to heaven, clutched at some visionary object in the air, fainting, praying, raving, despairing? Figure to yourself, reader, the elements of the case; suffer me to recall before your mind the circumstances of that unparalleled situation. From the silence and deep peace of this saintly summer night — from the pathetic blending of this sweet moonlight, dawnlight, dreamlight — from the manly tenderness of this flattering, whispering, murmuring love — suddenly as from the woods and fields — suddenly as from the chambers of the air opening in revelation — suddenly as from the ground yawning at her feet, leaped upon her, with the flashing of cataracts, Death the crowned phantom, with all the equipage of his terrors and the tiger roar of his voice.

The moments were numbered; the strife was finished; the vision was closed. In the

twinkling of an eye, our flying horses had carried us to the termination of the umbrageous aisle; at the right angles we wheeled into our former direction; the turn of the road carried the scene out of my eyes in an instant, and swept it into my dreams for ever.

## Section III — Dream-Fugue

### Founded on the Preceding Theme of Sudden Death

"Whence the sound
Of instruments, that made melodious chime,
Was heard, of harp and organ; and who moved
Their stops and chords was seen; his volant touch
Instinct through all proportions, low and high,
Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue."
*Paradise Lost*, Bk. XI.

### *Tumultuosissimamente*

Passion of sudden death! that once in youth I read and interpreted by the shadows of thy averted signs![1] — rapture of panic taking the shape (which amongst tombs in churches I have seen) of woman bursting her sepulchral bonds — of woman's Ionic form bending forward from the ruins of her grave with arching foot, with eyes upraised, with clasped adoring hands — waiting, watching, trembling, praying for the trumpet's call to rise from dust for ever! Ah, vision too fearful of shuddering humanity on the brink of almighty abysses! — vision that didst start back, that didst reel away, like a shrivelling scroll from before the wrath of fire racing on the wings of the wind! Epilepsy so brief of horror, wherefore is it that thou canst not die? Passing so suddenly into darkness, wherefore is it that still thou sheddest thy sad funeral blights upon the gorgeous mosaics of dreams? Fragment of music too passionate, heard once, and heard no more, what aileth thee, that thy deep rolling chords come up at intervals through all the worlds of sleep, and after forty years have lost no element of horror?

1

Lo, it is summer — almighty summer! The everlasting gates of life and summer are thrown open wide; and on the ocean, tranquil and verdant as a savannah, the unknown lady from the dreadful vision and I myself are floating — she upon a fairy pinnace, and I upon an English three-decker. Both of us are wooing gales of festal happiness within the domain of our common country, within that ancient watery park, within the pathless chase of ocean, where England takes her pleasure as a huntress through winter and summer, from the rising to the setting sun. Ah, what a wilderness of floral beauty was hidden, or was suddenly revealed, upon the tropic islands through which the pinnace moved! And upon her deck what a bevy of human flowers: young women how lovely, young men how noble, that were dancing together, and slowly drifting towards *us* amidst music and incense, amidst blossoms from forests and gorgeous corymbi[1] from vintages, amidst natural carolling, and the echoes of sweet girlish laughter. Slowly the pinnace nears us, gaily she hails us, and silently she disappears beneath the shadow of our mighty bows. But then, as at some signal from heaven, the music, and the carols, and the sweet echoing of girlish laughter — all are hushed. What evil has smitten the pinnace, meeting or overtaking her? Did ruin to our friends couch within our own dreadful shadow? Was our shadow the shadow of death? I looked over the bow for an answer, and, behold! the pinnace was dismantled; the revel and the revellers were found no more; the glory of the vintage was dust; and the forests with their beauty were left without a witness upon the seas. "But where," and I turned to our crew — "where are the lovely women that danced beneath the awning of flowers and clustering corymbi? Whither have fled the noble young men that danced with *them?*" Answer there was none. But suddenly the man at the mast-head, whose countenance darkened with alarm, cried out, "Sail on the weather beam! Down she comes upon us: in seventy seconds she also will founder."

2

I looked to the weather side, and the summer had departed. The sea was rocking, and shaken with gathering wrath. Upon its surface sat mighty mists, which grouped themselves into arches and long cathedral aisles. Down one of these, with the fiery pace of a quarrel[1] from a cross-bow, ran a frigate right athwart our course. "Are they mad?" some voice exclaimed from our deck. "Do they woo their ruin?" But in a moment, as she was close upon us, some impulse of a heady current or local vortex gave a wheeling bias to her course, and off she forged without a

1 I read the course and changes of the lady's agony in the succession of her involuntary gestures; but it must be remembered that I read all this from the rear, never once catching the lady's full face, and even her profile imperfectly. (De Quincey's note.)

1 clusters of fruit or flowers.
2 bolt, of a cross-bow.

shock. As she ran past us, high aloft amongst the shrouds stood the lady of the pinnace. The deeps opened ahead in malice to receive her, towering surges of foam ran after her, the billows were fierce to catch her. But far away she was borne into desert spaces of the sea: whilst still by sight I followed her, as she ran before the howling gale, chased by angry sea-birds and by maddening billows; still I saw her, at the moment when she ran past us, standing amongst the shrouds, with her white draperies streaming before the wind. There she stood, with hair dishevelled, one hand clutched amongst the tackling — rising, sinking, fluttering, trembling, praying; there for leagues I saw her as she stood, raising at intervals one hand to heaven, amidst the fiery crests of the pursuing waves and the raving of the storm; until at last, upon a sound from afar of malicious laughter and mockery, all was hidden for ever in driving showers; and afterwards, but when I knew not, nor how.

3

Sweet funeral bells from some incalculable distance, wailing over the dead that die before the dawn, awakened me as I slept in a boat moored to some familiar shore. The morning twilight even then was breaking; and, by the dusky revelations which it spread, I saw a girl, adorned with a garland of white roses about her head for some great festival, running along the solitary strand in extremity of haste. Her running was the running of panic; and often she looked back as to some dreadful enemy in the rear. But, when I leaped ashore, and followed on her steps to warn her of a peril in front, alas! from me she fled as from another peril, and vainly I shouted to her of quicksands that lay ahead. Faster and faster she ran; round a promontory of rocks she wheeled out of sight; in an instant I also wheeled round it, but only to see the treacherous sands gathering above her head. Already her person was buried; only the fair young head and the diadem of white roses around it were still visible to the pitying heavens; and, last of all, was visible one white marble arm. I saw by the early twilight this fair young head, as it was sinking down to darkness — saw this marble arm, as it rose above her head and her treacherous grave, tossing, faltering, rising, clutching, as at some false deceiving hand stretched out from the clouds — saw this marble arm uttering her dying hope, and then uttering her dying despair. The head, the diadem, the arm — these all had sunk; at last over these also the cruel quicksand had closed; and no memorial of the fair young girl remained on earth, except my own solitary tears, and the funeral bells from the desert seas, that, rising again more softly, sang a requiem over the grave of the buried child, and over her blighted dawn.

I sat, and wept in secret the tears that men have ever given to the memory of those that died before the dawn, and by the treachery of earth, our mother. But suddenly the tears and funeral bells were hushed by a shout as of many nations, and by a roar as from some great king's artillery, advancing rapidly along the valleys, and heard afar by echoes from the mountains. "Hush!" I said, as I bent my ear earthwards to listen — "hush! — this either is the very anarchy of strife, or else" — and then I listened more profoundly, and whispered as I raised my head — "or else, oh heavens! it is *victory* that is final, victory that swallows up all strife."

4

Immediately, in trance, I was carried over land and sea to some distant kingdom, and placed upon a triumphal car, amongst companions crowned with laurel. The darkness of gathering midnight, brooding over all the land, hid from us the mighty crowds that were weaving restlessly about ourselves as a centre: we heard them, but saw them not. Tidings had arrived, within an hour, of a grandeur that measured itself against centuries; too full of pathos they were, too full of joy, to utter themselves by other language than by tears, by restless anthems, and *Te Deums* reverberated from the choirs and orchestras of earth. These tidings we that sat upon the laurelled car had it for our privilege to publish amongst all nations. And already, by signs audible through the darkness, by snortings and tramplings, our angry horses, that knew no fear or fleshly weariness, upbraided us with delay. Wherefore *was* it that we delayed? We waited for a secret word, that should bear witness to the hope of nations as now accomplished for ever. At midnight the secret word arrived; which word was — *Waterloo and Recovered Christendom!* The dreadful word shone by its own light; before us it went; high above our leaders' heads it rode, and spread a golden light over the paths which we traversed. Every city, at the presence of the secret word, threw open its gates. The rivers were conscious as we crossed. All the forests, as we ran along their

margins, shivered in homage to the secret word. And the darkness comprehended it.

Two hours after midnight we approached a mighty Minster. Its gates, which rose to the clouds, were closed. But, when the dreadful word that rode before us reached them with its golden light; silently they moved back upon their hinges; and at a flying gallop our equipage entered the grand aisle of the cathedral. Headlong was our pace; and at every altar, in the little chapels and oratories to the right hand and left of our course, the lamps, dying or sickening, kindled anew in sympathy with the secret word that was flying past. Forty leagues we might have run in the cathedral, and as yet no strength of morning light had reached us, when before us we saw the aerial galleries of organ and choir. Every pinnacle of fretwork, every station of advantage amongst the traceries, was crested by white-robed choristers that sang deliverance; that wept no more tears, as once their fathers had wept; but at intervals that sang together to the generations, saying,

"Chant the deliverer's praise in every tongue,"

and receiving answers from afar,

"Such as once in heaven and earth were sung."

And of their chanting was no end; of our headlong pace was neither pause nor slackening.

Thus we ran like torrents — thus as we swept with bridal rapture over the Campo Santo [1] of the cathedral graves — suddenly we became aware of a vast necropolis rising upon the far-off horizon — a city of sepulchres, built within the saintly cathedral for the warrior dead that rested from their feuds on earth. Of purple granite was the necropolis; yet, in the first minute, it lay like a purple stain upon the horizon, so mighty was the distance. In the second minute it trembled through many changes, growing into terraces and towers of wondrous altitude, so mighty was the pace. In the third minute already, with our dreadful gallop, we were entering its suburbs. Vast sarcophagi rose on every side, having towers and turrets that, upon the limits of the central aisle, strode forward with haughty intrusion, that ran back with mighty shadows into answering recesses. Every sarcophagus showed many bas-reliefs — bas-reliefs of battles and of battle-fields; battles from forgotten ages, battles from yesterday; battle-fields that, long since, nature had healed and reconciled to herself with the sweet oblivion of flowers; battle-fields that were yet angry and crimson with carnage. Where the terraces ran, there did *we* run; where the towers curved, there did *we* curve. With the flight of swallows our horses swept round every angle. Like rivers in flood wheeling round headlands, like hurricanes that ride into the secrets of forests, faster than ever light unwove the mazes of darkness, our flying equipage carried earthly passions, kindled warrior instincts, amongst the dust that lay around us — dust oftentimes of our noble fathers that had slept in God from Crécy to Trafalgar. And now had we reached the last sarcophagus, now were we abreast of the last bas-relief, already had we recovered the arrow-like flight of the illimitable central aisle, when coming up this aisle to meet us we beheld afar off a female child, that rode in a carriage as frail as flowers. The mists which went before her hid the fawns that drew her, but could not hide the shells and tropic flowers with which she played — but could not hide the lovely smiles by which she uttered her trust in the mighty cathedral, and in the cherubim that looked down upon her from the mighty shafts of its pillars. Face to face she was meeting us; face to face she rode, as if danger there were none. Oh, "baby!" I exclaimed, "shalt thou be the ransom for Waterloo? Must we, that carry tidings of great joy to every people, be messengers of ruin to thee!" In horror I rose at the thought; but then also, in horror at the thought, rose one that was sculptured on a bas-relief — a Dying Trumpeter. Solemnly from the field of battle he rose to his feet; and, unslinging his stony trumpet, carried it, in his dying anguish, to his stony lips — sounding once, and yet once again; proclamation that, in *thy* ears, oh baby! spoke from the battlements of death. Immediately deep shadows fell between us, and aboriginal silence. The choir had ceased to sing. The hoofs of our horses, the dreadful rattle of our harness, the groaning of our wheels, alarmed the graves no more. By horror the bas-relief had been unlocked unto life. By horror we, that were

1 It is probable that most of my readers will be acquainted with the history of the Campo Santo (or cemetery) at Pisa, composed of earth brought from Jerusalem from a bed of sanctity as the highest prize which the noble piety of crusaders could ask or imagine. To readers who are unacquainted with England, or who (being English) are yet unacquainted with the cathedral cities of England, it may be right to mention that the graves within-side the cathedrals often form a flat pavement over which carriages and horses *might* run; and perhaps a boyish remembrance of one particular cathedral, across which I had seen passengers walk and burdens carried, as about two centuries back they were through the middle of St. Paul's in London, may have assisted my dream. (De Quincey's note.)

so full of life, we men and our horses, with their fiery fore-legs rising in mid air to their everlasting gallop, were frozen to a bas-relief. Then a third time the trumpet sounded; the seals were taken off all pulses; life, and the frenzy of life, tore into their channels again; again the choir burst forth in sunny grandeur, as from the muffling of storms and darkness; again the thunderings of our horses carried temptation into the graves. One cry burst from our lips, as the clouds, drawing off from the aisle, showed it empty before us. — "Whither has the infant fled? — is the young child caught up to God?" Lo! afar off, in a vast recess, rose three mighty windows to the clouds; and on a level with their summits, at height insuperable to man, rose an altar of purest alabaster. On its eastern face was trembling a crimson glory. A glory was it from the reddening dawn that now streamed *through* the windows? Was it from the crimson robes of the martyrs painted *on* the windows? Was it from the bloody bas-reliefs of earth? There, suddenly, within that crimson radiance, rose the apparition of a woman's head, and then of a woman's figure. The child it was — grown up to woman's height. Clinging to the horns of the altar, voiceless she stood — sinking, rising, raving, despairing; and behind the volume of incense that, night and day, streamed upwards from the altar, dimly was seen the fiery font, and the shadow of that dreadful being who should have baptized her with the baptism of death. But by her side was kneeling her better angel, that hid his face with wings; that wept and pleaded for *her;* that prayed when *she* could *not;* that fought with Heaven by tears for *her* deliverance; which also, as he raised his immortal countenance from his wings, I saw, by the glory in his eye, that from Heaven he had won at last.

5

Then was completed the passion of the mighty fugue. The golden tubes of the organ, which as yet had but muttered at intervals — gleaming amongst clouds and surges of incense — threw up, as from fountains unfathomable, columns of heart-shattering music. Choir and anti-choir were filling fast with unknown voices. Thou also, Dying Trumpeter, with thy love that was victorious, and thy anguish that was finishing, didst enter the tumult; trumpet and echo — farewell love, and farewell anguish — rang through the dreadful *sanctus.* Oh, darkness of the grave! that from the crimson altar and from the fiery font wert visited and searched by the effulgence in the angel's eye — were these indeed thy children? Pomps of life, that, from the burials of centuries, rose again to the voice of perfect joy, did ye indeed mingle with the festivals of Death? Lo! as I looked back for seventy leagues through the mighty cathedral, I saw the quick and the dead that sang together to God, together that sang to the generations of man. All the hosts of jubilation, like armies that ride in pursuit, moved with one step. Us, that, with laurelled heads, were passing from the cathedral, they overtook, and, as with a garment, they wrapped us round with thunders greater than our own. As brothers we moved together: to the dawn that advanced, to the stars that fled; rendering thanks to God in the highest — that, having hid His face through one generation behind thick clouds of War, once again was ascending, from the Campo Santo of Waterloo was ascending, in the visions of Peace; rendering thanks for thee, young girl! whom having overshadowed with His ineffable passion of death, suddenly did God relent, suffered thy angel to turn aside His arm, and even in thee, sister unknown! shown to me for a moment only to be hidden for ever, found an occasion to glorify His goodness. A thousand times, amongst the phantoms of sleep, have I seen thee entering the gates of the golden dawn, with the secret word riding before thee, with the armies of the grave behind thee, — seen thee sinking, rising, raving, despairing; a thousand times in the worlds of sleep have I seen thee followed by God's angel through storms, through desert seas, through the darkness of quicksands, through dreams and the dreadful revelations that are in dreams; only that at the last, with one sling of His victorious arm, He might snatch thee back from ruin, and might emblazon in thy deliverance the endless resurrections of His love!

# THE LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY

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The later nineteenth century is a period of rapid change in the social fabric of the English people. With the extension of machinery, production in every department showed an enormous increase, and population doubled and trebled. This mass of human beings demanded education and entertainment, and accordingly the function of literature became greatly enlarged. They demanded, also, a share in the government. The Reform Bill of 1832 had extended the franchise to the upper industrial class. After its passage the workers organized a campaign for a more popular government, with universal suffrage, and a Parliament elected every three years. These demands were embodied in the People's Charter, whence came the name "Chartism." Although as an attempt at mass action Chartism failed, its aims have been gradually achieved. Another popular movement was that for the repeal of the duties on foodstuffs, imposed by the so-called "Corn Laws," which were levied in the interest of the landowning agricultural class and kept the industrial population on the verge of starvation. They were repealed in 1845. Soon afterwards free trade was extended to nearly all commodities, and English manufacture and trade increased more rapidly than ever. This industrial activity demanded new markets, which were secured by extending the British Empire in Asia and Africa, by penetration, colonization, and conquest. There continued to be great misery among the workers in mine and factory, and the labor of small children was necessary to support the family. Factory legislation gradually cured the worst evils, and the workers themselves organized trade unions which gave them an opportunity to check, by collective bargaining, the exploitation of capitalism.

These and similar movements are clearly reflected in the literature of the period. The great advance in prosperity of the middle class and the multiplication of material comforts made possible by machinery contributed to a sense of well-being, of pride in wealth, of belief in progress through mechanical inventions and social organization. The most eloquent representative of this complacency was Lord Macaulay. Later in the century we find a corresponding pride in the increasing extent and power of the Empire, of which Rudyard Kipling was the exponent. On the other hand, the sense that this prosperity and power were paid for by the misery of the working class, that revolution was imminent in the mass demonstrations when the Chartists took their monster petitions to Parliament, was the burden of the urgent prophecies of Thomas Carlyle. The suffering of the poor was a theme in Dickens's work and in the poetry of Mrs. Browning. The injury to the natural beauty of the country caused by the growth of cities, with factories and railroads, and the decline in taste for beauty of workmanship under mass production were subjects of bitter protest by John Ruskin and William Morris. The vulgarity, as well as the selfishness of a society devoted to material ends and contented with mechanical triumphs was denounced by these writers and by Matthew Arnold, all of whom asserted the claims of the spiritual life upon the individual, and of art and beauty upon society, to be achieved only through the establishment of social justice.

There are to be discerned in this period two marked tendencies, which defined themselves at the time of the French Revolution. On the one hand were those who believed in the application of intelligence to human affairs, who held that social problems were to be solved by democracy, that is, by giving the people control over the government and educating them to use their power for their own welfare. This trust in intelligence was characteristic of the Liberals; its classic expression is to be found in John Stuart Mill's tract on *Liberty*. On the other hand were those who felt that the unconscious, non-intellectual elements in human nature, often called instincts, were more in harmony with the underlying forces which moved the world. Carlyle was their leader. Their doctrine of the spiritual nature of man and the universe made them skeptical or scornful of the triumphs of machinery, education, and democracy, to which the Liberal pointed as signs of progress. "What shall it profit a man," they asked, "if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

The intellectual attitude of the century was profoundly influenced by the scientific discoveries which led up to the promulgation of the theory of evolution in Darwin's *Origin of Species*, in 1859. This linking of man in his natural history to the lower animals had a disturbing influence on belief in revealed religion. One of the chief themes in nineteenth-century poetry and fiction is this decline in religious faith and its tragic consequences to the individual and to society. This idea of man's evolution became the intellectual background for thought on social and ethical themes, even of writers like Walter Pater and R. L. Stevenson, whose interests were largely æsthetic. On the other hand, the Church was aroused from its lethargy to meet this new foe. About the time of the passage of the Reform Bill a movement began at Oxford for the revival of spiritual power in the Church of England, led by John Henry Newman. The Oxford Movement, as it is called,

emphasized the historical inheritance of Anglicanism in the Church of the Middle Ages. Many of its adherents, including Newman himself, were led to join the Roman Catholic Church. Newman's followers in the Anglo-Catholic Movement became the dominant party within the Church of England. Both churches gained in spiritual and social force: and to this revival is to be traced a group of religious poets, chief among whom is Francis Thompson, unequaled since the seventeenth century.

The great prose writers of the late nineteenth century reflected in their lives the growing seriousness of the age. They began their work with the literary and philosophical inheritance of romanticism, and gradually subordinated their individual interests to the social necessities of the time. Carlyle, a critic of literature, became a historian and critic of society. Ruskin turned from art criticism to political economy. Matthew Arnold's early romantic verse gave place to the grave poetry of religious doubt, and to the prose of social criticism. This is true of the poets also. Tennyson's early master was Keats, and his early verse, chiefly sensuous and decorative. His later history is an effort to deal with problems of the day, sometimes in allegory and symbol as in *The Princess* and the *Idylls of the King*, sometimes in the realism of *Dora* and *Aylmer's Field*. Browning's early master was Shelley. He likewise turned from the romantic studies of the individual, in *Pauline*, *Paracelsus*, and *Sordello*, to problems of men and women in social bonds, as in *The Ring and the Book*. Mrs. Browning's transition from *The Seraphim* to *Aurora Leigh*, and William Morris's from *The Earthly Paradise* to his propaganda for socialism, are even more striking. The effort of Victorian poetry to escape from its romantic inheritance, to deal with realities, and share in the social burden of the time is a long descent from Parnassus.

There is one apparent exception to the general course of Victorian poetry. That is the pre-Raphaelite Movement. This owed its impulse largely to the Oxford Movement, with its revival of the mediæval spirit of religious sincerity. The pre-Raphaelites, led by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, found a corresponding sincerity in art in the painters and poets who came before the Renaissance in Italy. The pre-Raphaelites were interested in æsthetic matters; they looked for their themes to mediæval and early Christian stories; they were not concerned with social problems. Yet they contributed, in Christina Rossetti, to the revival of religious poetry of the later century; and their admiration of mediæval ideals carried Ruskin and Morris into their attempts to revive mediæval craftsmanship, and thence to restore the social conditions out of which that craftsmanship grew. In the main, however, the pre-Raphaelite Movement was a romantic escape from the serious preoccupation with society which absorbed much of the energy of the time. It furnished a sort of æsthetic background for a poet such as Swinburne, whose inspiration was purely literary, for the neo-pagan philosophy of Walter Pater, and for the various eccentricities of the mood of protest against Victorian seriousness which marked the last decade of the century.

The novel was for many reasons the most popular form of prose in the nineteenth century. It was a free form, unsubjected to definite rules; it lent itself readily to the journalistic interests of the day; for both reasons it was agreeable to the new public of uncritical readers. The Victorian novel, like poetry, had to disembarrass itself from the romantic inheritance. The success of Scott in the Waverley novels at first threatened to dominate fiction for an indefinite time. Other modes of popularity in time succeeded the historical interest, but down to the close of the century nearly every novelist chose to write his intended masterpiece in the historical form. The fiction-reading public built up by Scott was accustomed to romance, and his successors, Disraeli, Bulwer-Lytton, and others, sought it in various fields.

The next great reputation in fiction to Scott's was that of Charles Dickens (1812–70). Dickens began by using a humble popular form, the narrative of adventures of characters who find themselves in various incongruous situations, more or less humorous. He thus came to write *Pickwick Papers*. For more serious fiction he drew characters, mainly children, who are victims of some private vice or institutional cruelty. His novels were an important influence in the redress of social wrongs which the industrial system had aggravated. For romantic appeal he replaced the terror of the supernatural by that of lawlessness, of crime and mobs. In so doing Dickens could claim to be a realist, but his effort was always to present the romantic elements of real life. He effected a great democratic revolution in the publication of fiction by issuing his novels in monthly installments at a shilling each, instead of in three volumes at a guinea and a half. This periodical form of publication tempted W. M. Thackeray (1811–63), who had a reputation as a writer of essays and sketches, to throw his material into a novel, whence came *Vanity Fair* (1846), a panorama of English society in the first half of the century. Thackeray was a more thoroughgoing realist than Dickens; he worked in the spirit of Fielding in his next novel *Pendennis* (1848). His masterpiece *Henry Esmond* (1852) is one of the best pictures of the eighteenth century imaginable. The third in the trio of great nineteenth-century novelists is Mary Ann Evans (1819–80) who is known by her pen name of George Eliot. She began to write fiction about the time when the decline of faith in supernatural religion seemed to threaten the very basis of morality. George Eliot wrote to show that the principle of right conduct was implicit in the human soul, in a spirit of self-renunciation and unselfish service of others. These ideals, which reflect the spirit of Carlyle, are set forth in *Adam Bede* (1859), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), *Romola* (1863), *Middlemarch* (1872).

Two novelists whose reputations fill the closing years of the century, George Meredith (1828–1909) and Thomas Hardy (1841–1928) offer interesting illustration of the opposition above noted, between the school of thought which emphasizes conscious intelligence, and that which regards the unconscious forces as more important in human life. Meredith held that evolution, having produced man as a physical being, would continue to raise him to higher power as an intellectual one. His poetry expresses this faith: "Never is earth misread by brain." Hardy's view of life rested upon the same revelation of the world by science as Meredith's, to which, however, it is totally opposed. Hardy pictures man as controlled by blind forces of which intelligence merely serves to make him tragically aware. The happiest are the unconscious, simple souls, who resign themselves to fate. Hardy's most distinctive characters are his simple-minded peasants.

There was much to justify the mood of pessimism which settled down upon the late nineteenth century, of which Hardy's novels are typical. Industry destroyed the natural beauty of the parts of the world in which most of the great population which had been called into existence was obliged to live. It killed the primary source of satisfaction for most men, their joy in their work. As life in the present world became more bitter, faith grew weaker in a world to come. The great hopes entertained of science and intellectual progress, of the happiness of man through the extension of his control over Nature and through the intelligent organization of society, seemed doomed to disappointment. Many of the poets of the period reflect this discouragement, Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, Morris, Swinburne, James Thompson, as well as Carlyle, Ruskin, and George Eliot. These great Victorians were all deeply serious in their outlook on life. In the last decade of the century, this seriousness gave way to a mood of indifference to the social problems of mankind, a disposition to escape from them by way of æsthetic interests, to find satisfaction in art for its own sake. This mood has something in common with the pre-Raphaelite Movement. It gave rise to much invention in forms of verse as in the other arts. Its philosophy was Walter Pater's Epicureanism. At the same time Browning with his instinctive optimism was gaining in popularity, as was Meredith with his more intellectual faith. Against the Epicureanism of Pater, there was the Stoicism of Stevenson and Henley. There was a revival of religious poetry. Altogether, the decade of the nineties was one of those periods in which no general tendency can be discerned among the many cross and shifting currents, a period to which the term "decadence" is often applied.

The student will find the following works useful: *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, Vols. XIII and XIV; H. D. Traill, *Social England*, Vol. VI; O. Elton, *Survey of English Literature*, Vols. III and IV; G. Saintsbury, *History of Nineteenth Century Literature;* A. H. Thorndike, *Literature in a Changing Age;* Hugh Walker, *Literature in the Victorian Era;* G. K. Chesterton, *The Victorian Age in Literature;* J. W. Cunliffe, *English Literature during the Last Half Century;* Emery Neff, *Carlyle and Mill;* Holbrook Jackson, *The Eighteen-Nineties;* W. L. Cross, *The Development of the English Novel.*

## THOMAS CARLYLE (1795–1881)

Thomas Carlyle was born at Ecclefechan, Annandale, December 4, 1795. He was sent to the Annan grammar school, and thence to the University of Edinburgh, to prepare for the ministry. He taught school at Annan and at Kircaldy, became a private tutor for a time, and then turned to literature. In 1826 he married Jane Welsh and shortly afterwards went to the remote farm of Craigenputtock, where for six years he struggled with farming and literature. Here Emerson visited him, and the friendship began which was to be an important influence in the lives of both, bringing Carlyle into contact with the Transcendentalists in Massachusetts, and securing to him returns from the American publication of his books. In 1834 he moved to London and took up his residence at 5 Cheyne Row, Chelsea. Here he remained during the long remainder of his life, gathering about him a circle of younger men whose guide and philosopher he became — Tennyson, Ruskin, Browning, Dickens, Thackeray, John Sterling, Clough; and seeing visitors from America — Emerson, Norton, Alcott, and Margaret Fuller. The personal influence of Carlyle upon his contemporaries is one of the most important facts in the history of English literature in the century. In 1876 he was elected Rector of the University of Edinburgh. It was while he was in Scotland to receive this honor that Mrs. Carlyle died. His death occurred in 1881.

Carlyle's earliest writings had to do with literature. He learned German at a time when few Englishmen knew that language, and became a translator and interpreter of Goethe, Schiller, Richter, and others. He wrote also essays for the *Edinburgh Review* on his own countrymen, Burns, Scott, and Boswell's *Johnson*. He was, however, essentially a teacher and prophet rather than a literary critic. While a student at Edinburgh he passed through a spiritual crisis from which he emerged with an unshakable faith in the spiritual reality of the universe underneath its material appearance. Thenceforth he inclined more and more to dealing with life directly rather

than with literature. His essay on *Characteristics* (1831) contains the substance of his teaching his distrust of reason, and his reliance on intuition for the revelation of truth necessary to th individual and society. *Sartor Resartus*, his spiritual autobiography, was published in 1834 History as the record of life in the past was to him the most important of subjects, and histor in his view consisted of the essence of innumerable biographies, and was the story of what grea men had accomplished in the world. His *History of the French Revolution* was written in the year after his arrival in London and published in 1837. Then followed *Past and Present* (1843), *Th Letters and Speeches of Cromwell* (1845), and a long history of *Frederick the Great*, finished in 1865 In the meantime Carlyle wrote the *Life of John Sterling* (1851) and a series of essays entitle *Latter Day Pamphlets* (1850), in which he expressed violently his distrust and dislike of politica democracy, extension of the suffrage, and various reforms which to him seemed to represent mer superficial exercises of the mind. The bitterness of Carlyle's scorn alienated many of his friends but his Inaugural Address at Edinburgh had a wide appeal as an eloquent and beautiful summin up of his message to his time.

The complete works of Carlyle are published in many editions, notably the Ashburton, by Chap man and Hall. A critical edition of *Sartor Resartus* is that by Archibald MacMechan in th Athenæum Press series. *Sartor Resartus* and *Heroes and Hero Worhsip* form a volume in Every man's Library, which includes also several other works. The standard biography is that by J. A Froude, who also edited Carlyle's Reminiscences. A new *Life* by David Alec Wilson has reache its fifth volume. Short Lives are those by John Nichol in the English Men of Letters and Richar Garnett in the Great Writers series.

## SARTOR RESARTUS

### 1834

In 1831 Carlyle, then at Craigenputtock, wrote, "Am engaged on a strange piece on clothes. Know not what will come of it." This was the germ of *Sartor Resartus*, which was published in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1834, and in book form in Boston two years later. The book consists of supposed autobiographical fragments of Professor Teufelsdröckh of Weissnichtwo, which Carlyle supposes himself obliged to arrange and publish with explanatory comments. The title of the book, *The Tailor Reclothed*, has reference to a humorous philosophy of Professor Teufelsdröckh, according to which the opinions of men are likened to the clothes which they put on or off, change and renew — doubtless a reminiscence of Swift's satire in *A Tale of a Tub*. The experience and philosophy are those of Carlyle himself. The chapters here given narrate an episode, as Carlyle says quite literally, which occurred to him in Leith Walk, Edinburgh. In deep spiritual discouragement, "without hope and God in the world," he suddenly realized the strength of his own unconquerable soul. This sense of personality was the basis of Carlyle's faith. It was strengthened by sacrifice and work. It became the source of a mystic faith in the spiritual nature of the universe which is developed in the further chapter, on Natural Supernaturalism.

*Sartor Resartus* is written in a style distinguished by strange words placed in unusual order for emphasis, an explosive rather than a sustained rhythmic style. Carlyle excuses it by reference to his original which he is supposed to be translating, but in fact it is the style which he made thereafter his own, a style suited to the burden of his utterance, which was of the nature of Hebrew prophecy.

## Book II

### Chapter VII

#### THE EVERLASTING NO

Under the strange nebulous envelopment wherein our Professor has now shrouded himself, no doubt but his spiritual nature i nevertheless progressive, and growing: fo how can the "Son of Time," in any case stand still? We behold him, through thos dim years, in a state of crisis, of transition his mad Pilgrimings, and general solution into aimless Discontinuity, what is all thi but a mad Fermentation; wherefrom, the fiercer it is, the clearer product will one day evolve itself?

Such transitions are ever full of pain: thus the Eagle when he molts is sickly; and, to attain his new beak, must harshly dash-of the old one upon rocks. What Stoicism soever our Wanderer, in his individual act and motions, may affect, it is clear that there is a hot fever of anarchy and misery raging within; coruscations of which flash out: as indeed, how could there be other? Have we not seen him disappointed, bemocked o Destiny, through long years? All that the young heart might desire and pray for has been denied; nay, as in the last worst instance offered and then snatched away. Ever a "excellent Passivity"; but of useful, reasonable Activity, essential to the former as Food to Hunger, nothing granted: till a length, in this wild Pilgrimage, he must forcibly seize for himself an Activity, though useless, unreasonable. Alas, his cup o bitterness, which had been filling drop by

drop, ever since that first "ruddy morning" in the Hinterschlag Gymnasium, was at the very lip; and then with that poison-drop, of the Towgood-and-Blumine business, it runs over, and even hisses over in a deluge of foam.

He himself says once, with more justice than originality: "Man is, properly speaking, based upon Hope, he has no other possession but Hope; this world of his is emphatically the 'Place of Hope.'" What, then, was our Professor's possession? We see him, for the present, quite shut-out from Hope; looking not into the golden orient, but vaguely all round into a dim copper firmament, pregnant with earthquake and tornado.

Alas, shut-out from Hope, in a deeper sense than we yet dream of! For, as he wanders wearisomely through this world, he has now lost all tidings of another and higher. Full of religion, or at least of religiosity, as our Friend has since exhibited himself, he hides not that, in those days, he was wholly irreligious: "Doubt had darkened into Unbelief," says he; "shade after shade goes grimly over your soul, till you have the fixed, starless, Tartarean black." To such readers as have reflected, what can be called reflecting, on man's life, and happily discovered, in contradiction to much Profit-and-Loss Philosophy, speculative and practical, that Soul is *not* synonymous with Stomach; who understand, therefore, in our Friend's words, "that, for man's well-being, Faith is properly the one thing needful; how, with it, Martyrs, otherwise weak, can cheerfully endure the shame and the cross; and without it, Worldlings puke-up their sick existence, by suicide, in the midst of luxury": to such it will be clear that, for a pure moral nature, the loss of his religious Belief was the loss of everything. Unhappy young man! All wounds, the crush of long-continued Destitution, the stab of false Friendship and of false Love, all wounds in thy so genial heart, would have healed again, had not its life-warmth been withdrawn. Well might he exclaim, in his wild way: "Is there no God, then; but at best an absentee God, sitting idle, ever since the first Sabbath, at the outside of his Universe, and *seeing* it go? Has the word Duty no meaning; is what we call Duty no divine Messenger and Guide, but a false earthly Fantasm, made-up of Desire and Fear, of emanations from the Gallows and from Doctor Graham's[1] Celestial-Bed? Happiness of an approving Conscience! Did not Paul of Tarsus, whom admiring men have since named Saint, feel that *he* was 'the chief of sinners'; and Nero of Rome, jocund in spirit (*wohlgemuth*), spend much of his time in fiddling? Foolish Wordmonger and Motive-grinder, who in thy Logic-mill hast an earthly mechanism for the Godlike itself, and wouldst fain grind me out Virtue from the husks of Pleasure, — I tell thee, Nay! To the unregenerate Prometheus Vinctus of a man, it is ever the bitterest aggravation of his wretchedness that he is conscious of Virtue, that he feels himself the victim not of suffering only, but of injustice. What then? Is the heroic inspiration we name Virtue but some Passion; some bubble of the blood, bubbling in the direction others *profit* by? I know not: only this I know, If what thou namest Happiness be our true aim, then are we all astray. With Stupidity and sound Digestion man may front much. But what, in these dull unimaginative days, are the terrors of Conscience to the diseases of the Liver! Not on Morality, but on Cookery, let us build our stronghold: there brandishing our frying-pan, as censer, let us offer sweet incense to the Devil, and live at ease on the fat things *he* has provided for his Elect!"

Thus has the bewildered Wanderer to stand, as so many have done, shouting question after question into the Sibyl cave of Destiny, and receive no Answer but an Echo. It is all a grim Desert, this once-fair world of his; wherein is heard only the howling of wild-beasts, or the shrieks of despairing, hate-filled men; and no Pillar of Cloud by day, and no Pillar of Fire by night, any longer guides the Pilgrim. To such length has the spirit of Inquiry carried him. "But what boots it (*was thut's*)?" cries he: "it is but the common lot in this era. Not having come to spiritual majority prior to the *Siècle de Louis Quinze*, and not being born purely a Loghead (*Dummkopf*), thou hadst no other outlook. The whole world is, like thee, sold to Unbelief; their old Temples of the Godhead, which for long have not been rainproof, crumble down; and men ask now: where is the Godhead; our eyes never saw him?"

Pitiful enough were it, for all these wild utterances, to call our Diogenes wicked. Unprofitable servants as we all are, perhaps at no era of his life was he more decisively the Servant of Goodness, the Servant of God, than even now when doubting God's existence. "One circumstance I note," says he: "after all the nameless woe that Inquiry,

[1] A famous quack doctor.

which for me, what it is not always, was genuine Love of Truth, had wrought me, I nevertheless still loved Truth, and would bate no jot of my allegiance to her. 'Truth!' I cried, 'though the Heavens crush me for following her: no Falsehood! though a whole celestial Lubberland were the price of Apostasy.' In conduct it was the same. Had a divine Messenger from the clouds, or miraculous Handwriting on the wall, convincingly proclaimed to me *This thou shalt do*, with what passionate readiness, as I often thought, would I have done it, had it been leaping into the infernal Fire. Thus, in spite of all Motive-grinders, and Mechanical Profit-and-Loss Philosophies, with the sick ophthalmia and hallucination they had brought on, was the Infinite nature of Duty still dimly present to me: living without God in the world, of God's light I was not utterly bereft; if my as yet sealed eyes, with their unspeakable longing, could nowhere see Him, nevertheless in my heart He was present, and His heaven-written Law still stood legible and sacred there."

Meanwhile, under all these tribulations, and temporal and spiritual destitutions, what must the Wanderer, in his silent soul, have endured! "The painfullest feeling," writes he, "is that of your own Feebleness (*Unkraft*); ever, as the English Milton says, to be weak is the true misery. And yet of your Strength there is and can be no clear feeling, save by what you have prospered in, by what you have done. Between vague wavering Capability and fixed indubitable Performance, what a difference! A certain inarticulate Self-consciousness dwells dimly in us; which only our Works can render articulate and decisively discernible. Our Works are the mirror wherein the spirit first sees its natural lineaments. Hence, too, the folly of that impossible Precept, *Know thyself;*[1] till it be translated into this partially possible one, *Know what thou canst work at.*

"But for me, so strangely unprosperous had I been, the net-result of my Workings amounted as yet simply to — Nothing. How then could I believe in my Strength, when there was as yet no mirror to see it in? Ever did this agitating, yet, as I now perceive, quite frivolous question, remain to me insoluble: Hast thou a certain Faculty, a certain Worth, such even as the most have not; or art thou the completest Dullard of these modern times? Alas, the fearful Unbelief is unbelief in yourself; and how could I believe? Had not my first, last Faith in myself, when even to me the Heavens seemed laid open, and I dared to love, been all-too cruelly belied? The speculative Mystery of Life grew ever more mysterious to me; neither in the practical Mystery had I made the slightest progress, but been everywhere buffeted, foiled, and contemptuously cast out. A feeble unit in the middle of a threatening Infinitude, I seemed to have nothing given me but eyes, whereby to discern my own wretchedness. Invisible yet impenetrable walls, as of Enchantment, divided me from all living: was there, in the wide world, any true bosom I could press trustfully to mine? O Heaven, No, there was none! I kept a lock upon my lips: why should I speak much with that shifting variety of so-called Friends, in whose withered, vain and too hungry souls Friendship was but an incredible tradition? In such cases, your resource is to talk little, and that little mostly from the Newspapers. Now when I look back, it was a strange isolation I then lived in. The men and women around me, even speaking with me, were but Figures; I had practically, forgotten that they were alive, that they were not merely automatic. In the midst of their crowded streets and assemblages, I walked solitary; and (except as it was my own heart, not another's, that kept devouring) savage also, as the tiger in his jungle. Some comfort it would have been could I, like a Faust, have fancied myself tempted and tormented of the Devil; for a Hell, as I imagine, without Life, though only diabolic Life, were more frightful: but in our age of Down-pulling and Disbelief, the very Devil has been pulled down, you cannot so much as believe in a Devil. To me the Universe was all void of Life, of Purpose, of Volition, even of Hostility: it was one huge dead, immeasurable Steam-engine, rolling on, in its dead indifference, to grind me limb from limb. O, the vast, gloomy, solitary Golgotha,[1] and Mill of Death! Why was the Living banished thither companionless, conscious? Why, if there is no Devil; nay, unless the Devil is your God?"

A prey incessantly to such corrosions might not, moreover, as the worst aggravation to them, the iron constitution even of a Teufelsdröckh threaten to fail? We conjecture that he has known sickness; and, in spite of his locomotive habits, perhaps sickness of the chronic sort. Hear this, for ex-

1 Maxim of Solon inscribed over the portico of the temple of Delphi.

1 St. Matthew xxvii, 33.

ample: "How beautiful to die of broken-heart, on Paper! Quite another thing in practice; every window of your Feeling, even of your Intellect, as it were, begrimed and mud-bespattered, so that no pure ray can enter; a whole Drugshop in your inwards; the fordone soul drowning slowly in quagmires of Disgust!"

Putting all which external and internal miseries together, may we not find in the following sentences, quite in our Professor's still vein, significance enough? "From Suicide a certain aftershine (*Nachschein*) of Christianity withheld me: perhaps also a certain indolence of character; for, was not that a remedy I had at any time within reach? Often, however, was there a question present to me: Should some one now, at the turning of that corner, blow thee suddenly out of Space, into the other World, or other No-world, by pistol-shot, — how were it? On which ground, too, I often, in seastorms and sieged cities and other death-scenes, exhibited an imperturbability, which passed, falsely enough, for courage."

"So had it lasted," concludes the Wanderer, "so had it lasted as in bitter protracted Death-agony, through long years. The heart within me, unvisited by any heavenly dew-drop was smoldering in sulphurous, slow-consuming fire. Almost since earliest memory I had shed no tear; or once only when I, murmuring half-audibly, recited Faust's Death-song, that wild *Selig der den er im Siegesglanze findet* (Happy whom *he* finds in Battle's splendor), and thought that of this last Friend even I was not forsaken, that Destiny itself could not doom me not to die. Having no hope, neither had I any definite fear, were it of Man or of Devil: nay, I often felt as if it might be solacing, could the Arch-Devil himself, though in Tartarean terrors, but rise to me, that I might tell him a little of my mind. And yet, strangely enough, I lived in a continual, indefinite, pining fear; tremulous, pusillanimous, apprehensive of I knew not what; it seemed as if all things in the Heavens above and the Earth beneath would hurt me; as if the Heavens and the Earth were but boundless jaws of a devouring monster, wherein I, palpitating, waited, to be devoured.

"Full of such humor, and perhaps the miserablest man in the whole French Capital or Suburbs, was I, one sultry Dogday, after much perambulation, toiling along the dirty little *Rue Saint-Thomas de l'Enfer*, among civic rubbish enough, in a close atmosphere, and over pavements hot as Nebuchadnezzar's Furnace; whereby doubtless my spirits were little cheered; when, all at once, there rose a Thought in me, and I asked myself: 'What *art* thou afraid of? Wherefore, like a coward, dost thou forever pip and whimper, and go cowering and trembling? Despicable biped! what is the sum-total of the worst that lies before thee? Death? Well, Death; and say the pangs of Tophet too, and all that the Devil and Man may, will or can do against thee! Hast thou not a heart; canst thou not suffer whatsoever it be; and, as a Child of Freedom, though outcast, trample Tophet itself under thy feet, while it consumes thee? Let it come, then; I will meet it and defy it!' And as I so thought, there rushed like a stream of fire over my whole soul; and I shook base Fear away from me forever. I was strong, of unknown strength; a spirit, almost a god. Ever from that time, the temper of my misery was changed: not Fear or whining Sorrow was it, but Indignation and grim fire-eyed Defiance.

"Thus had the EVERLASTING NO (*das ewige Nein*) pealed authoritatively through all the recesses of my Being, of my ME; and then was it that my whole ME stood up, in native God-created majesty, and with emphasis recorded its Protest. Such a Protest, the most important transaction in Life, may that same Indignation and Defiance, in a psychological point of view, be fitly called. The Everlasting No had said: 'Behold, thou art fatherless, outcast, and the Universe is mine (the Devil's)'; to which my whole Me now made answer: '*I* am not thine, but Free, and forever hate thee!'

"It is from this hour that I incline to date my Spiritual New-birth, or Baphometic[1] Fire-baptism; perhaps I directly thereupon began to be a Man."

## CHAPTER VIII

### CENTRE OF INDIFFERENCE

Though, after this "Baphometic Fire-baptism" of his, our Wanderer signifies that his Unrest was but increased; as, indeed, "Indignation and Defiance," especially against things in general, are not the most peaceable inmates; yet can the Psychologist surmise that it was no longer a quite hopeless Unrest; that henceforth it had at least a fixed centre to revolve round. For the fire-baptized soul, long so scathed and thunder-

1 From Baphomet, the imaginary idol or symbol which the Templars were accused of worshiping.

riven, here feels its own Freedom, which feeling is its Baphometic Baptism: the citadel of its whole kingdom it has thus gained by assault, and will keep inexpugnable; outwards from which the remaining dominions, not indeed without hard battling, will doubtless by degrees be conquered and pacificated. Under another figure, we might say, if in that great moment, in the *Rue Saint-Thomas de l'Enfer*, the old inward Satanic School was not yet thrown out of doors, it received peremptory judicial notice to quit; — whereby, for the rest, its howl-chantings, Ernulphus-[1] cursings, and rebellious gnashings of teeth, might, in the meanwhile, become only the more tumultuous, and difficult to keep secret.

Accordingly, if we scrutinize these Pilgrimings well, there is perhaps discernible henceforth a certain incipient method in their madness. Not wholly as a Spectre does Teufelsdröckh now storm through the world; at worst as a spectre-fighting Man, nay who will one day be a Spectre-queller. If pilgriming restlessly to so many "Saints' Wells," and ever without quenching of his thirst, he nevertheless finds little secular wells, whereby from time to time some alleviation is ministered. In a word, he is now, if not ceasing, yet intermitting to "eat his own heart"; and clutches round him outwardly on the NOT-ME for wholesomer food. Does not the following glimpse exhibit him in a much more natural state?

"Towns also and Cities, especially the ancient, I failed not to look upon with interest. How beautiful to see thereby, as through a long vista, into the remote Time; to have as it were, an actual section of almost the earliest Past brought safe into the Present, and set before your eyes! There, in that old City, was a live ember of Culinary Fire put down, say only two-thousand years ago; and there, burning more or less triumphantly, with such fuel as the region yielded, it has burnt, and still burns, and thou thyself seest the very smoke thereof. Ah! and the far more mysterious live ember of Vital Fire was then also put down there; and still miraculously burns and spreads; and the smoke and ashes thereof (in these Judgment-Halls and Church-yards), and its bellows-engines (in these Churches), thou still seest; and its flame, looking out from every kind countenance, and every hateful one, still warms thee or scorches thee.

"Of Man's Activity and Attainment the chief results are aeriform, mystic, and preserved in Tradition only: such are his Forms of Government, with the Authority they rest on; his Customs, or Fashions both of Cloth-habits and of Soul-habits; much more his collective stock of Handicrafts, the whole Faculty he has acquired of manipulating Nature: all these things, as indispensable and priceless as they are, cannot in any way be fixed under lock and key, but must flit, spirit-like, on impalpable vehicles, from Father to Son; if you demand sight of them, they are nowhere to be met with. Visible Plowmen and Hammermen there have been, ever from Cain and Tubalcain downwards: but where does your accumulated Agricultural, Metallurgic, and other Manufacturing SKILL lie warehoused? It transmits itself on the atmospheric air, on the sun's rays (by Hearing and by Vision); it is a thing aeriform, impalpable, of quite spiritual sort. In like manner, ask me not, Where are the LAWS; where is the GOVERNMENT? In vain wilt thou go to Schönbrunn, to Downing Street, to the Palais Bourbon: thou findest nothing there but brick or stone houses, and some bundles of Papers tied with tape. Where, then, is that same cunningly-devised almighty GOVERNMENT of theirs to be laid hands on? Everywhere, yet nowhere: seen only in its works, this too is a thing aeriform, invisible; or if you will, mystic and miraculous. So spiritual (*geistig*) is our whole daily Life: all that we do springs out of Mystery, Spirit, invisible Force; only like a little Cloud-image, or Armida's Palace,[1] air-built, does the Actual body itself forth from the great mystic Deep.

"Visible and tangible products of the Past, again, I reckon-up to the extent of three. Cities, with their Cabinets and Arsenals; then tilled Fields, to either or to both of which divisions Roads with their Bridges may belong; and thirdly —— Books. In which third truly, the last invented, lies a worth far surpassing that of the two others. Wondrous indeed is the virtue of a true Book. Not like a dead city of stones, yearly crumbling, yearly needing repair; more like a tilled field, but then a spiritual field: like a spiritual tree, let me rather say, it stands from year to year, and from age to age (we have Books that already number some hundred-and-fifty human ages); and yearly comes its new produce of leaves (Commentaries, Deductions, Philosophical, Political Systems; or

1 The curse is given in *Tristram Shandy*, III, xi.

1 The palace of an enchantress in Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, bk. 16.

ere it only Sermons, Pamphlets, Journalistic ssays), every one of which is talismanic nd thaumaturgic, for it can persuade men. thou who art able to write a Book, which nce in the two centuries or oftener there is a an gifted to do, envy not him whom they ame City-builder, and inexpressibly pity im whom they name Conqueror or City-urner! Thou too art a Conqueror and ictor; but of the true sort, namely over the evil: thou too hast built what will outlast ll marble and metal, and be a wonder-ringing City of the Mind, a Temple and eminary and Prophetic Mount, whereto all indreds of the Earth will pilgrim. — Fool! hy journeyest thou wearisomely, in thy ntiquarian fervor, to gaze on the stone yramids of Geeza, or the clay ones of Sac-nara? These stand there, as I can tell thee, lle and inert, looking over the Desert, olishly enough, for the last three-thousand ears: but canst thou not open thy Hebrew IBLE, then, or even Luther's Version ereof?"

No less satisfactory is his sudden appear-nce not in Battle, yet on some Battle-field; hich, we soon gather, must be that of Wa-ram; so that here, for once, is a certain pproximation to distinctiveness of date. mitting much, let us impart what follows: "Horrible enough! A whole Marchfeld [1] rewed with shell-splinters, cannon-shot, ined tumbrils, and dead men and horses; ragglers still remaining not so much as uried. And those red mould heaps: ay, ere lie the Shells of Men, out of which all e Life and Virtue has been blown; and now re they swept together, and crammed-own out of sight, like blown Egg-shells! — id Nature, when she bade the Donau bring own his mould-cargoes from the Carinthian nd Carpathian Heights, and spread them ut here into the softest, richest level, — ttend thee, O Marchfeld, for a corn-bearing ursery, whereon her children might be ursed; or for a Cockpit, wherein they might e more commodiously be throttled and ttered? Were thy three broad Highways, eeting here from the ends of Europe, made r Ammunition-wagons, then? Were thy agrams and Stillfrieds but so many ready-uilt Casemates, wherein the house of Haps-urg might batter with artillery, and with rtillery be battered? König Ottokar, amid onder hillocks, dies under Rodolf's trun-heon; here Kaiser Franz falls a-swoon under Napoleon's: within which five centuries, to omit the others, how has thy breast, fair Plain, been defaced and defiled! The green-sward is torn-up and trampled-down; man's fond care of it, his fruit-trees, hedge-rows, and pleasant dwellings, blown away with gunpowder; and the kind seedfield lies a desolate, hideous Place of Skulls. — Nevertheless, Nature is at work; neither shall these Powder-Devilkins with their utmost devilry gainsay her: but all that gore and carnage will be shrouded-in, absorbed into manure; and next year the Marchfeld will be green, nay greener. Thrifty unwearied Nature, ever out of our great waste educing some little profit of thy own, — how dost thou, from the very carcass of the Killer, bring Life for the Living!

"What, speaking in quite unofficial language, is the net-purport and upshot of war? To my own knowledge, for example, there dwell and toil, in the British village of Dumdrudge, usually some five-hundred souls. From these, by certain 'Natural Enemies' of the French, there are successively selected, during the French war, say thirty able-bodied men: Dumdrudge, at her own expense, has suckled and nursed them: she has, not without difficulty and sorrow, fed them up to manhood, and even trained them to crafts, so that one can weave, another build, another hammer, and the weakest can stand under thirty stone avoirdupois. Nevertheless, amid much weeping and swearing, they are selected; all dressed in red; and shipped away, at the public charges, some two-thousand miles, or say only to the south of Spain; and fed there till wanted. And now to that same spot, in the south of Spain, are thirty similar French artisans, from a French Dumdrudge, in like manner wending: till at length, after infinite effort, the two parties come into actual juxtaposition; and Thirty stands fronting Thirty, each with a gun in his hand. Straightway the word 'Fire!' is given: and they blow the souls out of one another; and in place of sixty brisk useful craftsmen, the world has sixty dead carcasses, which it must bury, and anew shed tears for. Had these men any quarrel? Busy as the Devil is, not the smallest! They lived far enough apart; were the entirest strangers; nay, in so wide a Universe, there was even, unconsciously, by Commerce, some mutual helpfulness between them. How then? Simpleton! their Governors had fallen-out; and, instead of shooting one another, had the cunning to make

[1] A decisive battle between the Emperor, Rudolph of Hapsburg, and Ottokar, King of Bohemia, fought in 1278.

these poor blockheads shoot. — Alas, so is it in Deutschland, and hitherto in all other lands; still as of old, 'what devilry soever Kings do, the Greeks must pay the piper!' — In that fiction of the English Smollett, it is true, the final Cessation of War is perhaps prophetically shadowed forth; where the two Natural Enemies, in person, take each a Tobacco-pipe, filled with Brimstone; light the same, and smoke in one another's faces, till the weaker gives in: but from such predicted Peace-Era, what blood-filled trenches, and contentious centuries, may still divide us!"

Thus can the Professor, at least in lucid intervals, look away from his own sorrows, over the many-colored world, and pertinently enough note what is passing there. We may remark, indeed, that for the matter of spiritual culture, if for nothing else, perhaps few periods of his life were richer than this. Internally, there is the most momentous instructive Course of Practical Philosophy, with Experiments, going on; towards the right comprehension of which his Peripatetic habits, favorable to Meditation, might help him rather than hinder. Externally, again, as he wanders to and fro, there are, if for the longing heart little substance, yet for the seeing eye sights enough: in these so boundless Travels of his, granting that the Satanic School was even partially kept down, what an incredible knowledge of our Planet, and its Inhabitants and their Works, that is to say, of all knowable things, might not Teufelsdröckh acquire!

"I have read in most Public Libraries," says he, "including those of Constantinople and Samarcand: in most Colleges, except the Chinese Mandarin ones, I have studied, or seen that there was no studying. Unknown Languages have I oftenest gathered from their natural repertory, the Air, by my organ of Hearing; Statistics, Geographics, Topographics came, through the Eye, almost of their own accord. The ways of Man, how he seeks food, and warmth, and protection for himself, in most regions, are ocularly known to me. Like the great Hadrian, I meted-out much of the terraqueous Globe with a pair of Compasses that belonged to myself only.

"Of great Scenes why speak? Three summer days, I lingered reflecting, and even composing (*dichtete*) by the Pine-chasms of Vaucluse;[1] and in that clear Lakelet moistened my bread. I have sat under the Palm-trees of Tadmor;[1] smoked a pipe among the ruins of Babylon. The great Wall of China I have seen; and can testify that it is of gray brick, coped and covered with granite, and shows only second-rate masonry. — Great Events, also, have not I witnessed? Kings sweated-down (*ausgemergelt*) into Berlin-and-Milan[2] Customhouse-Officers; the World well won, and the World well lost; oftener than once a hundred-thousand individuals shot (by each other) in one day. All kindreds and peoples and nations dashed together, and shifted and shovelled into heaps, that they might ferment there, and in time unite. The birth-pangs of Democracy, wherewith convulsed Europe was groaning in cries that reached Heaven, could not escape me.

"For great Men I have ever had the warmest predilection; and can perhaps boast that few such in this era have wholly escaped me. Great Men are the inspired (speaking and acting) Texts of that divine Book of Revelation, whereof a Chapter is completed from epoch to epoch, and by some named History; to which inspired Texts your numerous talented men, and your innumerable untalented men, are the better or worse exegetic Commentaries, and wagonload of too-stupid heretical or orthodox, weekly Sermons. For my study, the inspired Texts themselves. Thus did not I, in very early days, having disguised me as tavern-waiter, stand behind the field-chairs, under the shady Tree at Treisnitz by the Jena Highway; waiting upon the great Schiller and greater Goethe and hearing what I have not forgotten For ——"

—— But at this point the Editor recalls his principle of caution, some time ago laid down, and must suppress much. Let not the sacredness of Laurelled, still more, of Crowned Heads, be tampered with. Should we, at a future day, find circumstances altered, and the time come for Publication, there may these glimpses into the privacy of the Illustrious be conceded; which for the present were little better than treacherous, perhaps traitorous Eavesdroppings. Of Lord Byron therefore, of Pope Pius, Emperor Tarakwang,[3] and the "White Water-roses" (Chinese Carbonari) with their mysteries, no notice here! Of Napoleon himself we shall only, glancing from afar, remark that Teufelsdröckh's relation to him seems to have

1 A village near Avignon where Petrarch once lived.

1 Palmyra, once a city on an oasis in the desert east of Syria.

2 The Berlin and Milan decrees were directed by Napoleon from those cities, imposing restrictions on British trade.

3 The contemporary Emperor of China.

been of very varied character. At first we find our poor Professor on the point of being shot as a spy; then taken into private conversation, even pinched on the ear, yet presented with no money; at last indignantly dismissed, almost thrown out of doors, as an 'Ideologist.' "He himself," says the Professor, "was among the completest Ideologists, at least Ideopraxists: in the Idea (*in Her Idee*) he lived, moved and fought. The man was a Divine Missionary, though unconscious of it; and preached, through the cannon's throat, that great doctrine, *La carrière ouverte aux talens* (The Tools to him that can handle them), which is our ultimate Political Evangel, wherein alone can liberty lie. Madly enough he preached, it is true, as Enthusiasts and first Missionaries are wont, with imperfect utterance, amid much frothy rant; yet as articulately perhaps as the case admitted. Or call him, if you will, an American Backwoodsman, who had to fell unpenetrated forests, and battle with innumerable wolves, and did not entirely forbear strong liquor, rioting, and even theft; whom, notwithstanding, the peaceful Sower will follow, and, as he cuts the boundless harvest, bless."

More legitimate and decisively authentic is Teufelsdröckh's appearance and emergence (we know not well whence) in the solitude of the North Cape, on that June Midnight. He has as a "light-blue Spanish cloak" hanging round him, as his "most commodious, principal, indeed sole upper-garment"; and stands there, on the World-promontory, looking over the infinite Brine, like a little blue Belfry (as we figure), now motionless indeed, yet ready, if stirred, to ring quaintest changes. "Silence as of death," writes he; "for Midnight, even in the Arctic latitudes, has its character: nothing but the granite cliffs ruddy-tinged, the peaceable gurgle of that low-heaving Polar Ocean, over which in the utmost North the great Sun hangs low and hazy, as if he too were slumbering. Yet is his cloud-couch wrought of crimson and cloth-of-gold; yet does his light stream over the mirror of waters, like a tremulous fire-pillar, shooting downwards to the abyss, and hide itself under my feet. In such moments, solitude also is invaluable; for who would speak, or be looked on, when behind him lies all Europe and Africa, fast asleep, except the watchmen; and before him the silent Immensity, and Palace of the Eternal, whereof our Sun is but a porch-lamp?

"Nevertheless, in this solemn moment comes a man, or monster, scrambling from among the rock-hollows; and, shaggy, huge as the Hyperborean Bear, hails me in Russian speech: most probably, therefore, a Russian Smuggler. With courteous brevity, I signify my indifference to contraband trade, my humane intentions, yet strong wish to be private. In vain: the monster, counting doubtless on his superior stature, and minded to make sport for himself, or perhaps profit, were it with murder, continues to advance; ever assailing me with his importunate train-oil breath; and now has advanced, till we stand both on the verge of the rock, the deep Sea rippling greedily down below. What argument will avail? On the thick Hyperborean, cherubic reasoning, seraphic eloquence were lost. Prepared for such extremity, I, deftly enough, whisk aside one step; draw out, from my interior reservoirs, a sufficient Birmingham Horse-pistol, and say, 'Be so obliging as retire, Friend (*Er ziehe sich zurück, Freund*), and with promptitude!' This logic even the Hyperborean understands: fast enough, with apologetic, petitionary growl, he sidles off; and, except for suicidal as well as homicidal purposes, need not return.

"Such I hold to be the genuine use of Gunpowder: that it makes all men alike tall. Nay, if thou be cooler, cleverer than I, if thou have more *Mind*, though all but no *Body* whatever, then canst thou kill me first, and art the taller. Hereby, at last, is the Goliath powerless, and the David resistless; savage Animalism is nothing, inventive Spiritualism is all.

"With respect to Duels, indeed, I have my own ideas. Few things, in this so surprising world, strike me with more surprise. Two little visual Spectra of men, hovering with insecure enough cohesion in the midst of the UNFATHOMABLE, and to dissolve therein, at any rate, very soon, — make pause at the distance of twelve paces asunder; whirl round; and, simultaneously by the cunningest mechanism, explode one another into Dissolution; and off-hand become Air, and Non-extant! Deuce on it (*verdammt*), the little spitfires! — Nay, I think with old Hugo von Trimberg:[1] 'God must needs laugh outright, could such a thing be, to see his wondrous Manikins here below.'"

But amid these specialties, let us not forget the great generality, which is our chief quest here: How prospered the inner man of Teufelsdröckh under so much outward shifting? Does Legion still lurk in him, though

1 A schoolmaster and moral writer, 1260–1309.

repressed; or has he exorcised that Devil's Brood? We can answer that the symptoms continue promising. Experience is the grand spiritual Doctor; and with him Teufelsdröckh had been long a patient, swallowing many a bitter bolus. Unless our poor Friend belong to the numerous class of Incurables, which seems not likely, some cure will doubtless be affected. We should rather say that Legion, or the Satanic School,[1] was now pretty well extirpated and cast out, but next to nothing introduced in its room; whereby the heart remains, for the while, in a quiet but no comfortable state.

"At length, after so much roasting," thus writes our Autobiographer, "I was what you might name calcined. Pray only that it be not rather, as is the more frequent issue, reduced to a *caput-mortuum!*[2] But in any case, by mere dint of practice, I had grown familiar with many things. Wretchedness was still wretched; but I could now partly see through it, and despise it. Which highest mortal, in this inane Existence, had I not found a Shadow-hunter, or Shadow-hunted; and, when I looked through his brave garnitures, miserable enough? Thy wishes have all been sniffed aside, thought I: but what, had they even been all granted! Did not the Boy Alexander weep because he had not two Planets to conquer; or a whole Solar System; or after that, whole Universe? *Ach Gott,* when I gazed into these Stars, have they not looked-down on me as if with pity, from their serene spaces; like Eyes glistening with heavenly tears over the little lot of man! Thousands of human generations, all as noisy as our own, have been swallowed-up of Time, and there remains no wreck of them any more; and Arcturus and Orion and Sirius and the Pleiades are still shining in their courses, clear and young, as when the Shepherd first noted them in the plain of Shinar. Pshaw! what is this paltry little Dogcage of an Earth; what art thou that sittest whining there? Thou art still Nothing, Nobody: true; but who, then, is Something, Somebody? For thee the Family of Man has no use; it rejects thee; thou art wholly as a dissevered limb: so be it; perhaps it is better so!"

Too-heavy-laden Teufelsdröckh! Yet surely his bands are loosening; one day he will hurl the burden far from him, and bound forth free and with a second youth.

1 So Southey called the school of Byron.

2 Literally, a dead-head — from the terminology of the old chemists, denoting the residuum when volatile elements had escaped.

"This," says our Professor, "was the CENTRE OF INDIFFERENCE I had now reached, through which whoso travels from the Negative Pole to the Positive must necessarily pass."

## CHAPTER IX

### THE EVERLASTING YEA

"Temptations in the Wilderness!" exclaims Teufelsdröckh: "Have we not all to be tried with such? Not so easily can the old Adam, lodged in us by birth, be dispossessed. Our Life is compassed round with Necessity; yet is the meaning of Life itself no other than Freedom, than Voluntary Force: thus have we a warfare; in the beginning, especially, a hard-fought battle. For the God-given mandate, *Work thou in Well-doing,* lies mysteriously written, in Promethean Prophetic Characters, in our hearts; and leaves us no rest, night or day, till it be deciphered and obeyed; till it burn forth, in our conduct, a visible, acted Gospel of Freedom. And as the clay-given mandate, *Eat thou and be filled,* at the same time persuasively proclaims itself through every nerve, — must not there be a confusion, a contest, before the better Influence can become the upper?

"To me nothing seems more natural than that the Son of Man, when such God-given mandate first prophetically stirs within him, and the Clay must now be vanquished or vanquish, — should be carried of the spirit into grim Solitudes, and there fronting the Tempter do grimmest battle with him; defiantly setting him at naught, till he yield and fly. Name it as we choose: with or without visible Devil, whether in the natural Desert of rocks and sands, or in the popu lous moral Desert of selfishness and basenes — to such Temptation are we all called. Un happy if we are not! Unhappy if we are bu Half-men, in whom that divine hand-writin has never blazed forth, all-subduing, in tru sun-splendor; but quivers dubiously ami meaner lights: or smoulders, in dull pain, darkness, under earthly vapors! — Our Wi derness is the wide World in an Atheist Century; our Forty Days are long years o suffering and fasting: nevertheless, to thes also comes an end. Yes, to me also wa given, if not Victory, yet the consciousne of Battle, and the resolve to persevere there while life or faculty is left. To me also, en tangled in the enchanted forests, demon peopled, doleful of sight and of sound, it wa given, after weariest wanderings, to work ou

ny way into the higher sunlight slopes — of hat Mountain which has no summit, or hose summit is in Heaven only!"

He says elsewhere, under a less ambitious igure; as figures are, once for all, natural to im: "Has not thy Life been that of most ufficient men (*tüchtigen Männer*) thou hast nown in this generation? An outflush of oolish young Enthusiasm, like the first allow-crop, wherein are as many weeds as aluable herbs: this all parched away, under he Droughts of practical and spiritual Unelief, as Disappointment, in thought and ct, often-repeated gave rise to Doubt, and )oubt gradually settled into Denial! If I ave had a second-crop, and now see the erennial greensward, and sit under umrageous cedars, which defy all Drought and Doubt); herein too, be the Heavens raised, I am not without examples, and ven examplars."

So that, for Teufelsdröckh also, there has een a "glorious revolution": these mad hadow-hunting and shadow-hunted Pilrimings of his were but some purifying "Temptation in the Wilderness," before his postolic work (such as it was) could begin; hich Temptation is now happily over, and he Devil once more worsted! Was "that igh moment in the *Rue de l'Enfer*," then, roperly the turning-point of the battle; hen the Fiend said, *Worship me, or be torn n shreds;* and was answered valiantly with n *Apage Satana?*[1] — Singular Teufelsdröckh, would thou hadst told thy singular story in lain words! But it is fruitless to look there, n those Paper-bags, for such. Nothing but nnuendoes, figurative crotchets: a typical hadow, fitfully wavering, prophetico-sariric; no clear logical Picture. "How paint o the sensual eye," asks he once, "what asses in the Holy-of-Holies of Man's Soul; n what words, known to these profane times, peak even afar-off of the unspeakable?" Ve ask in turn: Why perplex these times, rofane as they are, with needless obscurity, y omission and by commission? Not nystical only is our Professor, but whimsical; nd involves himself, now more than ever, n eye-bewildering *chiaroscuro*. Successive limpses, here faithfully imparted, our more ifted readers must endeavor to combine or their own behoof.

He says: "The hot Harmattan[2] wind had aged itself out; its howl went silent within me; and the long-deafened soul could now hear. I paused in my wild wanderings; and sat me down to wait, and consider; for it was as if the hour of change drew nigh. I seemed to surrender, to renounce utterly, and say: Fly, then, false shadows of Hope; I will chase you no more, I will believe you no more. And ye too, haggard spectres of Fear, I care not for you; ye too are all shadows and a lie. Let me rest here: for I am way-weary and lifeweary; I will rest here, were it but to die: to die or to live is alike to me; alike insignificant." — And again: "Here, then, as I lay in that CENTRE OF INDIFFERENCE; cast, doubtless by benignant upper Influence, into a healing sleep, the heavy dreams rolled gradually away, and I awoke to a new Heaven and a new Earth. The first preliminary moral Act, Annihilation of Self (*Selbsttödtung*), had been happily accomplished; and my mind's eyes were now unsealed, and its hands ungyved."

Might we not also conjecture that the following passage refers to his Locality, during this same "healing sleep"; that his Pilgrim-staff lies cast aside here, on "the high table-land"; and indeed that the repose is already taking wholesome effect on him? If it were not that the tone, in some parts, has more of riancy, even of levity, than we could have expected! However, in Teufelsdröckh, there is always the strangest Dualism: light dancing, with guitar-music, will be going on in the fore-court, while by fits from within comes the faint whimpering of woe and wail. We transcribe the piece entire.

"Beautiful it was to sit there, as in my skyey Tent, musing and meditating; on the high table-land, in front of the Mountains; over me, as roof, the azure Dome, and around me, for walls, four azure-flowing curtains, — namely, of the Four azure Winds, on whose bottom-fringes also I have seen gilding. And then to fancy the fair Castles that stood sheltered in these Mountain hollows; with their green flower-lawns, and white dames and damosels, lovely enough: or better still, the straw-roofed Cottages, wherein stood many a Mother baking bread, with her children round her: — all hidden and protectingly folded-up in the valley-folds; yet there and alive, as sure as if I beheld them. Or to see, as well as fancy, the nine Towns and Villages, that lay round my mountain-seat, which, in still weather, were wont to speak to me (by their steeple-bells) with metal tongue; and, in almost all weather, proclaimed their vitality by re-

1 "Get thee behind me, Satan!" Matthew IV, 10.
2 A devastating dry land wind felt on the coast of Africa.

peated Smoke-clouds; whereon, as on a culinary horologe, I might read the hour of the day. For it was the smoke of cookery, as kind housewives at morning, midday, eventide, were boiling their husbands' kettles; and ever a blue pillar rose up into the air, successively or simultaneously, from each of the nine, saying, as plainly as smoke could say: Such and such a meal is getting ready here. Not uninteresting! For you have the whole Borough, with all its love-makings and scandal-mongeries, contentions and contentments, as in miniature, and could cover it all with your hat. — If, in my wide Wayfarings, I had learned to look into the business of the World in its details, here perhaps was the place for combining it into general propositions, and deducing inferences therefrom.

"Often also could I see the black Tempest marching in anger through the Distance: round some Schreckhorn,[1] as yet grim-blue, would the eddying vapor gather, and there tumultuously eddy, and flow down like a mad witch's hair; till, after a space, it vanished, and, in the clear sunbeam, your Schreckhorn stood smiling grim-white, for the vapor had held snow. How thou fermentest and elaboratest, in thy great fermenting-vat and laboratory of an Atmosphere, of a World, O Nature! — Or what is Nature? Ha! why do I not name thee GOD? Art not thou the 'Living Garment of God'? O Heavens, is it, in very deed, HE, then, that ever speaks through thee; that lives and loves in thee, that lives and loves in me?

"Fore-shadows, call them rather fore-splendors, of that Truth, and Beginning of Truths, fell mysteriously over my soul. Sweeter than Dayspring to the Ship-wrecked in Nova Zembla;[2] ah, like the mother's voice to her little child that strays bewildered, weeping, in unknown tumults; like soft streamings of celestial music to my too-exasperated heart, came that Evangel. The Universe is not dead and demoniacal, a charnel-house with spectres; but godlike, and my Father's!

"With other eyes, too, could I now look upon my fellow man: with an infinite Love, an infinite Pity. Poor, wandering, wayward man! Art thou not tried, and beaten with stripes, even as I am? Ever, whether thou bear the royal mantle or the beggar's gabardine, art thou not so weary, so heavy-laden; and thy Bed of Rest is but a Grave. O my Brother, my Brother, why cannot I shelter thee in my bosom, and wipe away all tears from thy eyes! — Truly, the din of many voiced Life, which, in this solitude, with the mind's organ, I could hear, was no longer a maddening discord, but a melting one; like inarticulate cries, and sobbings of a dumb creature, which in the ear of Heaven are prayers. The poor Earth, with her poor joys, was now my needy Mother, not my cruel Stepdame; Man, with his so mad Wants and so mean Endeavors, had become the dearer to me; and even for his sufferings and his sins, I now first named him Brother. Thus was I standing in the porch of that '*Sanctuary of Sorrow*';[1] by strange, steep ways had I too been guided thither; and ere long its sacred gates would open, and the '*Divine Depth of Sorrow*' lie disclosed to me."

The Professor says, he here first got eye on the Knot that had been strangling him, and straightway could unfasten it, and was free. "A vain interminable controversy," writes he, "touching what is at present called Origin of Evil, or some such thing, arises in every soul, since the beginning of the world and in every soul, that would pass from idle Suffering into actual Endeavoring, must first be put an end to. The most, in our time have to go content with a simple, incomplete enough Suppression of this controversy; to a few some Solution of it is indispensable. In every new era, too, such Solution comes-out in different terms; and ever the Solution of the last era has become obsolete, and is found unserviceable. For it is man's nature to change his Dialect from century to century; he cannot help it though he would. The authentic *Church-Catechism* of our present century has not yet fallen into my hands meanwhile, for my own private behoof, I attempt to elucidate the matter so. Man's Unhappiness, as I construe, comes of his Greatness; it is because there is an Infinite in him, which with all his cunning he cannot quite bury under the Finite. Will the whole Finance Ministers and Upholsterers and Confectioners of modern Europe undertake, in joint-stock company, to make one Shoeblack HAPPY? They cannot accomplish it, above an hour or two: for the Shoeblack also has a Soul quite other than his Stomach; and would require, if you consider it, for his permanent satisfaction and saturation, simply this allotment, no more, and no less: *God's infinite Universe altogether to himself.*

1 Peak of Terror. In the Bernese Alps.

2 A reference to the Barents Expedition seeking a northern passage whose ship was frozen in off the coast of Nova Zembla in the late sixteenth century.

1 From Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Travels*, chap. XI.

therein to enjoy infinitely, and fill every wish as fast as it rose. Oceans of Hochheimer, a Throat like that of Ophiuchus: speak not of them; to the infinite Shoeblack they are as nothing. No sooner is your ocean filled, than he grumbles that it might have been of better vintage. Try him with half of a Universe, of an Omnipotence, he sets to quarrelling with the proprietor of the other half, and declares himself the most maltreated of men. — Always there is a black spot in our sunshine: it is even, as I said, the *Shadow of Ourselves*.

"But the whim we have of Happiness is somewhat thus. By certain valuations, and averages, or our own striking, we come upon some sort of average terrestrial lot; this we fancy belongs to us by nature, and of infeasible right. It is simple payment of our wages, of our deserts; requires neither thanks nor complaint; only such *overplus* as there may be do we account Happiness; any *deficit* again is Misery. Now consider that we have the valuation of our own deserts ourselves, and what a fund of Self-conceit there is in each of us, — do you wonder that the balance should so often dip the wrong way, and many a Blockhead cry: See there, what a payment; was ever worthy gentleman so used! — I tell thee, Blockhead, it all comes of thy Vanity; of what thou *fanciest* those same deserts of thine to be. Fancy that thou deservest to be hanged (as is most likely), thou wilt feel it happiness to be only shot: fancy that thou deservest to be hanged in a hair-halter, it will be a luxury to die in hemp.

"So true is it, what I then said, that *the Fraction of Life can be increased in value not so much by increasing your Numerator as by lessening your Denominator*. Nay, unless my Algebra deceive me, *Unity* itself divided by *Zero* will give *Infinity*. Make thy claim of wages a zero, then; thou hast the world under thy feet. Well did the Wisest of our time [1] write: 'It is only with Renunciation (*Entsagen*) that Life, properly speaking, can be said to begin.'

"I asked myself: What is this that, ever since earliest years, thou hast been fretting and fuming, and lamenting and self-tormenting, on account of? Say it in a word: is it not because thou art not HAPPY? Because the THOU (sweet gentleman) is not sufficiently honored, nourished, soft-bedded, and lovingly cared-for? Foolish soul! What Act of Legislature was there that *thou* shouldst be Happy? A little while ago thou hadst no right to *be* at all. What if thou wert born and predestined not to be Happy, but to be Unhappy! Art thou nothing other than a Vulture, then, that fliest through the Universe seeking after somewhat to *eat;* and shrieking dolefully because carrion enough is not given thee? Close thy *Byron;* open thy *Goethe*."

"*Es leuchtet mir ein*, I see a glimpse of it!" cries he elsewhere: "there is in man a HIGHER than Love of Happiness: he can do without Happiness, and instead thereof find Blessedness! Was it not to preach-forth this same HIGHER that sages and martyrs, the Poet and the Priest, in all times, have spoken and suffered; bearing testimony, through life and through death, of the Godlike that is in Man, and how in the Godlike only has he Strength and Freedom? Which God-inspired Doctrine art thou also honored to be taught; O Heavens! and broken with manifold merciful Afflictions, even till thou become contrite, and learn it! O, thank thy Destiny for these; thankfully bear what yet remain: thou hadst need of them; the Self in thee needed to be annihilated. By benignant fever-paroxysms is Life rooting out the deep-seated chronic Disease, and triumphs over Death. On the roaring billows of Time, thou art not engulfed, but borne aloft into the azure of Eternity. Love not Pleasure; love God. This is the EVERLASTING YEA, wherein all contradiction is solved: wherein whoso walks and works, it is well with him."

And again: "Small is it that thou canst trample the Earth with its injuries under thy feet, as old Greek Zeno [1] trained thee: thou canst love the Earth while it injures thee, and even because it injures thee; for this a Greater than Zeno was needed, and he too was sent. Knowest thou that '*Worship of Sorrow*'? The Temple thereof, founded some eighteen centuries ago, now lies in ruins, overgrown with jungle, the habitation of doleful creatures: nevertheless, venture forward; in a low crypt, arched out of falling fragments, thou findest the Altar still there, and its sacred Lamp perennially burning."

Without pretending to comment on which strange utterances, the Editor will only remark, that there lies beside them much of a still more questionable character; unsuited to the general apprehension; nay wherein he himself does not see his way. Nebulous disquisitions on Religion, yet not without bursts of splendor; on the "perennial continuance of Inspiration"; on Prophecy; that there are

1 Goethe.

1 Founder of the Stoic philosophy.

"true Priests, as well as Baal-Priests, in our own day": with more of the like sort. We select some fractions, by way of finish to this farrago.

"Cease, my much respected Herr von Voltaire," thus apostrophizes the Professor: "shut thy sweet voice; for the task appointed thee seems finished. Sufficiently hast thou demonstrated this proposition, considerable or otherwise: That the Mythus of the Christian Religion looks not in the eighteenth century as it did in the eighth. Alas, were thy six-and-thirty quartos, and the six-and-thirty thousand other quartos and folios, and flying sheets or reams, printed before and since on the same subject, all needed to convince us of so little! But what next? Wilt thou help us to embody the divine Spirit of that Religion in a new Mythus, in a new vehicle and vesture, that our Souls, otherwise too like perishing, may live? What! thou hast no faculty in that kind? Only a torch for burning, no hammer for building? Take our thanks, then, and ——— thyself away.

"Meanwhile what are antiquated Mythuses to me? Or is the God present, felt in my own heart, a thing which Herr von Voltaire will dispute out of me; or dispute into me? To the '*Worship of Sorrow*' ascribe what origin and genesis thou pleasest, *has* not that Worship originated, and been generated; is it not *here?* Feel it in thy heart, and then say whether it is of God! This is Belief; all else is Opinion, — for which latter whoso will, let him worry and be worried."

"Neither," observes he elsewhere, "shall ye tear-out one another's eyes, struggling over 'Plenary Inspiration,' and such-like: try rather to get a little even Partial Inspiration, each of you for himself. One BIBLE I know, of whose Plenary Inspiration doubt is not so much as possible; nay with my own eyes I saw the God's-Hand writing it: thereof all other Bibles are but Leaves, — say, in Picture-Writing to assist the weaker faculty."

Or, to give the wearied reader relief, and bring it to an end, let him take the following perhaps more intelligible passage:

"To me, in this our life," says the Professor, "which is an internecine warfare with the Time-spirit, other warfare seems questionable. Hast thou in any way a Contention with thy brother, I advise thee, think well what the meaning thereof is. If thou gauge it to the bottom, it is simply this: 'Fellow, see! thou art taking more than thy share of Happiness in the world, something from *my* share: which, by the Heavens, thou shalt not; nay I will fight thee rather.' — Alas, and the whole lot to be divided is such a beggarly matter, truly a 'feast of shells,' for the substance has been spilled out: no enough to quench one Appetite; and the collective human species clutching at them! — Can we not, in all such cases, rather say 'Take it, thou too-ravenous individual; take that pitiful additional fraction of a share which I reckoned mine, but which thou sc wantest; take it with a blessing: would to Heaven I had enough for thee!' — If Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*[1] be, 'to a certain extent Applied Christianity,' surely to a still greater extent, so is this. We have here not a Whole Duty of Man,[2] yet a Half Duty, namely the Passive half: could we but do it, as we can demonstrate it!

"But indeed Conviction, were it never so excellent, is worthless till it convert itself into Conduct. Nay properly Conviction is not possible till then; inasmuch as all Speculation is by nature endless, formless, a vortex amid vortices: only by a felt indubitable certainty of Experience does it find any centre to revolve round, and so fashion itself into a system. Most true is it, as a wise man teaches us, that 'Doubt of any sort cannot be removed except by Action.' On which ground, too, let him who gropes painfully in darkness or uncertain light, and prays vehemently that the dawn may ripen into day, lay this other precept well to heart, which to me was of invaluable service: '*Do the Duty which lies nearest thee,*' which thou knowest to be a Duty! Thy second Duty will already have become clearer.

"May we not say, however, that the hour of Spiritual Enfranchisement is even this: When your Ideal World, wherein the whole man has been dimly struggling and inexpressibly languishing to work, becomes revealed, and thrown open; and you discover, with amazement enough, like the Lothario in *Wilhelm Meister,* that your 'America is here or nowhere'? The Situation that has not its Duty, its Ideal, was never yet occupied by man. Yes here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy Ideal: work it out therefrom; and working believe, live, be free. Fool! the Ideal is in thyself, the impediment too is in thyself: thy

1 The Theory of Knowledge by Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814).

2 An anonymous book of moral instruction first published in 1659.

Condition is but the stuff thou art to shape that same Ideal out of: what matters whether such stuff be of this sort or that, so the Form thou give it be heroic, be poetic? O thou that pinest in the imprisonment of the Actual, and criest bitterly to the gods for a kingdom wherein to rule and create, know this of a truth: the thing thou seekest is already with thee, 'here or nowhere,' couldst thou only see!

"But it is with man's Soul as it was with Nature: the beginning of Creation is — Light. Till the eye have vision, the whole members are in bonds. Divine moment, when over the tempest-tossed Soul, as once over the wild-weltering Chaos, it is spoken: Let there be Light! Ever to the greatest that has felt such moment, is it not miraculous and God-announcing; even as, under simpler figures, to the simplest and least. The mad primeval Discord is hushed; the rudely-jumbled conflicting elements bind themselves into separate Firmaments: deep silent rock-foundations are built beneath; and the skyey vault with its everlasting Luminaries above: instead of a dark wasteful Chaos, we have a blooming, fertile, heaven-encompassed World.

"I too could now say to myself: Be no longer a Chaos, but a World, or even World-kin. Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it, in God's name! 'Tis the utmost thou hast in thee: out with it, then. Up, up! Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy whole might. Work while it is called Today; for the Night cometh, wherein no man can work."

## Book III

### Chapter VIII

#### NATURAL SUPERNATURALISM

It is in his stupendous Section, headed *Natural Supernaturalism*, that the Professor first becomes a Seer; and, after long effort, such as we have witnessed, finally subdues under his feet this refractory Clothes-Philosophy, and takes victorious possession thereof. Phantasms enough he has had to struggle with; "Cloth-webs and Cob-webs," of Imperial Mantles, Superannuated Symbols, and what not: yet still did he courageously pierce through. Nay, worst of all, two quite mysterious, world-embracing Phantasms, Time and Space, have ever hovered round him, perplexing and bewildering: but with these also he now resolutely grapples, these also he victoriously rends asunder. In a word, he has looked fixedly on Existence, till, one after the other, its earthly hulls and garnitures have all melted away; and now, to his rapt vision, the interior celestial Holy of Holies lies disclosed.

Here, therefore, properly it is that the Philosophy of Clothes attains to Transcendentalism; this last leap, can we but clear it, takes us safe into the promised land, where *Palingenesia*,[1] in all senses, may be considered as beginning. "Courage, then!" may our Diogenes exclaim, with better right than Diogenes the First once did. This stupendous Section we, after long painful meditation, have found not to be unintelligible; but, on the contrary, to grow clear, nay radiant, and all-illuminating. Let the reader, turning on it what utmost force of speculative intellect is in him, do his part; as we, by judicious selection and adjustment, shall study to do ours:

"Deep has been, and is, the significance of Miracles," thus quietly begins the Professor; "far deeper perhaps than we imagine. Meanwhile, the question of questions were: What specially is a Miracle? To that Dutch King of Siam, an icicle had been a miracle; whoso had carried with him an air-pump, and vial of vitriolic ether, might have worked a miracle. To my Horse, again, who unhappily is still more unscientific, do not I work a miracle, and magical '*Open sesame!*' every time I please to pay twopence, and open for him an impassable *Schlagbaum*, or shut Turnpike?

"'But is not a real Miracle simply a violation of the Laws of Nature?' ask several. Whom I answer by this new question: What are the Laws of Nature? To me perhaps the rising of one from the dead were no violation of these Laws, but a confirmation; were some far deeper Law, now first penetrated into, and by Spiritual Force, even as the rest have all been, brought to bear on us with its Material Force.

"Here too may some inquire, not without astonishment: On what ground shall one, that can make Iron swim, come and declare that therefore he can teach Religion? To us, truly, of the Nineteenth Century, such declaration were inept enough; which nevertheless to our fathers, of the First Century, was full of meaning.

"'But is it not the deepest Law of Nature that she be constant?' cries an illuminated

[1] second birth.

class: 'Is not the Machine of the Universe fixed to move by unalterable rules?' Probable enough, good friends: nay I, too, must believe that the God, whom ancient inspired men assert to be 'without variableness or shadow of turning,' does indeed never change; that Nature, that the Universe, which no one whom it so pleases can be prevented from calling a Machine, does move by the most unalterable rules. And now of you, too, I make the old inquiry: What those same unalterable rules, forming the complete Statute-Book of Nature, may possibly be?

"They stand written in our Works of Science, say you; in the accumulated records of Man's Experience? — Was Man with his Experience present at the Creation, then, to see how it all went on? Have any deepest scientific individuals yet dived down to the foundations of the Universe, and gauged everything there? Did the Maker take them into His counsel; that they read His ground-plan of the incomprehensible All; and can say, This stands marked therein, and no more than this? Alas, not in anywise! These scientific individuals have been nowhere but where we also are; have seen some handbreadths deeper than we see into the Deep that is infinite, without bottom as without shore.

"Laplace's Book on the Stars, wherein he exhibits that certain Planets, with their Satellites, gyrate round our worthy Sun, at a rate and in a course, which, by greatest good fortune, he and the like of him have succeeded in detecting, — is to me as precious as to another. But is this what thou namest 'Mechanism of the Heavens,' and 'System of the World'; this, wherein Sirius and the Pleiades, and all Herschel's Fifteen-thousand Suns per minute, being left out, some paltry handful of Moons, and inert Balls, had been — looked at, nicknamed, and marked in the Zodiacal Way-bill; so that we can now prate of their Whereabout; their How, their Why, their What, being hid from us, as in the signless Inane?

"System of Nature! To the wisest man, wide as is his vision, Nature remains of quite *infinite* depth, of quite infinite expansion; and all Experience thereof limits itself to some few computed centuries and measured square-miles. The course of Nature's phases, on this our little fraction of a Planet, is partially known to us: but who knows what deeper courses these depend on; what infinitely larger Cycle (of causes) our little Epicycle revolves on? To the Minnow every cranny and pebble, and quality and accident, of its little native Creek may have become familiar: but does the Minnow understand the Ocean Tides and periodic Currents, the Trade-winds, and Monsoons, and Moon's Eclipses; by all which the condition of its little Creek is regulated, and may, from time to time (*un*miraculously enough), be quite overset and reversed? Such a minnow is Man; his Creek this Planet Earth; his Ocean the immeasurable All; his Monsoons and periodic Currents the mysterious Course of Providence through Æons of Æons.

"We speak of the Volume of Nature: and truly a Volume it is, — whose Author and Writer is God. To read it! Dost thou, does man, so much as well know the Alphabet thereof? With its Words, Sentences, and grand descriptive Pages, poetical and philosophical, spread out through Solar Systems, and Thousands of Years, we shall not try thee. It is a Volume written in celestial hieroglyphs, in the true Sacred-writing; of which even Prophets are happy that they can read here a line and there a line. As for your Institutes, and Academies of Science, they strive bravely; and, from amid the thick-crowded, inextricably intertwisted hieroglyphic writing, pick out, by dextrous combination, some Letters in the vulgar Character, and therefrom put together this and the other economic Recipe, of high avail in Practice. That Nature is more than some boundless Volume of such Recipes, or huge, well-nigh inexhaustible Domestic-Cookery Book, of which the whole secret will in this manner one day evolve itself, the fewest dream.

"Custom," continues the Professor, "doth make dotards of us all. Consider well, thou wilt find that Custom is the greatest of Weavers; and weaves air-raiment for all the Spirits of the Universe; whereby indeed these dwell with us visibly, as ministering servants, in our houses and workshops; but their spiritual nature becomes, to the most, forever hidden. Philosophy complains that Custom has hoodwinked us, from the first; that we do everything by Custom, even Believe by it; that our very Axioms, let us boast of Free-thinking as we may, are oftenest simply such Beliefs as we have never heard questioned. Nay, what is Philosophy throughout but a continual battle against Custom; an ever-renewed effort to *transcend* the sphere of blind Custom, and so become Transcendental?

"Innumerable are the illusions and legerdemain-tricks of Custom: but of all these, perhaps the cleverest is her knack of persuading us that the Miraculous, by simple repetition, ceases to be Miraculous. True, it is by this means we live; for man must work as well as wonder: and herein is Custom so far a kind nurse, guiding him to his true benefit. But she is a fond foolish nurse, or rather we are false foolish nurselings, when, in our resting and reflecting hours, we prolong the same deception. Am I to view the Stupendous with stupid indifference, because I have seen it twice, or two-hundred, or two-million times? There is no reason in Nature or in Art why I should: unless, indeed, I am a mere Work-Machine, for whom the divine gift of Thought were no other than the terrestrial gift of Steam is to the Steam-engine; a power whereby cotton might be spun, and money and money's worth realized.

"Notable enough too, here as elsewhere, wilt thou find the potency of Names; which indeed are but one kind of such custom-woven, wonder-hiding Garments. Witchcraft, and all manner of Spectre-work, and Demonology, we have now named Madness and Diseases of the Nerves. Seldom reflecting that still the new question comes upon us: What is Madness, what are Nerves? Ever, as before, does Madness remain a mysterious-terrific, altogether *infernal* boiling-up of the Nether Chaotic Deep, through this fair-painted Vision of Creation, which swims thereon, which we name the Real. Was Luther's Picture of the Devil less a Reality, whether it were formed within the bodily eye, or without it? In every the wisest Soul lies a whole world of internal Madness, an authentic Demon-Empire; out of which, indeed, his world of Wisdom has been creatively built together, and now rests there, as on its dark foundations does a habitable flowery Earth-rind.

"But deepest of all illusory Appearances, for hiding Wonder, as for many other ends, are your two grand fundamental world-enveloping Appearances, SPACE and TIME. These, as spun and woven for us from before Birth itself, to clothe our celestial ME for dwelling here, and yet to blind it, — lie all-embracing, as the universal canvas, or warp and woof, whereby all minor Illusions, in this Phantasm Existence, weave and paint themselves. In vain, while here on Earth, shall you endeavor to strip them off; you can, at best, but rend them asunder for moments, and look through.

"Fortunatus had a wishing Hat, which when he put on, and wished himself Anywhere, behold he was There. By this means had Fortunatus triumphed over Space, he had annihilated Space; for him there was no Where, but all was Here. Were a Hatter to establish himself, in the Wahngasse of Weissnichtwo, and make felts of this sort for all mankind, what a world we should have of it! Still stranger, should, on the opposite side of the street, another Hatter establish himself; and, as his fellow-craftsman made Space-annihilating Hats, make Time-annihilating! Of both would I purchase, were it with my last groschen; but chiefly of this latter. To clap-on your felt, and, simply by wishing that you were Any*where*, straightway to be *There!* Next to clap-on your other felt, and, simply by wishing that you were Any*when*, straightway to be *Then!* This were indeed the grander: shooting at will from the Fire-Creation of the World to its Fire-Consummation; here historically present in the First Century, conversing face to face with Paul and Seneca; there prophetically in the Thirty-first, conversing also face to face with other Pauls and Senecas, who as yet stand hidden in the depth of that late Time!

"Or thinkest thou it were impossible, unimaginable? Is the Past annihilated, then, or only past; is the Future nonextant, or only future? Those mystic faculties of thine, Memory and Hope, already answer: already through those mystic avenues, thou the Earth-blinded summonest both Past and Future, and communest with them, though as yet darkly, and with mute beckonings. The curtains of Yesterday drop down, the curtains of Tomorrow roll up; but Yesterday and Tomorrow both *are*. Pierce through the Time-element, glance into the Eternal. Believe what thou findest written in the sanctuaries of Man's Soul, even as all Thinkers, in all ages, have devoutly read it there: that Time and Space are not God, but creations of God; that with God as it is a universal HERE, so is it an everlasting NOW.

"And seest thou therein any glimpse of IMMORTALITY? — O Heaven! Is the white Tomb of our Loved One, who died from our arms, and had to be left behind us there, which rises in the distance, like a pale, mournfully receding Milestone, to tell how many toilsome uncheered miles we have journeyed on alone, — but a pale spectral

Illusion! Is the lost Friend still mysteriously Here, even as we are Here mysteriously, with God! — Know of a truth that only the Time-shadows have perished, or are perishable; that the real Being of whatever was, and whatever is, and whatever will be, *is* even now and forever. This, should it unhappily seem new, thou mayest ponder at thy leisure; for the next twenty years, or the next twenty centuries: believe it thou must; understand it thou canst not.

"That the Thought-forms, Space and Time, wherein, once for all, we are sent into this Earth to live, should condition and determine our whole Practical reasonings, conceptions, and imagings or imaginings, seems altogether fit, just, and unavoidable. But that they should, furthermore, usurp such sway over pure spiritual Meditation, and blind us to the wonder everywhere lying close on us, seems nowise so. Admit Space and Time to their due rank as Forms of Thought; nay even, if thou wilt, to their quite undue rank of Realities: and consider, then, with thyself how their thin disguises hide from us the brightest God-effulgences! Thus, were it not miraculous, could I stretch forth my hand and clutch the Sun? Yet thou seest me daily stretch forth my hand and therewith clutch many a thing, and swing it hither and thither. Art thou a grown baby, then, to fancy that the Miracle lies in miles of distance, or in pounds avoirdupois of weight; and not to see that the true inexplicable God-revealing Miracle lies in this, that I can stretch forth my hand at all; that I have free Force to clutch aught therewith? Innumerable other of this sort are the deceptions, and wonder-hiding stupefactions, which Space practices on us.

"Still worse is it with regard to Time. Your grand antimagician, and universal wonder-hider, is this same lying Time. Had we but the Time-annihilating Hat, to put on for once only, we should see ourselves in a World of Miracles, wherein all fabled or authentic Thaumaturgy, and feats of Magic, were outdone. But unhappily we have not such a Hat; and man, poor fool that he is, can seldom and scantily help himself without one.

"Were it not wonderful, for instance, had Orpheus, or Amphion, built the walls of Thebes by the mere sound of his Lyre? Yet tell me, Who built these walls of Weissnichtwo; summoning out all the sandstone rocks, to dance along from the *Steinbruch*[1] (now a huge Troglodyte Chasm, with frightful green-mantled pools); and shape themselves into Doric and Ionic pillars, squared ashlar houses and noble streets? Was it not the still higher Orpheus, or Orpheuses, who, in past centuries, by the divine Music of Wisdom, succeeded in civilizing Man? Our highest Orpheus walked in Judea, eighteen-hundred years ago: his sphere-melody, flowing in wild native tones, took captive the ravished souls of men; and, being of a truth sphere-melody, still flows and sounds, though now with thousandfold accompaniments, and rich symphonies, through all our hearts; and modulates, and divinely leads them. Is that a wonder, which happens in two hours; and does it cease to be wonderful if happening in two million? Not only was Thebes built by the music of an Orpheus; but without the music of some inspired Orpheus was no city ever built, no work that man glories in ever done.

"Sweep away the Illusion of Time; glance, if thou have eyes, from the near moving-cause to its far-distant Mover: The stroke that came transmitted through a whole galaxy of elastic balls, was it less a stroke than if the last ball only had been struck, and sent flying? O, could I (with the Time-annihilating Hat) transport thee direct from the Beginnings to the Endings, how were thy eyesight unsealed, and thy heart set flaming in the Light-sea of celestial wonder! Then sawest thou that this fair Universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed City of God; that through every star, through every grass-blade, and most through every Living Soul, the glory of a present God still beams. But Nature, which is the Time-vesture of God, and reveals Him to the wise, hides Him from the foolish.

"Again, could anything be more miraculous than an actual authentic Ghost? The English Johnson longed, all his life, to see one; but could not, though he went to Cock Lane, and thence to the church-vaults, and tapped on coffins. Foolish Doctor! Did he never, with the mind's eye as well as with the body's, look round him into that full tide of human Life he so loved; did he never so much as look into Himself? The good Doctor was a Ghost, as actual and authentic as heart could wish; well-nigh a million of Ghosts were travelling the streets by his side. Once more I say, sweep away the illusion of Time; compress the threescore years into three minutes: what else was he, what else

[1] quarry.

are we? Are we not Spirits, that are shaped into a body, into an Appearance; and that fade away again into air and Invisibility? This is no metaphor, it is a simple scientific *fact;* we start out of Nothingness, take figure, and are Apparitions; round us, as round the veriest spectre, is Eternity; and to Eternity minutes are as years and æons. Come there not tones of Love and Faith, as from celestial harp-strings, like the Song of beatified Souls? And again, do not we squeak and jibber (in our discordant, screech-owlish debatings and recriminatings); and glide bodeful, and feeble, and fearful; or uproar (*poltern*), and revel in our mad Dance of the Dead, — till the scent of the morning air summons us to our still Home; and dreamy Night becomes awake and Day? Where now is Alexander of Macedon: does the steel Host, that yelled in fierce battle-shouts at Issus and Arbela, remain behind him; or have they all vanished utterly, even as perturbed Goblins must? Napoleon too, and his Moscow Retreats and Austerlitz Campaigns! Was it all other than the veriest Spectre-hunt; which has now, with its howling tumult that made Night hideous, flitted away? — Ghosts! There are high a thousand-million walking the Earth openly at noontide; some half-hundred have vanished from it, some half-hundred have arisen in it, ere thy watch ticks once.

"O Heaven, it is mysterious, it is awful to consider that we not only carry each a future Ghost within Him; but are, in very deed, Ghosts! These Limbs, whence had we them; this stormy Force; this life-blood with its burning Passion? They are dust and shadow; a Shadow-system gathered round our ME; wherein, through some moments or years, the Divine Essence is to be revealed in the Flesh. That warrior on his strong war-horse, fire flashes through his eyes; force dwells in his arm and heart: but warrior and war-horse are a vision; a revealed Force, nothing more. Stately they tread the Earth, as if it were a firm substance: fool! the Earth is but a film; it cracks in twain, and warrior and war-horse sink beyond plummet's sounding. Plummet's? Fantasy herself will not follow them. A little while ago, they were not; a little while, and they are not, their very ashes are not.

"So has it been from the beginning, so will it be to the end. Generation after generation takes to itself the Form of a Body; and forth-issuing from Cimmerian Night, on Heaven's mission APPEARS. What Force and Fire is in each he expends: one grinding in the mill of Industry; one hunter-like climbing the giddy Alpine heights of Science; one madly dashed in pieces on the rocks of Strife, in war with his fellow: — and then the Heaven-sent is recalled; his earthly Vesture falls away, and soon even to sense becomes a vanished Shadow. Thus, like some wild-flaming, wild-thundering train of Heaven's Artillery, does this mysterious MANKIND thunder and flame, in long-drawn, quick-succeeding grandeur, through the unknown Deep. Thus, like a God-created, fire-breathing Spirit-host, we emerge from the Inane; haste stormfully across the astonished Earth; then plunge again into the Inane. Earth's mountains are levelled, and her seas filled up, in our passage: can the Earth, which is but dead and a vision, resist Spirits which have reality and are alive? On the hardest adamant some footprint of us is stamped-in; the last Rear of the host will read traces of the earliest Van. But whence? — O Heaven, whither? Sense knows not; Faith knows not; only that it is through Mystery to Mystery, from God and to God.

'We *are such stuff*
As dreams are made of, and our little Life
Is rounded with a sleep!'"

## PAST AND PRESENT

### 1843

The publication by the Camden Society of a mediæval chronicle, giving an account of the reformation of the Monastery of Saint Edmundsbury in the reign of King John, furnished Carlyle with the text for a sermon on the necessity of a similar reform in the England of his day. In 1843 the condition of the country was alarming. The extension of manufacturing had called into existence a great population of industrial workers, men, women, and children, whose lives depended precariously on the demand for English-made goods. There was a high tariff on imported grain to protect the agricultural interests, and as England had long ceased to raise enough food for her population, starvation of the poor was chronic. Carlyle saw the three classes which divided England at odds with each other. The old landed aristocracy had ceased to govern, and were sunk in idleness and pleasure. The active middle class to which the political power had passed were ambitious of material success and selfishly devoted to their own interests, content to attribute the misery of the workers to economic law. The lower class were demanding a share in the government through the People's Charter, and threatening revolution. Carlyle believed that the well-being of the community, as of the single life, depended on the practice of the

virtues of toil and sacrifice; and he felt the necessity of putting at the head of the State a strong governor, like the Abbot Samson who brought the idle and dissipated monks of Saint Edmundsbury to order. This notion of the part played by the strong man, the hero, in history, and the need of hero-worship, in the present, is the essence of Carlyle's social doctrine.

## Book III

### Chapter XII

#### REWARD

"Religion," I said; for, properly speaking, all true Work is Religion: and whatsoever Religion is not Work may go and dwell among the Brahmins, Antinomians, Spinning Dervishes, or where it will; with me it shall have no harbor. Admirable was that of the old Monks, "*Laborare est Orare*, Work is Worship."

Older than all preached Gospels was this unpreached, inarticulate, but ineradicable, forever-enduring Gospel: Work, and therein have well-being. Man, Son of Earth and of Heaven, lies there not, in the innermost heart of thee, a Spirit of active Method, a Force for Work; — and burns like a painfully-smoldering fire, giving thee no rest till thou unfold it, till thou write it down in beneficent Facts around thee! What is immethodic, waste, thou shalt make methodic, regulated, arable; obedient and productive to thee. Wheresoever thou findest Disorder, there is thy eternal enemy; attack him swiftly, subdue him; make Order of him, the subject not of Chaos, but of Intelligence, Divinity and Thee! The thistle that grows in thy path, dig it out, that a blade of useful grass, a drop of nourishing milk, may grow there instead. The waste cotton-shrub, gather its waste white down, spin it, weave it; that, in place of idle litter, there may be folded webs, and the naked skin of man be covered.

But above all, where thou findest Ignorance, Stupidity, Brute-mindedness, — yes, there, with or without Church-tithes and Shovel-hat, with or without Talfourd-Mahon[1] Copyrights, or were it with mere dungeons and gibbets and crosses, attack it, I say; smite it wisely, unweariedly, and rest not while thou livest and it lives; but smite, smite, in the name of God! The Highest God, as I understand it, does audibly so command thee; still audibly, if thou have ears to hear. He, even He, with his *un*spoken voice, awfuler than any Sinai thunders or syllabled speech of Whirlwinds; for the Silence of deep Eternities, of Worlds from beyond the morning-stars, does it not speak to thee? The unborn Ages; the old Graves with their long-moldering dust, the very tears that wetted it now all dry, — do not these speak to thee, what ear hath not heard? The deep Death-kingdoms, the Stars in their never-resting courses, all Space and all Time proclaim it to thee in continual silent admonition. Thou too, if ever man should, shalt work while it is called Today. For the Night cometh, wherein no man can work.

All true Work is sacred; in all true Work, were it but true hand-labor, there is something of divineness. Labor, wide as the Earth, has its summit in Heaven. Sweat of the brow; and up from that to sweat of the brain, sweat of the heart; which includes all Kepler calculations, Newton meditations, all Sciences, all spoken Epics, all acted Heroisms, Martyrdoms, — up to that "Agony of bloody sweat," which all men have called divine! O brother, if this is not "worship," then I say, the more pity for worship; for this is the noblest thing yet discovered under God's sky. Who art thou that complainest of thy life of toil? Complain not. Look up, my wearied brother; see thy fellow Workmen there, in God's Eternity; surviving there, they alone surviving: sacred Band of the Immortals, celestial Bodyguard of the Empire of Mankind. Even in the weak Human Memory they survive so long, as saints, as heroes, as gods; they alone surviving; peopling, they alone, the unmeasured solitudes of Time! To thee Heaven, though severe, is *not* unkind; Heaven is kind, — as a noble Mother; as that Spartan Mother, saying while she gave her son his shield, "With it, my son, or upon it!" Thou too shalt return *home* in honor; to thy far-distant Home, in honor; doubt it not, — if in the battle thou keep thy shield! Thou, in the Eternities and deepest Death-kingdoms, art not an alien; thou everywhere art a denizen! Complain not; the very Spartans did not *complain*.

And who art thou that braggest of thy life of Idleness; complacently showest thy bright gilt equipages; sumptuous cushions, appliances for folding of the hands to mere sleep? Looking up, looking down, around, behind or before, discernest thou, if it be not in Mayfair alone, any *idle* hero, saint, god, or even devil? Not a vestige of one.

[1] Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd (1795–1854), English jurist and poet, best known in Parliament as author of the International Copyright Law.

In the Heavens, in the Earth, in the Waters under the Earth, is none like unto thee. Thou art an original figure in this Creation; a denizen in Mayfair alone, in this extraordinary Century or Half-Century alone! One monster there is in the world: the idle man. What is his "Religion"? That Nature is a Phantasm, where cunning beggary or thievery may sometimes find good victual. That God is a lie; and that Man and his Life are a lie. — Alas, alas, who of us *is* there that can say, I have worked? The faithfulest of us are unprofitable servants; the faithfulest of us know that best. The faithfulest of us may say, with sad and true old Samuel,[1] "Much of my life has been trifled away!" But he that has, and except "on public occasions" professes to have, no function but that of going idle in a graceful or graceless manner; and of begetting sons to go idle; and to address Chief Spinners and Diggers, who at least *are* spinning and digging, "Ye scandalous persons who produce too much" — My Corn-Law friends, on what imaginary still richer Eldorados, and true iron-spikes with law of gravitation, are ye rushing!

As to the Wages of Work there might innumerable things be said; there will and must yet innumerable things be said and spoken, in Saint Stephen's[2] and out of Saint Stephen's; and gradually not a few things be ascertained and written, on Law-parchment, concerning this very matter: — "Fair day's-wages for a fair day's-work" is the most unrefusable demand! Money-wages "to the extend of keeping your worker alive that he may work more;" these, unless you mean to dismiss him straightway out of this world, are indispensable alike to the noblest Worker and to the least noble!

One thing only I will say here, in special reference to the former class, the noble and noblest; but throwing light on all the other classes and their arrangements of this difficult matter: The "wages" of every noble Work do yet lie in Heaven or else Nowhere. Not in Bank-of-England bills, in Owen's[3] Labor-bank, or any the most improved establishment of banking and money-changing, needest thou, heroic soul, present thy account of earnings. Human banks and labor-banks know thee not; or know thee after generations and centuries have passed away, and thou art clean gone from "rewarding," — all manner of bank-drafts, shop-tills, and Downing-street Exchequers lying very invisible, so far from thee! Nay, at bottom, dost thou need any reward? Was it thy aim and life-purpose to be filled with good things for thy heroism; to have a life of pomp and ease, and be what men call "happy," in this world, or in any other world? I answer for thee deliberately, No. The whole spiritual secret of the new epoch lies in this, that thou canst answer for thyself, with thy whole clearness of head and heart, deliberately, No!

My brother, the brave man has to give his Life away. Give it, I advise thee; — thou dost not expect to *sell* thy Life in an adequate manner? What price, for example, would content thee? The just price of thy LIFE to thee, — why, God's entire Creation to thyself, the whole Universe of Space, the whole Eternity of Time, and what they hold: that is the price which would content thee; that, and if thou wilt be candid, nothing short of that! It is thy all; and for it thou wouldst have all. Thou art an unreasonable mortal; — or rather thou art a poor *infinite* mortal, who, in thy narrow clay-prison here, *seemest* so unreasonable! Thou wilt never sell thy Life, or any part of thy Life, in a satisfactory manner. Give it, like a royal heart; let the price be Nothing: thou *hast* then, in a certain sense, got All for it! The heroic man, — and is not every man, God be thanked, a potential hero? — has to do so, in all times and circumstances. In the most heroic age, as in the most unheroic, he will have to say, as Burns said proudly and humbly of his little Scottish Songs, little dewdrops of Celestial Melody in an age when so much was unmelodious: "By Heaven, they shall either be invaluable or of no value; I do not need your guineas for them!" It is an element which should, and must, enter deeply into all settlements of wages here below. They never will be "satisfactory" otherwise; they cannot, O Mammon Gospel, they never can! Money for my little piece of work "to the extent that will allow me to keep working;" yes, this, — unless you mean that I shall go my ways *before* the work is all taken out of me: but as to "wages" —! —

On the whole, we do entirely agree with those old Monks, *Laborare est Orare*. In a thousand senses, from one end of it to the other, true Work *is* Worship. He that works, whatsoever be his work, he bodies forth the form of Things Unseen; a small Poet every Worker is. The idea, were it but of his poor Delf Platter, how much more of his Epic

1 Samuel Johnson. 2 The British Parliament.
3 Robert Owen (1771–1858), founder of English socialism.

Poem, is as yet "seen," half-seen, only by himself; to all others it is a thing unseen, impossible; to Nature herself it is a thing unseen, a thing which never hitherto was; — very "impossible," for it is as yet a No-thing! The Unseen Powers had need to watch over such a man; he works in and for the Unseen. Alas, if he look to the Seen Powers only, he may as well quit the business; his No-thing will never rightly issue as a Thing, but as a Deceptivity, a Sham-thing, — which it had better not do!

Thy No-thing of an Intended Poem, O Poet who hast looked merely to reviewers, copyrights, booksellers, popularities, behold it has not yet become a Thing; for the truth is not in it! Though printed, hotpressed, reviewed, celebrated, sold to the twentieth edition: what is all that? The Thing, in philosophical uncommercial language, is still a No-thing, mostly semblance and deception of the sight; — benign Oblivion incessantly gnawing at it, impatient till Chaos, to which it belongs, do reabsorb it! —

He who takes not counsel of the Unseen and Silent, from him will never come real visibility and speech. Thou must descend to the *Mothers*,[1] to the *Manes*,[2] and Hercules-like long suffer and labor there, wouldst thou emerge with victory into the sunlight. As in battle and the shock of war, — for is not this a battle? — thou too shalt fear no pain or death, shalt love no ease or life; the voice of festive Lubberlands, the noise of greedy Acheron shall alike lie silent under thy victorious feet. Thy work, like Dante's, shall "make thee lean for many years." The world and its wages, its criticisms, counsels, helps, impediments, shall be as a waste ocean-flood; the chaos through which thou art to swim and sail. Not the waste waves and their weedy gulf-streams, shalt thou take for guidance: thy star alone, — "*Se tu segui tua stella!*" Thy star alone, now clear-beaming over Chaos, nay now by fits gone out, disastrously eclipsed: this only shalt thou strive to follow. O, it is a business, as I fancy, that of weltering your way through Chaos and the murk of Hell! Green-eyed dragons watching you, three-headed Cerberuses, — not without sympathy of *their* sort! "*Eccovi l' uom ch' è stato all' Inferno.*"[3] For in fine, as Poet Dryden says, you do walk hand in hand with sheer Madness, all the way, — who is by no means pleasant company! You look fixedly into Madness, and *her* undiscovered, boundless, bottomless Night-empire; that you may extort new Wisdom out of it, as an Eurydice from Tartarus. The higher the Wisdom, the closer was its neighborhood and kindred with mere Insanity; literally so; — and thou wilt with a speechless feeling, observe how highest Wisdom, struggling up into this world, has oftentimes carried such tinctures and adhesions of Insanity still cleaving to it hither!

All Works, each in their degree, are a making of Madness sane; — truly enough a religious operation; which cannot be carried on without religion. You have not work otherwise; you have eye-service, greedy grasping of wages, swift and ever swifter manufacture of semblances to get hold of wages. Instead of better felt-hats to cover your head, you have bigger lath-and-plaster hats set travelling the streets on wheels. Instead of heavenly and earthly Guidance for the souls of men, you have "Black or White Surplice" Controversies, stuffed hair-and-leather Popes; — terrestrial *Law-wards*, Lords and Law-bringers, "organizing Labor" in these years, by passing Corn-Laws. With all which, alas, this distracted Earth is now full, nigh to bursting. Semblances most smooth to the touch and eye; most accursed nevertheless, to body and soul. Semblances be they of Shamwoven Cloth or of Dilettante Legislation, which are *not* real wool or substance, but Devil's-dust, accursed of God and man! No man has worked, or can work except religiously; not even the poor day-laborer, the weaver of your coat, the sewer of your shoes. All men, if they work not as in a Great Taskmaster's eye will work wrong, work unhappily for themselves and you.

Industrial work, still under bondage to Mammon, the rational soul of it not yet awakened, is a tragic spectacle. Men in the rapidest motion and self-motion; restless with convulsive energy, as if driven by Galvanism, as if possessed by a Devil tearing asunder mountains, — to no purpose for Mammonism is always Midas-eared. This is sad, on the face of it. Yet courage the beneficent Destinies, kind in their sternness, are apprising us that this cannot continue. Labor is not a devil, even while encased in Mammonism; Labor is ever an imprisoned god, writhing unconsciously or consciously to escape out of Mammonism

1 Mothers of Destiny or Fates.
2 Shades of Hades in Greek Mythology.
3 "Behold the man who has been in Hell!" said of Dante.

Plugson of Undershot, like Taillefer [1] of Normandy, wants victory; how much happier will even Plugson be to have a Chivalrous victory than a Chactaw one! The unredeemed ugliness is that of a slothful People. Show me a People energetically busy; heaving, struggling, all shoulders at the wheel; their heart pulsing, every muscle swelling, with man's energy and will; — I show you a People of whom great good is already predictable; to whom all manner of good is yet certain, if their energy endure. By very working, they will learn; they have, Antæus-like, their foot on Mother Fact: how can they but learn?

The vulgarest Plugson of a Master-Worker, who can command Workers, and get work out of them, is already a considerable man. Blessed and thrice-blessed symptoms I discern of Master-Workers who are not vulgar men; who are Nobles, and begin to feel that they must act as such: all speed to these, they are England's hope at present! But in this Plugson himself, conscious of almost no nobleness whatever, how much is there! Not without man's faculty, insight, courage, hard energy, is this rugged figure. His words none of the wisest; but his actings cannot be altogether foolish. Think, how were it, stoodst thou suddenly in his shoes! He has to command a thousand men. And not imaginary commanding; no, it is real, incessantly practical. The evil passions of so many men (with the Devil in them, as in all of us) he has to vanquish; by manifold force of speech and of silence, to repress or evade. What a force of silence, to say nothing of the others, is in Plugson! For these his thousand men he has to provide raw-material, machinery, arrangement, houseroom; and ever at the week's end, wages by due sale. No Civil-List, or Goulburn-Baring [2] Budget has he to fall back upon, for paying of his regiment; he has to pick his supplies from the confused face of the whole Earth and Contemporaneous History, by his dexterity alone. There will be dry eyes if he fail to do it! — He exclaims, at present, "black in the face," near strangled with Dilettante Legislation: "Let me have elbow-room, throat-room, and I will not fail! No, I will spin yet, and conquer like a giant: what 'sinews of war' lie in me, untold resources towards the Conquest of this Planet, if instead of hanging me, you husband them, and help me!" — My indomitable friend, it is *true;* and thou shalt and must be helped.

This is not a man I would kill and strangle by Corn-Laws, even if I could! No, I would fling my Corn-Laws and Shotbelts to the Devil; and try to help this man. I would teach him, by noble precept and law-precept, by noble example most of all, that Mammonism was not the essence of his or of my station in God's Universe; but the adscititious excrescence of it; the gross, terrene, godless embodiment of it; which would have to become, more or less, a godlike one. By noble *real* legislation, by true *noble's*-work, by unwearied, valiant, and were it wageless effort, in my Parliament and in my Parish, I would aid, constrain, encourage him to effect more or less this blessed change. I should know that it would have to be effected; that unless it were in some measure effected, he and I and all of us, I first and soonest of all were doomed to perdition! — Effected it will be; unless it were a Demon that made this Universe; which I, for my own part, do at no moment, under no form, in the least believe.

May it please your Serene Highness, your Majesties, Lordships and Law-wardships, the proper Epic of this world is not now "Arms and the Man;" how much less, "Shirtfrills and the Man:" no, it is now "Tools and the Man:" that, henceforth to all time, is now our Epic; — and you, first of all others, I think, were wise to take note of that!

## Chapter XIII

### Democracy

If the Serene Highnesses and Majesties do not take note of that, then, as I perceive, *that* will take note of itself! The time for levity, insincerity, and idle babble and playacting, in all kinds, is gone by; it is a serious, grave time. Old long-vexed questions, not yet solved in logical words or parliamentary laws, are fast solving themselves in facts, somewhat unblessed to behold! This largest of questions, this question of Work and Wages, which ought, had we heeded Heaven's voice, to have begun two generations ago or more, cannot be delayed longer without hearing Earth's voice. "Labor" will verily need to be somewhat "organized," as they say, — God knows with what difficulty. Man will actually need to have his debts and earnings a little better paid by man; which, let Parliaments speak of them or be silent of them, are

1 The Minstrel who rode in front of the Norman army at the Battle of Hastings, tossing his sword in the air and catching it as it fell. Chanting *The Song of Roland*, he was the first to fall in battle.

2 Henry Goulburn (1784–1856) was Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1841 to 1846, succeeding in that office Sir Francis Thornhill Baring (1796–1866).

eternally his due from man, and cannot, without penalty and at length not without death-penalty, be withheld. How much ought to cease among us straightway; how much ought to begin straightway, while the hours yet are!

Truly they are strange results to which this of leaving all to "Cash;" of quietly shutting-up the God's Temple, and gradually opening wide-open the Mammon's Temple, with "Laissez-faire, and Every man for himself," — have led us in these days! We have Upper, speaking Classes, who indeed do "speak" as never man spake before; the withered flimsiness, the godless baseness and barrenness of whose Speech might of itself indicate what kind of Doing and practical Governing went on under it! For Speech is the gaseous element out of which most kinds of Practice and Performance, especially all kinds of moral Performance, condense themselves, and take shape; as the one is, so will the other be. Descending, accordingly, into the Dumb Class in its Stockport Cellars and Poor-Law Bastilles, have we not to announce that they also are hitherto unexampled in the History of Adam's Posterity?

Life was never a May-game for men: in all times the lot of the dumb millions born to toil was defaced with manifold sufferings, injustices, heavy burdens, avoidable and unavoidable; not play at all, but hard work that made the sinews sore and the heart sore. As bond-slaves, *villani*, *bordarii*, *sochemanni*, nay indeed as dukes, earls and kings, men were oftentimes made weary of their life; and had to say, in the sweat of their brow and of their soul, Behold, it is not sport, it is grim earnest, and our back can bear no more! Who knows not what massacrings and harryings there have been; grinding, long-continuing, unbearable injustices, — till the heart had to rise in madness, and some "*Eu Sachsen, nimith euer sachses*, You Saxons, out with your gully-knives, then!" You Saxons, some "arrestment," partial "arrestment of the Knaves and Dastards" has become indispensable! — The page of Dryasdust is heavy with such details.

And yet I will venture to believe that in no time, since the beginnings of Society, was the lot of those same dumb millions of toilers so entirely unbearable as it is even in the days now passing over us. It is not to die, or even to die of hunger, that makes a man wretched; many men have died; all men must die, — the last exit of us all is in a Fire-Chariot of Pain. But it is to live miserable we know not why; to work sore and yet gain nothing; to be heart-worn, weary, yet isolated, unrelated, girt-in with a cold universal Laissez-faire: it is to die slowly all our life long, imprisoned in a deaf, dead, Infinite Injustice, as in the accursed iron belly of a Phalaris' Bull! This is and remains forever intolerable to all men whom God has made. Do we wonder at French Revolutions, Chartisms, Revolts of Three Days?[1] The times, if we will consider them, are really unexampled.

Never before did I hear of an Irish Widow reduced to "prove her sisterhood by dying of typhus-fever and infecting seventeen persons," — saying in such undeniable way, "You *see* I was your sister!" Sisterhood, brotherhood, was often forgotten; but not till the rise of these ultimate Mammon and Shotbelt Gospels did I ever see it so expressly denied. If no pious Lord or *Lawward* would remember it, always some pious Lady ("*Hlaf-dig*," Benefactress, "*Loaf-giveress*," they say she is, — blessings on her beautiful heart!) was there, with mild mother-voice and hand, to remember it; some pious thoughtful *Elder*, what we now call "Prester," *Presbyter* or "Priest," was there to put all men in mind of it, in the name of the God who had made all.

Not even in Black Dahomey was it ever, I think, forgotten to the typhus-fever length. Mungo Park, resourceless, had sunk down to die under the Negro Village-Tree, a horrible White object in the eyes of all. But in the poor Black Woman, and her daughter who stood aghast at him, whose earthly wealth and funded capital consisted of one small calabash of rice, there lived a heart richer than *Laissez-faire:* they, with a royal munificence, boiled their rice for him; they sang all night to him, spinning assiduous on their cotton distaffs, as he lay to sleep: "Let us pity the poor white man; no mother has he to fetch him milk, no sister to grind him corn!" Thou poor black Noble One, — thou *Lady* too: did not a God make thee too; was there not in thee too something of a God! — Gurth,[2] born thrall of Cedric the Saxon, has been greatly pitied by Dryasdust and others. Gurth, with the brass collar round his neck, tending Cedric's pigs in the glades of the wood, is not what I call an exemplar of human felicity: but Gurth, with the sky

1 The "three days of July," 1830, when Charles X was dethroned and forced to flee from Paris.

2 See *Ivanhoe*, chapter I.

above him, with the free air and tinted boscage and umbrage round him, and in him at least the certainty of supper and social lodging when he came home; Gurth to me seems happy, in comparison with many a Lancashire and Buckinghamshire man of these days, not born thrall of anybody! Gurth's brass collar did not gall him: Cedric *deserved* to be his master. The pigs were Cedric's, but Gurth too would get his parings of them. Gurth had the inexpressible satisfaction of feeling himself related indissolubly, though in a rude brass-collar way, to his fellow-mortals in this Earth. He had superiors, inferiors, equals. — Gurth is now "emancipated" long since; has what we call "Liberty." Liberty, I am told, is a divine thing. Liberty when it becomes the "Liberty to die by starvation" is not so divine!

Liberty? The true liberty of a man, you would say, consisted in his finding out, or being forced to find out the right path, and to walk thereon. To learn, or to be taught, what work he actually was able for; and then by permission, persuasion, and even compulsion, to set about doing of the same! That is his true blessedness, honor, "liberty" and maximum of wellbeing; if liberty be not that, I for one have small care about liberty. You do not allow a palpable madman to leap over precipices; you violate his liberty, you that are wise; and keep him, were it in strait-waistcoats, away from the precipices! Every stupid, every cowardly and foolish man is but a less palpable madman: his true liberty were that a wiser man, that any and every wiser man, could, by brass collars, or in whatever milder or sharper way, lay hold of him when he was going wrong, and order and compel him to go a little righter. O, if thou really art my *Senior*, Seigneur, my *Elder*, Presbyter or Priest, — if thou art in very deed my *Wiser*, may a beneficient instinct lead and impel thee to "conquer" me, to command me! If thou do know better than I what is good and right, I conjure thee in the name of God, force me to do it; were it by never such brass collars, whips and handcuffs, leave me not to walk over precipices! That I have been called, by all the Newspapers, a "free man" will avail me little, if my pilgrimage have ended in death and wreck. O that the Newspapers had called me slave, coward, fool, or what it pleased their sweet voices to name me, and I had attained not death, but life! — Liberty requires new definitions.

A conscious abhorrence and intolerance of Folly, of Baseness, Stupidity, Poltroonery and all that brood of things, dwells deep in some men: still deeper in others an *un*conscious abhorrence and intolerance, clothed moreover by the beneficent Supreme Powers in what stout appetites, energies, egoisms so-called, are suitable to it; — these latter are your Conquerors, Romans, Normans, Russians, Indo-English; Founders of what we call Aristocracies. Which indeed have they not the most "divine right" to found; — being themselves very truly Ἄριστοι, BRAVEST, BEST; and conquering generally a confused rabble of WORST, or at lowest, clearly enough, of WORSE? I think their divine right, tried, with affirmatory verdict, in the greatest Law-Court known to me, was good! A class of men who are dreadfully exclaimed against by Dryasdust; of whom nevertheless beneficent Nature has oftentimes had need; and may, alas, again have need.

When, across the hundredfold poor scepticisms, trivialisms and constitutional cobwebberies of Dryasdust, you catch any glimpse of a William the Conqueror, a Tancred of Hauteville or suchlike, — do you not discern veritably some rude outline of a true God-made King; whom not the Champion of England cased in tin, but all Nature and the Universe were calling to the throne? It is absolutely necessary that he get thither. Nature does not mean her poor Saxon children to perish, of obesity, stupor or other malady, as yet: a stern Ruler and Line of Rulers therefore is called in, — a stern but most beneficent *perpetual House-Surgeon* is by Nature herself called in, and even the appropriate *fees* are provided for him! Dryasdust talks lamentably about Hereward and the Fen Counties; fate of Earl Waltheof; Yorkshire and the North reduced to ashes: all which is undoubtedly lamentable.[1] But even Dryasdust apprises me of one fact: "A child, in this William's reign, might have carried a purse of gold from end to end of England." My erudite friend, it is a fact which outweighs a thousand! Sweep away thy constitutional, sentimental and other cobwebberies; look eye to eye, if thou still have any eye, in the face of this big burly William Bastard: thou wilt see a fellow of most flashing discernment, of most strong lion-heart; — in whom, as it were, within a frame of oak and iron, the gods have planted the soul of "a man of genius"! Dost thou call that nothing? I call it an immense thing! — Rage enough was in this Willelmus

1 A reference to revolts which William suppressed.

Conquæstor, rage enough for his occasions; — and yet the essential element of him, as of all such men, is not scorching *fire*, but shining illuminative *light*. Fire and light are strangely interchangeable; nay, at bottom, I have found them different forms of the same most godlike "elementary substance" in our world: a thing worth stating in these days. The essential element of this Conquæstor is, first of all, the most sun-eyed perception of what *is* really what on this God's Earth; — which, thou wilt find, does mean at bottom "Justice," and "Virtues" not a few: *Conformity* to what the Maker has seen good to make; that, I suppose, will mean Justice and a Virtue or two? —

Dost thou think Willelmus Conquæstor would have tolerated ten years' jargon, one hour's jargon, on the propriety of killing Cotton-manufacturers by partridge Corn-Laws? I fancy, this was not the man to knock out of his night's-rest with nothing but a noisy bedlamism in your mouth! "Assist us still better to bush the partridges; strangle Plugson who spins the shirts?" — "*Par la Splendeur de Dieu!*" — — Dost thou think Willelmus Conquæstor, in this new time, with Steam-engine Captains of Industry on one hand of him, and Joe-Manton[1] Captains of Idleness on the other, would have doubted which *was* really the BEST; which did deserve strangling, and which not?

I have a certain indestructible regard for Willelmus Conquæstor. A resident House-Surgeon, provided by Nature for her beloved English People, and even furnished with the requisite fees, as I said; for he by no means felt himself doing Nature's work, this Willelmus, but his own work exclusively! And his own work withal it was; informed "*par la Splendeur de Dieu.*" — I say, it is necessary to get the work out of such a man, however harsh that be! When a world, not yet doomed for death, is rushing down to ever-deeper Baseness and Confusion, it is a dire necessity of Nature's to bring in her ARISTOCRACIES, her BEST, even by forcible methods. When their descendants or representatives cease entirely to *be* the Best, Nature's poor world will very soon rush down again to Baseness; and it becomes a dire necessity of Nature's to cast them out. Hence French Revolutions, Five-point Charters, Democracies, and a mournful list of *Etceteras*, in these our afflicted times.

To what extent Democracy has now reached, how it advances irresistible with ominous, ever-increasing speed, he that will open his eyes on any province of human affairs may discern. Democracy is every where the inexorable demand of these ages swiftly fulfilling itself. From the thunder of Napoleon battles, to the jabbering of Open vestry in St. Mary Axe, all things announce Democracy. A distinguished man, whom some of my readers will hear again with pleasure, thus writes to me what in these days he notes from the Wahngasse of Weissnichtwo, where our London fashions seem to be in full vogue. Let us hear the Herr Teufelsdröckh again, were it but the smalles word!

"Democracy, which means despair o finding any Heroes to govern you, and con tented putting-up with the want of them, — alas, thou too, *mein Lieber*, seest well how close it is of kin to *Atheism*, and other sad *Isms:* he who discovers no God whatever how shall he discover Heroes, the visibl Temples of God? — Strange enough mean while it is, to observe with what thoughtless ness, here in our rigidly Conservative Coun try, men rush into Democracy with full cry Beyond doubt, his Excellenz the Titular-Her Ritter Kauderwälsch von Pferdefuss-Quack salber, he our distinguished Conservativ Premier himself, and all but the thicker headed of his Party, discern Democracy t be inevitable as death, and are even desper ate of delaying it much!

"You cannot walk the streets without be holding Democracy announce itself: the very Tailor has become, if not properly Sanscu lottic, which to him would be ruinous, yet a Tailor unconsciously symbolizing, and pro phesying with his scissors, the reign of Equal ity. What now is our fashionable coat? A thing of super-finest texture, of deeply medi tated cut; with Malineslace cuffs; quilte with gold; so that a man can carry, without difficulty, an estate of land on his back *Keineswegs*, By no manner of means! The Sumptuary Laws have fallen into such a state of desuetude as was never before seen Our fashionable coat is an amphibium be tween barn-sack and drayman's doublet The cloth of it is studiously coarse; the color a speckled soot-black or rust-brown gray; the nearest approach to a Peasant's And for shape, — thou shouldst see it! The last consummation of the year now passing over us is definable as Three Bags; a big bag for the body, two small bags for the arms, and by way of collar a hem! The first Antique

1 Joseph Manton (1766–1835) was a gun-smith. His name suggests the sporting aristocracy.

Cheruscan[1] who, of felt-cloth or bear's-hide, with bone or metal needle, set about making himself a coat, before Tailors had yet awakened out of Nothing, — did not he make it even so? A loose wide poke for body, with two holes to let out the arms; this was his original coat: to which holes it was soon visible that two small loose pokes, or sleeves, easily appended, would be an improvement.

"Thus has the Tailor-art, so to speak, overset itself, like most other things; changed its centre-of-gravity; whirled suddenly over from zenith to nadir. Your Stulz, with huge somerset, vaults from his high shopboard down to the depths of primal savagery, — carrying much along with him! For I will invite thee to reflect that the Tailor, as topmost ultimate froth of Human Society, is indeed swift-passing, evanescent, slippery to decipher; yet significant of much, nay of all. Topmost evanescent froth, he is churned-up from the very lees, and from all intermediate regions of the liquor. The general outcome one, visible to the eye, of what men aimed to do, and were obliged and enabled to do, in this one public department of symbolizing themselves to each other by covering of their skins. A smack of all Human Life lies in the Tailor: its wild struggles towards beauty, dignity, freedom, victory; and how, hemmed-in by Sedan and Huddersfield, by Nescience, Dulness, Prurience, and other sad necessities and laws of Nature, it has attained just to this: Gray savagery of Three Sacks with a hem!

"When the very Tailor verges towards Sansculottism, is it not ominous? The last Divinity of poor mankind dethroning himself; sinking *his* taper too, flame downmost, like the Genius of Sleep or of Death; admonitory that Tailor time shall be no more! — For, little as one could advise Sumptuary Laws at the present epoch, yet nothing is clearer than that where ranks do actually exist, strict division of costumes will also be enforced; that if we ever have a new Hierarchy and Aristocracy, acknowledged veritably as such, for which I daily pray Heaven, the Tailor will reawaken; and be, by volunteering and appointment, consciously and unconsciously, a safeguard of that same." — Certain farther observations, from the same invaluable pen, on our never-ending changes of mode, our "perpetual nomadic and even ape-like appetite for change and mere change" in all the equipments of our existence, and the "fatal revolutionary character" thereby manifested, we suppress for the present. It may be admitted that Democracy, in all meanings of the word, is in full career; irresistible by any Ritter Kauderwälsch or other Son of Adam as times go. "Liberty" is a thing men are determined to have.

But truly, as I had to remark in the meanwhile, "the liberty of not being oppressed by your fellow man" is an indispensable, yet one of the most insignificant fractional parts of Human Liberty. No man oppresses thee, can bid thee fetch or carry, come or go, without reason shown. True; from all men thou art emancipated: but from Thyself and from the Devil —? No man, wiser, unwiser, can make thee come or go: but thy own futilities, bewilderments, thy false appetites for Money, Windsor Georges[1] and suchlike? No man oppresses thee, O free and independent Franchiser: but does not this stupid Porter-pot oppress thee? No Son of Adam can bid thee come or go; but this absurd Pot of Heavy-wet, this can and does! Thou art the thrall not of Cedric the Saxon, but of thy own brutal appetites and this scoured dish of liquor. And thou pratest of thy "liberty?" Thou entire blockhead!

Heavy-wet and gin: alas, these are not the only kinds of thraldom. Thou who walkest in a vain show, looking out with ornamental dilettante sniff and serene supremacy at all Life and all Death; and amblest jauntily; perking up thy poor talk into crotchets, thy poor conduct into fatuous somnambulisms; — and *art* as an "enchanted Ape" under God's sky, where thou mightest have been a man, had proper Schoolmasters and Conquerors, and Constables with cat-o'-nine tails, been vouchsafed thee; dost thou call that "liberty"? Or your unreposing Mammon-worshipper again, driven, as if by Galvanisms, by Devils, and Fixed-ideas, who rises early and sits late, chasing the impossible; straining every faculty to "fill himself with the east wind," — how merciful were it, could you, by mild persuasion, or by the severest tyranny so-called, check him in his mad path, and turn him into a wiser one! All painful tyranny, in that case again, were but mild "surgery;" the pain of it cheap, as health and life, instead of galvanism and fixed-idea, are cheap at any price.

Sure enough, of all paths a man could strike into, there *is*, at any given moment, a *best path* for every man; a thing which, here and now, it were of all things *wisest* for him

1 A German tribe in the time of Cæsar.

1 Decorations granted by King George.

to do; — which could he be but led or driven to do, he were then doing "like a man," as we phrase it; all men and gods agreeing with him, the whole Universe virtually exclaiming Well-done to him! His success, in such case, were complete; his felicity a maximum. This path, to find this path and walk in it, is the one thing needful for him. Whatsoever forwards him in that, let it come to him even in the shape of blows and spurnings, is liberty: whatsoever hinders him, were it wardmotes, open-vestries pollbooths, tremendous cheers, rivers of heavy-wet, is slavery.

The notion that a man's liberty consists in giving his vote at election-hustings, and saying, "Behold, now I too have my twenty-thousandth part of a Talker in our National Palaver; will not all the gods be good to me?" — is one of the pleasantest! Nature nevertheless is kind at present; and puts it into the heads of many, almost of all. The liberty especially which has to purchase itself by social isolation, and each man standing separate from the other, having "no business with him" but a cash-account: this is such a liberty as the Earth seldom saw; — as the Earth will not long put up with, recommend it how you may. This liberty turns out, before it have long continued in action, with all men flinging up their caps round it, to be, for the Working Millions a liberty to die by want of food; for the Idle Thousands and Units, alas, a still more fatal liberty to live in want of work; to have no earnest duty to do in this God's-World any more. What becomes a man in such predicament? Earth's Laws are silent; and Heaven's speak in a voice which is not heard. No work, and the ineradicable need of work, give rise to new very wondrous life-philosophies, new very wondrous life-practices! Dilettantism, Pococurantism,[1] Beau-Brummelism, with perhaps an occasional, half-mad, protesting burst of Byronism, establish themselves: at the end of a certain period, — if you go back to "the Dead Sea," there is, say our Moslem friends, a very strange "Sabbath-day" transacting itself there! — Brethren, we know but imperfectly yet, after ages of Constitutional Government, what Liberty and Slavery are.

Democracy, the chase of Liberty in that direction, shall go its full course; unrestrainable by him of Pferdefuss-Quacksalber, or any of *his* household. The Toiling Millions of Mankind, in most vital need and passionate instinctive desire of Guidance, shall cast away False-Guidance; and hope, for an hour, that No-Guidance will suffice them: but it can be for an hour only. The smallest item of human Slavery is the oppression of man by his Mock-Superiors; the palpablest, but I say at bottom the smallest. Let him shake off such oppression, trample it indignantly under his feet; I blame him not, I pity and commend him. But oppression by your Mock-Superiors well shaken off, the grand problem yet remains to solve: That of finding government by your Real-Superiors! Alas, how shall we ever learn the solution of that benighted, bewildered, sniffing, sneering, godforgetting unfortunates as we are? It is a work for centuries; to be taught us by tribulations, confusions, insurrections, obstructions; who knows if not by conflagration and despair! It is a lesson inclusive of all other lessons; the hardest of all lessons to learn.

One thing I do know: Those Apes, chattering on the branches by the Dead Sea, never got it learned; but chatter there to this day. To them no Moses need come a second time; a thousand Moseses would be but so many painted Phantasms, interesting Fellow-Apes of new strange aspect, — whom they would "invite to dinner," be glad to meet with in lion-soirées. To them the voice of Prophecy, of heavenly monition, is quite ended. They chatter there, all Heaven shut to them, to the end of the world. The unfortunates! Oh, what is dying of hunger with honest tools in your hand, with a manful purpose in your heart, and much real labor lying round you done, in comparison? You honestly quit your tools; quit a most muddy confused coil of sore work, short rations, of sorrows, dispiritments and contradictions, having now honestly done with it all; — and await, not entirely in a distracted manner, what the Supreme Powers, and the Silences and the Eternities may have to say to you.

A second thing I know: This lesson will have to be learned, — under penalties. England will either learn it, or England also will cease to exist among Nations. England will either learn to reverence its Heroes, and discriminate them from its Sham-Heroes and Valets and gaslighted Histrios; and to prize them as the audible God's-voice, amid all inane jargons and temporary market-cries, and say to them with heart-loyalty, "Be ye King and Priest, and Gospel and Guidance

[1] Pococurantism, from Pococurante, a character in Voltaire's *Candide*, who, with wealth and command of all the arts, is yet incapable of enjoyment.

for us:" or else England will continue to worship new and ever-new forms of Quackhood, — and so, with what resiliences and reboundings matters little, go down to the Father of Quacks! Can I dread such things of England? Wretched, thick-eyed, gross-hearted mortals, why will ye worship lies, and "Stuffed Clothes-suits created by the ninth-parts of men!" It is not your purses that suffer; your farm-rents, your commerces, your mill-revenues, loud as ye lament over these; no, it is not these alone, but a far deeper than these: it is your souls that lie dead, crushed down under despicable Nightmares, Atheisms, Brain-fumes; and are not souls at all, but mere succedanea for *salt* to keep your bodies and their appetites from putrefying! Your cotton-spinning and thrice-miraculous mechanism, what is this too, by itself, but a larger kind of Animalism? Spiders can spin, Beavers can build and show contrivance; the Ant lays-up accumulation of capital, and has, for aught I know, a Bank of Antland. If there is no soul in man higher than all that, did it reach to sailing on the cloud-rack and spinning sea-sand; then I say, man is but an animal, a more cunning kind of brute: he has no soul, but only a succedaneum for salt. Whereupon, seeing himself to be truly of the beasts that perish, he ought to admit it, I think; — and also straightway universally to kill himself; and so, in a manlike manner at least *end*, and wave these brute-worlds *his* dignified farewell! —

## Book IV

### Chapter I

#### Aristocracies

To predict the Future, to manage the Present, would not be so impossible, had not the Past been so sacrilegiously mishandled; effaced, and what is worse, defaced! The Past cannot be seen; the Past, looked at through the medium of "Philosophical History" in these times, cannot even be *not* seen: it is misseen; affirmed to have existed, — and to have been a godless impossibility. Your Norman Conquerors, true royal souls, crowned kings as such, were vulturous irrational tyrants: your Becket was a noisy egoist and hypocrite; getting his brains spilt on the floor of Canterbury Cathedral, to secure the main chance, — somewhat uncertain now! "Policy, Fanaticism;" or say "Enthusiasm," even "honest Enthusiasm," — ah yes, of course:

"The Dog, to gain his private ends,
*Went* mad, and bit the Man!" —

For in truth, the eye sees in all things "what it brought with it the means of seeing." A godless century, looking back on centuries that were godly, produces portraitures more miraculous than any other. All was inane discord in the Past; brute Force bore rule everywhere; Stupidity, savage Unreason, fitter for Bedlam than for a human World! Whereby indeed it becomes sufficiently natural that the like qualities, in new sleeker habiliments, should continue in our time to rule. Millions enchanted in Bastille Workhouses; Irish Widows proving their relationship by typhus-fever: what would you have? It was ever so, or worse. Man's History, was it not always even this: The cookery and eating-up of imbecile Dupedom by successful Quackhood; the battle, with various weapons, of vulturous Quack and Tyrant against vulturous Tyrant and Quack? No God was in the Past Time; nothing but Mechanisms and Chaotic Brute-Gods: — how shall the poor "Philosophic Historian," to whom his own century is all godless, see any God in other centuries?

Men believe in Bibles, and disbelieve in them: but of all Bibles the frightfulest to disbelieve in is this "Bible of Universal History." This is the Eternal Bible and God's-Book, "which every born man," till once the soul and eyesight are extinguished in him, "can and must, with his own eyes, see the God's-Finger writing!" To discredit this, is an *infidelity* like no other. Such infidelity you would punish, if not by fire and faggot, which are difficult to manage in our times, yet by the most peremptory order, To hold its peace till it got something wiser to say. Why should the blessed Silence be broken into noises, to communicate only the like of this? If the Past have no God's-Reason in it, nothing but Devil's-Unreason, let the Past be eternally forgotten: mention *it* no more; — we whose ancestors were all hanged, why should we talk of ropes!

It is, in brief, not true that men ever lived by Delirium, Hypocrisy, Injustice, or any form of Unreason, since they came to inhabit this Planet. It is not true that they ever did, or ever will, live except by the reverse of these. Men will again be taught this. Their acted History will then again be a Heroism; their written History, what it once was, an Epic. Nay, forever it is either such, or else it virtually is — Nothing. Were it written in a thousand volumes, the Unheroic of such

volumes hastens incessantly to be forgotten: the net content of an Alexandrian Library of Unheroics is, and will ultimately show itself to be, *zero*. What man is interested to remember *it;* have not all men, at all times, the liveliest interest to forget it? — "Revelations," if not celestial, then infernal, will teach us that God is; we shall then, if needful, discern without difficulty that He has always been! The Dryasdust Philosophisms and enlightened Scepticisms of the Eighteenth Century, historical and other, will have to survive for a while with the Physiologists, as a memorable *Nightmare-Dream*. All this haggard epoch, with its ghastly Doctrines, and death's-head Philosophies "teaching by example" or otherwise, will one day have become, what to our Moslem friends their godless ages are, "the Period of Ignorance."

If the convulsive struggles of the last Half-Century have taught poor struggling convulsed Europe any truth, it may perhaps be this as the essence of innumerable others: That Europe requires a real Aristocracy, a real Priesthood, or it cannot continue to exist. Huge French Revolutions, Napoleonisms, then Bourbonisms with their corollary of Three Days, finishing in very unfinal Louis-Philippisms: all this ought to be didactic! All this may have taught us, That False Aristocracies are insupportable; that No-Aristocracies, Liberty-and-Equalities are impossible; that true Aristocracies are at once indispensable and not easily attained.

Aristocracy and Priesthood, a Governing Class and a Teaching Class: these two, sometimes separate, and endeavoring to harmonize themselves, sometimes conjoined as one, and the King a Pontiff-King: — there did no Society exist without these two vital elements, there will none exist. It lies in the very nature of man: you will visit no remotest village in the most republican country of the world, where virtually or actually you do not find these two powers at work. Man, little as he may suppose it, is necessitated to obey superiors. He is a social being in virtue of this necessity; nay he could not be gregarious otherwise. He obeys those whom he esteems better than himself, wiser, braver; and will forever obey such; and even be ready and delighted to do it.

The Wiser, Braver: these, a Virtual Aristocracy everywhere and everywhen, do in all Societies that reach any articulate shape, develop themselves into a ruling class, an Actual Aristocracy, with settled modes of operating, what are called laws and even *private-laws* or privileges, and so forth; very notable to look upon in this world. — Aristocracy and Priesthood, we say, are sometimes united. For indeed the Wiser and the Braver are properly but one class; no wise man but needed first of all to be a brave man, or he never had been wise. The noble Priest was always a noble *Aristos* to begin with, and something more to end with. Your Luther, your Knox, your Anselm, Becket, Abbot Samson, Samuel Johnson, if they had not been brave enough, by what possibility could they ever have been wise? — If, from accident or forethought, this your Actual Aristocracy have got discriminated into Two Classes, there can be no doubt but the Priest Class is the more dignified; supreme over the other, as governing head is over active hand. And yet in practice again, it is likeliest the reverse will be found arranged; — a sign that the arrangement is already vitiated; that a split is introduced into it, which will widen and widen till the whole be rent asunder.

In England, in Europe generally, we may say that these two Virtualities have unfolded themselves into Actualities, in by far the noblest and richest manner any region of the world ever saw. A spiritual Guideship, a practical Governorship, fruit of the grand conscious endeavors, say rather of the immeasurable unconscious instincts and necessities of men, have established themselves very strange to behold. Everywhere, while so much has been forgotten, you find the King's Palace, and the Viceking's Castle, Mansion, Manorhouse; till there is not an inch of ground from sea to sea but has both its King and Viceking, long due series of Vicekings, its Squire, Earl, Duke or whatever the title of him, — to whom you have given the land, that he may govern you in it.

More touching still, there is not a hamlet where poor peasants congregate, but, by one means and another, a Church-Apparatus has been got together, — roofed edifice, with revenues and belfries; pulpit, reading-desk with Books and Methods: possibility, in short, and strict prescription, That a man stand there and speak of spiritual things to men. It is beautiful; — even in its great obscuration and decadence, it is among the beautifulest, most touching objects one sees on the Earth. This Speaking Man has indeed, in these times, wandered terribly from the point; has, alas, as it were, totally lost sight of the point: yet, at bottom, whom have we to compare with him? Of all public func-

tionaries boarded and lodged on the Industry of Modern Europe, is there one worthier of the board he has? A man even professing, and never so languidly making still some endeavor, to save the souls of men: contrast him with a man professing to do little but shoot the partridges of men! I wish he could find the point again, this Speaking One; and stick to it with tenacity, with deadly energy; for there is need of him yet! The Speaking Function, this of Truth coming to us with a living voice, nay in a living shape, and as a concrete practical exemplar: this, with all our Writing and Printing Functions, has a perennial place. Could he but find the point again, — take the old spectacles off his nose, and looking up discover, almost in contact with him, what the *real* Satanas, and soul-devouring, world-devouring *Devil*, now is! Original Sin and such-like are bad enough, I doubt not: but distilled Gin, dark Ignorance, Stupidity, dark Corn-Law, Bastille and Company, what are they! *Will* he discover our new real Satan, whom he has to fight; or go on droning through his old nose-spectacles about old extinct Satans; and never see the real one, till he *feel* him at his own throat and ours? That is a question, for the world! Let us not intermeddle with it here.

Sorrowful, phantasmal as this same Double Aristocracy of Teachers and Governors now looks, it is worth all men's while to know that the purport of it is and remains noble and most real. Dryasdust, looking merely at the surface, is greatly in error as to those ancient Kings. William Conqueror, William Rufus or Redbeard, Stephen Curthose himself, much more Henry Beauclerc and our brave Plantagenet Henry: the life of these men was not a vulturous Fighting; it was a valorous Governing, — to which occasionally Fighting did, and alas must yet, though far seldomer now, superadd itself as an accident, a distressing impedimental adjunct. The fighting too was indispensable, for ascertaining who had the might over whom, the right over whom. By much hard fighting, as we once said, "the unrealities, beaten into dust, flew gradually off;" and left the plain reality and fact, "Thou stronger than I; thou wiser than I; thou king, and subject I," in a somewhat clearer condition.

Truly we cannot enough admire, in those Abbot-Samson and William-Conqueror times, the arrangement they had made of their Governing Classes. Highly interesting to observe how the sincere insight, on their part, into what did, of primary necessity, behove to be accomplished, had led them to the way of accomplishing it, and in the course of time to get it accomplished! No imaginary Aristocracy would serve their turn; and accordingly they attained a real one. The Bravest men, who, it is ever to be repeated and remembered, are also on the whole the Wisest, Strongest, everyway Best, had here, with a respectable degree of accuracy, been got selected; seated each on his piece of territory, which was lent him, then gradually given him, that he might govern it. These Vicekings, each on his portion of the common soil of England, with a Head King over all, were a "Virtuality perfected into an Actuality" really to an astonishing extent.

For those were rugged stalwart ages; full of earnestness, of a rude God's-truth: — nay, at any rate, their *quilting* was so unspeakably *thinner* than ours; Fact came swiftly on them, if at any time they had yielded to Phantasm! "The Knaves and Dastards" had to be "arrested" in some measure; or the world, almost within year and day, found that it could not live. The Knaves and Dastards accordingly were got arrested. Dastards upon the very throne had to be got arrested, and taken off the throne, — by such methods as there were; by the roughest method, if there chanced to be no smoother one! Doubtless there was much harshness of operation, much severity; as indeed government and surgery are often somewhat severe. Gurth, born thrall of Cedric, it is like, got cuffs as often as pork-parings, if he misdemeaned himself; but Gurth did belong to Cedric: no human creature then went about connected with nobody; left to go his way into Bastilles or worse, under *Laissez-faire;* reduced to prove his relationship by dying of typhus-fever! — Days come when there is no King in Israel, but every man is his own king, doing that which is right in his own eyes; — and tarbarrels are burnt to "Liberty," "Ten-pound Franchise" and the like, with considerable effect in various ways! —

That Feudal Aristocracy, I say, was no imaginary one. To a respectable degree, its *Jarls*, what we now call Earls, were *Strong-Ones* in fact as well as etymology; its Dukes *Leaders;* its Lords *Law-wards*. They did all the Soldiering and Police of the country, all the Judging, Law-making, even the Church-Extension; whatsoever in the way of Governing, of Guiding and Protecting

could be done. It was a Land Aristocracy; it managed the Governing of this English People, and had the reaping of the Soil of England in return. It is, in many senses, the Law of Nature, this same Law of Feudalism; — no right Aristocracy but a Land one! The curious are invited to meditate upon it in these days. Soldiering, Police and Judging, Church-Extension, nay real Government and Guidance, all this was actually *done* by the Holders of the Land in return for their Land. How much of it is now done by them; done by anybody? Good Heavens, "Laissez-faire, Do ye nothing, eat your wages and sleep," is everywhere the passionate half-wise cry of this time; and they will not so much as do nothing, but must do mere Corn-Laws! We raise Fifty-two millions, from the general mass of us, to get our Governing done — or, alas, to get ourselves persuaded that it is done: and the "peculiar burden of the Land" is to pay, not all this, but to pay, as I learn, one twenty-fourth part of all this. Our first Chartist Parliament, or Oliver *Redivivus*, you would say, will know where to lay the new taxes of England! — Or, alas, taxes? If we made the Holders of the Land pay every shilling still of the expense of Governing the Land, what were all that? The Land, by mere hired Governors, cannot be got governed. You cannot hire men to govern the Land; it is by mission not contracted for in the Stock-Exchange, but felt in their own hearts as coming out of Heaven, that men can govern a Land. The mission of a Land Aristocracy is a *sacred* one, in both the senses of that old word. The footing it stands on, at present, might give rise to thoughts other than of Corn-Laws! —

But truly a "Splendor of God," as in William Conqueror's rough oath, did dwell in those old rude veracious ages; did inform, more and more, with a heavenly nobleness, all departments of their work and life. Phantasms could not yet walk abroad in mere Cloth Tailorage; they were at least Phantasms "on the rim of the horizon," pencilled there by an eternal Lightbeam from within. A most "practical" Hero-worship went on, unconsciously or half-consciously, everywhere. A Monk Samson, with a maximum of two shillings in his pocket, could, without ballot-box, be made a Viceking of, being seen to be worthy. The difference between a good man and a bad man was as yet felt to be, what it forever is, an immeasurable one. Who *durst* have elected a Pandarus Dogdraught, in those days, to any office, Carlton Club, Senatorship, or place whatsoever? It was felt that the arch Satanas and no other had a clear right of property in Pandarus; that it were better for you to have no hand in Pandarus, to keep out of Pandarus his neighborhood. Which is, to this hour, the mere fact; though for the present, alas, the forgotten fact. I think they were comparatively blessed times those, in their way! "Violence," "war," "disorder:" well, what is war, and death itself, to such a perpetual life-in-death, and "peace, peace, where there is no peace"? Unless some Hero-worship, in its new appropriate form, can return, this world does not promise to be very habitable long.

Old Anselm, exiled Archbishop of Canterbury, one of the purest-minded "men of genius," was travelling to make his appeal to Rome against King Rufus, — a man of rough ways, in whom the "inner Lightbeam" shone very fitfully. It is beautiful to read, in Monk Eadmer,[1] how the Continental populations welcomed and venerated this Anselm, as no French population now venerates Jean-Jacques[2] or giant-killing Voltaire; as not even an American population now venerates a Schnüspel the distinguished Novelist! They had, by phantasy and true insight, the intensest conviction that a God's-Blessing dwelt in this Anselm, — as is my conviction too. They crowded round, with bent knees and enkindled hearts, to receive his blessing, to hear his voice, to see the light of his face. My blessings on them and on him! — But the notablest was a certain necessitous or covetous Duke of Burgundy, in straitened circumstances we shall hope, — who reflected that in all likelihood this English Archbishop, going towards Rome to appeal, must have taken store of cash with him to bribe the Cardinals. Wherefore he of Burgundy, for his part, decided to lie in wait and rob him. "In an open space of a wood," some "wood" then green and growing, eight centuries ago, in Burgundian Land, — this fierce Duke, with fierce steel followers, shaggy, savage, as the Russian bear, dashes out on the weak old Anselm; who is riding along there, on his small quiet-going pony; escorted only by Eadmer and another poor Monk on ponies; and, except small modicum of roadmoney, not a gold coin in his possession. The steelclad Rus-

1 A twelfth-century monk of Canterbury who wrote the lives of Anselm and other ecclesiastics.
2 Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78).

sian bear emerges, glaring: the old white-bearded man starts not, — paces on unmoved, looking into him with those clear old earnest eyes, with that venerable sorrowful time-worn face; of whom no man or thing need be afraid, and who also is afraid of no created man or thing. The fire-eyes of his Burgundian Grace meet these clear eye-glances, convey them swift to his heart: he bethinks him that probably this feeble, fearless, hoary Figure has in it something of the Most High God; that probably he shall be damned if he meddle with it, — that, on the whole, he had better not. He plunges, the rough savage, from his war-horse, down to his knees; embraces the feet of old Anselm: he too begs his blessing; orders men to escort him, guard him from being robbed, and under dread penalties see him safe on his way. *Per os Dei*,[1] as his Majesty was wont to ejaculate!

Neither is this quarrel of Rufus and Anselm, of Henry and Becket uninstructive to us. It was, at bottom, a great quarrel. For, admitting that Anselm was full of divine blessing, he by no means included in him all forms of divine blessing: — there were far other forms withal, which he little dreamed of; and William Redbeard was unconsciously the representative and spokesman of these. In truth, could your divine Anselm, your divine Pope Gregory have had their way, the results had been very notable. Our Western World had all become a European Thibet, with one Grand Lama sitting at Rome; our one honorable business that of singing mass, all day and all night. Which would not in the least have suited us. The Supreme Powers willed it not so.

It was as if King Redbeard unconsciously, addressing Anselm, Becket and the others, had said: "Right Reverend, your Theory of the Universe is indisputable by man or devil. To the core of our heart we feel that this divine thing, which you call Mother Church, does fill the whole world hitherto known, and is and shall be all our salvation and all our desire. And yet — and yet — Behold, though it is an unspoken secret, the world is *wider* than any of us think, Right Reverend! Behold, there are yet other immeasurable sacrednesses in this that you call Heathenism, Secularity! On the whole, I, in an obscure but most rooted manner, feel that I cannot comply with you. Western Thibet and perpetual mass-chanting, — No. I am, so to speak, in the family-way; with child, of I know not what, — certainly of something far different from this! I have — *Per os Dei*, I have Manchester Cotton-trades, Bromwicham Iron-trades, American Commonwealths, Indian Empires, Steam Mechanisms, and Shakespeare Dramas, in my belly; and cannot do it, Right Reverend!" — So accordingly it was decided: and Saxon Becket spilt his life in Canterbury Cathedral, as Scottish Wallace did on Tower-hill, and as generally a noble man and martyr has to do, — not for nothing; no, but for a divine something other than *he* had altogether calculated. We will now quit this of the hard, organic, but limited Feudal Ages; and glance timidly into the immense Industrial Ages, as yet all inorganic, and in a quite pulpy condition, requiring desperately to harden themselves into some organism!

Our Epic having now become *Tools and the Man*, it is more than usually impossible to prophesy the Future. The boundless Future does lie there, predestined, nay already extant though unseen; hiding, in its Continents of Darkness, "gladness and sorrow:" but the supremest intelligence of man cannot prefigure much of it: — the united intelligence and effort of All Men in all coming generations, this alone will gradually prefigure it, and figure and form it into a seen fact! Straining our eyes hitherto, the utmost effort of intelligence sheds but some most glimmering dawn, a little way into its dark enormous Deeps: only huge outlines loom uncertain on the sight; and the ray of prophecy, at a short distance, expires. But may we not say, here as always, Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof! To shape the whole Future is not our problem; but only to shape faithfully a small part of it, according to rules already known. It is perhaps possible for each of us, who will with due earnestness inquire, to ascertain clearly what he, for his own part, ought to do: this let him, with true heart, do, and continue doing. The general issue will, as it has always done, rest well with a Higher Intelligence than ours.

One grand "outline," or even two, many earnest readers may perhaps, at this stage of the business, be able to prefigure for themselves, — and draw some guidance from. One prediction, or even two, are already possible. For the Life-Tree Igdrasil, in all its new developments, is the selfsame world-old Life-tree: having found an element or elements there, running from the very roots of it in Hela's Realms, in the Well of Mimer and of the Three Nornas or TIMES, up to this

[1] by the bones of God.

present hour of it in our own hearts, we conclude that such will have to continue. A man has, in his own soul, an Eternal; can read something of the Eternal there, if he will look! He already knows what will continue; what cannot, by any means or appliance whatsoever, be made to continue!

One wide and widest "outline" ought really, in all ways, to be becoming clear to us; this namely: That a "Splendor of God," in one form or other, will have to unfold itself from the heart of these our Industrial Ages too; or they will never get themselves "organized;" but continue chaotic, distressed, distracted evermore, and have to perish in frantic suicidal dissolution. A second "outline" or prophecy, narrower, but also wide enough, seems not less certain: That there will again *be* a King in Israel; a system of Order and Government; and every man shall, in some measure, see himself constrained to do that which is right in the King's eyes. This too we may call a sure element of the Future; for this too is of the Eternal; — this too is of the Present, though hidden from most; and without it no fibre of the Past ever was. An actual new Sovereignty, Industrial Aristocracy, real not imaginary Aristocracy, is indispensable and indubitable for us.

But what an Aristocracy; on what new, far more complex and cunningly devised conditions than that old Feudal fighting one! For we are to bethink us that the Epic verily is not *Arms and the Man*, but *Tools and the Man*, — an infinitely wider kind of Epic. And again we are to bethink us that men cannot now be bound to men by *brass-collars*, — not at all: that this brass-collar method, in all figures of it, has vanished out of Europe forevermore! Huge Democracy, walking the streets everywhere in its Sack Coat, has asserted so much; irrevocably, brooking no reply! True enough, man *is* forever the "born thrall" of certain men, born master of certain other men, born equal of certain others, let him acknowledge the fact or not. It is unblessed for him when he cannot acknowledge this fact; he is in the chaotic state, ready to perish, till he do get the fact acknowledged. But no man is, or can henceforth be, the brass-collar thrall of any man; you will have to bind him by other, far nobler and cunninger methods. Once for all, he is to be loose of the brass-collar, to have a scope *as* wide as his faculties now are: — will he not be all the usefuler to you in that new state? Let him go abroad as a trusted one, as a free one; and return home to you with rich earnings at night! Gurth could only tend pigs; this one will build cities, conquer waste worlds. — How, in conjunction with inevitable Democracy, indispensable Sovereignty is to exist: certainly it is the hugest question ever heretofore propounded to Mankind! The solution of which is work for long years and centuries. Years and centuries, of one knows not what complexion; — blessed or unblessed, according as they shall, with earnest valiant effort, make progress therein, or, in slothful unveracity and dilettantism, only talk of making progress. For either progress therein, or swift and ever swifter progress towards dissolution, is henceforth a necessity.

It is of importance that this grand reformation were begun; that Corn-Law Debatings and other jargon, little less than delirious in such a time, had fled far away, and left us room to begin! For the evil has grown practical, extremely conspicuous; if it be not seen and provided for, the blindest fool will have to feel it ere long. There is much that can wait; but there is something also that cannot wait. With millions of eager Working Men [1] imprisoned in "Impossibility" and Poor-Law Bastilles, it is time that some means of dealing with them were trying to become "possible"! Of the Government of England, of all articulate-speaking functionaries, real and imaginary Aristocracies, of me and of thee, it is imperatively demanded, "How do you mean to manage these men? Where are they to find a supportable existence? What is to become of them, — and of you!"

1 The *Return of the Paupers for England and Wales* at Ladyday, 1842, is "Indoor, 221,687, Out-door 1,207,402." Official Report. (Carlyle's note.)

# JOHN STUART MILL (1806–1873)

John Stuart Mill was born in London, May 20, 1806. He was brought up by his father with strict regard to his intellectual training and the devotion of his powers to the service of humanity. When about twenty he passed through a spiritual crisis somewhat similar to that which Carlyle relates in *Sartor Resartus*. "Suppose," he asked himself, "that all your objects in life were realized; that all the changes in institutions and opinions which you are looking forward to could be completely effected at this very instant, would this be a great joy and happiness to you?" He found himself obliged to answer, No. He realized that his life had been too exclusively intellectual, with little attention to those things which appeal directly to the emotions, and prove themselves æsthetically valuable for their own sake. He tried to correct this deficiency by interest in music and poetry, especially the poetry of Wordsworth. In 1833 he met Carlyle, and for some years the two were intimate friends. They remained, however, far apart in philosophy. Mill was for most of his life an employee of the East India Company. His position gave him leisure to write and take part in public affairs. He was a member of Parliament, 1867–68. Thereafter he retired to Avignon, where he died in 1873.

Mill never outgrew the effects of his early severe intellectual training. He was always somewhat cold, austere, aloof, scrupulous in his relations with his fellow-men. His father was a leader among the Utilitarians, and the close friend of Jeremy Bentham, the modern founder of the school. The Utilitarians believed in the reform of society according to the principle of utility, which declares that individual and social conduct should be regulated to produce the greatest happiness for the greatest number. They developed much of the political philosophy characteristic of the liberal movement in the nineteenth century — individual freedom, democracy through representation, limitation of governmental interference which is often called the *laissez faire* doctrine, universal education, and free trade. All this treatment of human affairs in accordance with theory and reason was violently opposed by Carlyle and his followers, who believed rather in the working of laws of which man remains unconscious, or which are revealed only in flashes of insight or intuition. Mill succeeded his father, James Mill, as leader of the Utilitarian School. His writings cover the main lines of intellectual endeavor in the century, with the exception of natural science. His *System of Logic* was published in 1843, *Principles of Political Economy*, 1848, *On Liberty*, 1859, *Utilitarianism*, 1863, *Autobiography*, 1873.

## ON LIBERTY

1859

Mill regarded *On Liberty* as the most individual of his works. It is in effect the textbook of the movement in the nineteenth century known as Liberalism. It shows the belief in the human intellect and its development by education, respect for the individual and distrust of government, which were the creed of the Liberals. Above all, it emphasizes freedom of discussion as indispensable to the working of democracy through a representative government. In this it follows closely in many points the arguments which Milton had urged in the *Areopagitica* two centuries before.

### Chapter I

#### INTRODUCTORY

The subject of this Essay is not the so-called Liberty of the Will, so unfortunately opposed to the misnamed doctrine of Philosophical Necessity; but Civil, or Social Liberty: the nature and limits of the power which can be legitimately exercised by society over the individual. A question seldom stated, and hardly ever discussed, in general terms, but which profoundly influences the practical controversies of the age by its latent presence, and is likely soon to make itself recognized as the vital question of the future. It is so far from being new, that, in a certain sense, it has divided mankind, almost from the remotest ages; but in the stage of progress into which the more civilized portions of the species have now entered, it presents itself under new conditions, and requires a different and more fundamental treatment.

The struggle between Liberty and Authority is the most conspicuous feature in the portions of history with which we are earliest familiar, particularly in that of Greece, Rome, and England. But in old times this contest was between subjects, or some classes of subjects, and the Government. By liberty, was meant protection against the tyranny of the political rulers. The rulers were conceived (except in some of the popular governments of Greece) as in a necessarily antagonistic position to the people whom they ruled. They consisted of a governing One, or a governing tribe or caste, who derived their authority from inheritance or conquest, who, at all events, did not hold it at the pleasure of the governed, and whose supremacy men did not venture, perhaps did not desire, to contest, whatever precautions

might be taken against its oppressive exercise. Their power was regarded as necessary, but also as highly dangerous; as a weapon which they would attempt to use against their subjects, no less than against external enemies. To prevent the weaker members of the community from being preyed upon by innumerable vultures, it was needful that there should be an animal of prey stronger than the rest, commissioned to keep them down. But as the king of the vultures would be no less bent upon preying on the flock than any of the minor harpies, it was indispensable to be in a perpetual attitude of defence against his beak and claws. The aim, therefore, of patriots was to set limits to the power which the ruler should be suffered to exercise over the community; and this limitation was what they meant by liberty. It was attempted in two ways. First, by obtaining a recognition of certain immunities, called political liberties or rights, which it was to be regarded as a breach of duty in the ruler to infringe, and which if he did infringe, specific resistance, or general rebellion, was held to be justifiable. A second, and generally a later expedient, was the establishment of constitutional checks, by which the consent of the community, or of a body of some sort, supposed to represent its interests, was made a necessary condition to some of the more important acts of the governing power. To the first of these modes of limitation, the ruling power, in most European countries, was compelled, more or less, to submit. It was not so with the second; and, to attain this, or when already in some degree possessed, to attain it more completely, became everywhere the principal object of the lovers of liberty. And so long as mankind were content to combat one enemy by another, and to be ruled by a master, on condition of being guaranteed more or less efficaciously against his tyranny, they did not carry their aspirations beyond this point.

A time, however, came, in the progress of human affairs, when men ceased to think it a necessity of nature that their governors should be an independent power, opposed in interest to themselves. It appeared to them much better that the various magistrates of the State should be their tenants or delegates, revocable at their pleasure. In that way alone, it seemed, could they have complete security that the powers of government would never be abused to their disadvantage. By degrees this new demand for elective and temporary rulers became the prominent object of the exertions of the popular party, wherever any such party existed; and superseded, to a considerable extent, the previous efforts to limit the power of rulers. As the struggle proceeded for making the ruling power emanate from the periodical choice of the ruled, some persons began to think that too much importance had been attached to the limitation of the power itself. *That* (it might seem) was a resource against rulers whose interests were habitually opposed to those of the people. What was now wanted was, that the rulers should be identified with the people; that their interest and will should be the interest and will of the nation. The nation did not need to be protected against its own will. There was no fear of its tyrannizing over itself. Let the rulers be effectually responsible to it, promptly removable by it, and it could afford to trust them with power of which it could itself dictate the use to be made. The power was but the nation's own power, concentrated, and in a form convenient for exercise. This mode of thought, or rather perhaps of feeling, was common among the last generation of European liberalism, in the Continental section of which it still apparently predominates. Those who admit any limit to what a government may do, except in the case of such governments as they think ought not to exist, stand out as brilliant exceptions among the political thinkers of the Continent. A similar tone of sentiment might by this time have been prevalent in our own country, if the circumstances which for a time encouraged it, had continued unaltered.

But, in political and philosophical theories, as well as in persons, success discloses faults and infirmities which failure might have concealed from observation. The notion, that the people have no need to limit their power over themselves, might seem axiomatic, when popular government was a thing only dreamed about, or read of as having existed at some distant period of the past. Neither was that notion necessarily disturbed by such temporary aberrations as those of the French Revolution, the worst of which were the work of a usurping few, and which, in any case, belonged, not to the permanent working of popular institutions, but to a sudden and convulsive outbreak against monarchical and aristocratic despotism. In time, however, a democratic republic came to occupy a large portion of the earth's surface, and made itself felt as one of the most

powerful members of the community of nations; and elective and responsible government became subject to the observations and criticisms which wait upon a great existing fact. It was now perceived that such phrases as "self-government," and "the power of the people over themselves," do not express the true state of the case. The "people" who exercise the power are not always the same people with those over whom it is exercised; and the "self-government" spoken of is not the government of each by himself, but of each by all the rest. The will of the people, moreover, practically means the will of the most numerous or the most active *part* of the people; the majority, or those who succeed in making themselves accepted as the majority; the people, consequently *may* desire to oppress a part of their number; and precautions are as much needed against this as against any other abuse of power. The limitation, therefore, of the power of government over individuals loses none of its importance when the holders of power are regularly accountable to the community, that is, to the strongest party therein. This view of things, recommending itself equally to the intelligence of thinkers and to the inclination of those important classes in European society to whose real or supposed interests democracy is adverse, has had no difficulty in establishing itself; and in political speculations "the tyranny of the majority" is now generally included among the evils against which society requires to be on its guard.

Like other tyrannies, the tyranny of the majority was at first, and is still vulgarly, held in dread, chiefly as operating through the acts of the public authorities. But reflecting persons perceived that when society is itself the tyrant — society collectively over the separate individuals who compose it — its means of tyrannizing are not restricted to the acts which it may do by the hands of its political functionaries. Society can and does execute its own mandates: and if it issues wrong mandates instead of right, or any mandates at all in things with which it ought not to meddle, it practises a social tyranny more formidable than many kinds of political oppression, since, though not usually upheld by such extreme penalties, it leaves fewer means of escape, penetrating much more deeply into the details of life, and enslaving the soul itself. Protection, therefore, against the tyranny of the magistrate is not enough: there needs protection also against the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling; against the tendency of society to impose, by other means than civil penalties, its own ideas and practices as rules of conduct on those who dissent from them; to fetter the development, and, if possible, prevent the formation, of any individuality not in harmony with its ways, and compel all characters to fashion themselves upon the model of its own. There is a limit to the legitimate interference of collective opinion with individual independence: and to find that limit, and maintain it against encroachment, is as indispensable to a good condition of human affairs, as protection against political despotism.

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The object of this Essay is to assert one very simple principle, as entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control, whether the means used be physical force in the form of legal penalties, or the moral coercion of public opinion. That principle is, that the sole end for which mankind was warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinions of others, to do so would be wise, or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for compelling him, or visiting him with any evil in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to some one else. The only part of the conduct of any one, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.

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## Chapter II

### Of the Liberty of Thought and Discussion

The time, it is to be hoped, is gone by,

when any defence would be necessary of the "liberty of the press" as one of the securities against corrupt or tyrannical government. No argument, we may suppose, can now be needed, against permitting a legislature or an executive, not identified in interest with the people, to prescribe opinions to them, and determine what doctrines or what arguments they shall be allowed to hear. This aspect of the question, besides, has been so often and so triumphantly enforced by preceding writers, that it needs not be specially insisted on in this place. Though the law of England, on the subject of the press, is as servile to this day as it was in the time of the Tudors, there is little danger of its being actually put in force against political discussion, except during some temporary panic, when fear of insurrection drives ministers and judges from their propriety;[1] and, speaking generally, it is not, in constitutional countries, to be apprehended, that the government, whether completely responsible to the people or not, will often attempt to control the expression of opinion, except when in doing so it makes itself the organ of the general intolerance of the public. Let us suppose, therefore, that the government is entirely at one with the people, and never thinks of exerting any power of coercion unless in agreement with what it conceives to be their voice. But I deny the right of the people to exercise such coercion, either by themselves or by their government. The power itself is illegitimate. The best government has no more title to it than the worst. It is as noxious, or more noxious, when exerted in accordance with public opinion, than when in opposition to it. If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind. Were an opinion a personal possession of no value except to the owner; if to be obstructed in the enjoyment of it were simply a private injury, it would make some difference whether the injury was inflicted only on a few persons or on many. But the peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is, that it is robbing the human race; posterity as well as the existing generation; those who dissent from the opinion, still more than those who hold it. If the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth: if wrong, they lose what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth, produced by its collision with error.

It is necessary to consider separately these two hypotheses, each of which has a distinct branch of the argument corresponding to it. We can never be sure that the opinion we are endeavoring to stifle is a false opinion; and if we were sure, stifling it would be an evil still.

First: the opinion which it is attempted to suppress by authority may possibly be true. Those who desire to suppress it, of course deny its truth; but they are not infallible. They have no authority to decide the question for all mankind, and exclude every other person from the means of judging. To refuse a hearing to an opinion, because they are sure that it is false, is to assume that *their* certainty is the same thing as *absolute* certainty. All silencing of discussion is an assumption of infallibility. Its condemnation may be allowed to rest on this common argument, not the worse for being common.

Unfortunately for the good sense of mankind, the fact of their fallibility is far from carrying the weight in their practical judgment which is always allowed to it in theory; for while every one well knows himself to be fallible, few think it necessary to take any precautions against their own fallibility, or admit the supposition that any opinion, of which they feel very certain, may be one of

[1] These words had scarcely been written, when, as if to give them an emphatic contradiction, occurred the Government Press Prosecutions of 1858. That ill-judged interference with the liberty of public discussion has not, however, induced me to alter a single word in the text, nor has it at all weakened my conviction that, moments of panic excepted, the era of pains and penalties for political discussion has, in our own country, passed away. For, in the first place, the prosecutions were not persisted in; and, in the second, they were never, properly speaking, political prosecutions. The offence charged was not that of criticizing institutions, or the acts or persons of rulers, but of circulating what was deemed an immoral doctrine, the lawfulness of Tyrannicide.

If the arguments of the present chapter are of any validity, there ought to exist the fullest liberty of professing and discussing, as a matter of ethical conviction, any doctrine, however immoral it may be considered. It would, therefore, be irrelevant and out of place to examine here, whether the doctrine of Tyrannicide deserves that title. I shall content myself with saying that the subject has been at all times one of the open questions of morals; that the act of a private citizen in striking down a criminal, who, by raising himself above the law, has placed himself beyond the reach of legal punishment or control, has been accounted by whole nations, and by some of the best and wisest of men, not a crime, but an act of exalted virtue; and that, right or wrong, it is not of the nature of assassination, but of civil war. As such, I hold that the instigation to it, in a specific case, may be a proper subject of punishment, but only if an overt act has followed, and at least a probable connection can be established between the act and the instigation. Even then, it is not a foreign government, but the very government assailed, which alone, in the exercise of self-defence, can legitimately punish attacks directed against its own existence. (Mill's note.)

he examples of the error to which they acknowledge themselves to be liable. Absolute princes, or others who are accustomed to unlimited deference, usually feel this complete confidence in their own opinions on nearly all subjects. People more happily situated, who sometimes hear their opinions disputed, and are not wholly unused to set right when they are wrong, place the same unbounded reliance only on such of their opinions as are shared by all who surround them, or to whom they habitually defer; for in proportion to a man's want of confidence in his own solitary judgment, does he usually repose, with implicit trust, on the infallibility of "the world" in general. And the world, to each individual, means the part of it with which he comes in contact; his party, his sect, his church, his class of society; the man may be called, by comparison, almost liberal and large-minded to whom it means anything so comprehensive as his own country or his own age. Nor is his faith in this collective authority at all shaken by his being aware that other ages, countries, sects, churches, classes, and parties have thought, and even now think, the exact reverse. He devolves upon his own world the responsibility of being in the right against the dissentient worlds of other people; and it never troubles him that mere accident has decided which of these numerous worlds is the object of his reliance, and that the same causes which make him a Churchman in London, would have made him a Buddhist or a Confucian in Pekin. Yet it is as evident in itself, as any amount of argument can make it, that ages are no more infallible than individuals; every age having held many opinions which subsequent ages have deemed not only false but absurd; and it is as certain that many opinions now general will be rejected by future ages, as it is that many, once general, are rejected by the present.

The objection likely to be made to this argument would probably take some such form as the following. There is no greater assumption of infallibility in forbidding the propagation of error, than in any other thing which is done by public authority on its own judgment and responsibility. Judgment is given to men that they may use it. Because it may be used erroneously, are men to be told that they ought not to use it at all? To prohibit what they think pernicious, is not claiming exemption from error, but fulfilling the duty incumbent on them, although fallible, of acting on their conscientious conviction. If we were never to act on our opinions, because those opinions may be wrong, we should leave all our interests uncared for, and all our duties unperformed. An objection which applies to all conduct can be no valid objection to any conduct in particular. It is the duty of governments, and of individuals, to form the truest opinions they can; to form them carefully, and never impose them upon others unless they are quite sure of being right. But when they are sure (such reasoners may say), it is not conscientiousness but cowardice to shrink from acting on their opinions, and allow doctrines which they honestly think dangerous to the welfare of mankind, either in this life or in another, to be scattered abroad without restraint, because other people, in less enlightened times, have persecuted opinions now believed to be true. Let us take care, it may be said, not to make the same mistake: but governments and nations have made mistakes in other things, which are not denied to be fit subjects for the exercise of authority: they have laid on bad taxes, made unjust wars. Ought we therefore to lay on no taxes, and, under whatever provocation, make no wars? Men, and governments, must act to the best of their ability. There is no such thing as absolute certainty, but there is assurance sufficient for the purposes of human life. We may, and must, assume our opinion to be true for the guidance of our own conduct: and it is assuming no more when we forbid bad men to pervert society by the propagation of opinions which we regard as false and pernicious.

I answer, that it is assuming very much more. There is the greatest difference between presuming an opinion to be true, because, with every opportunity for contesting it, it has not been refuted, and assuming its truth for the purpose of not permitting its refutation. Complete liberty of contradicting and disproving our opinion is the very condition which justifies us in assuming its truth for purposes of action; and on no other terms can a being with human faculties have any rational assurance of being right.

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Let us now pass to the second division of the argument, and dismissing the supposition that any of the received opinions may be false, let us assume them to be true, and examine into the worth of the manner in which they are likely to be held, when their truth is not freely and openly canvassed. However unwillingly a person who has a strong opinion

may admit the possibility that his opinion may be false, he ought to be moved by the consideration that, however true it may be, if it is not fully, frequently, and fearlessly discussed, it will be held as a dead dogma, not a living truth.

There is a class of persons (happily not quite so numerous as formerly) who think it enough if a person assents undoubtingly to what they think true, though he has no knowledge whatever of the grounds of the opinion, and could not make a tenable defence of it against the most superficial objections. Such persons, if they can once get their creed taught from authority, naturally think that no good, and some harm, comes of its being allowed to be questioned. Where their influence prevails, they make it nearly impossible for the received opinion to be rejected wisely and considerately, though it may still be rejected rashly and ignorantly; for to shut out discussion entirely is seldom possible, and when it once gets in, beliefs not grounded on conviction are apt to give way before the slightest semblance of an argument. Waiving, however, this possibility — assuming that the true opinion abides in the mind, but abides as a prejudice, a belief independent of, and proof against, argument — this is not the way in which truth ought to be held by a rational being. This is not knowing the truth. Truth, thus held, is but one superstition the more, accidentally clinging to the words which enunciate a truth.

If the intellect and judgment of mankind ought to be cultivated, a thing which Protestants at least do not deny, on what can these faculties be more appropriately exercised by any one, than on the things which concern him so much that it is considered necessary for him to hold opinions on them? If the cultivation of the understanding consists in one thing more than in another, it is surely in learning the grounds of one's own opinions. Whatever people believe, on subjects on which it is of the first importance to believe rightly, they ought to be able to defend against at least the common objections. But, some one may say, "Let them be *taught* the grounds of their opinions. It does not follow that opinions must be merely parroted because they are never heard controverted. Persons who learn geometry do not simply commit the theorems to memory, but understand and learn likewise the demonstrations; and it would be absurd to say that they remain ignorant of the grounds of geometrical truths, because they never hear any one deny, and attempt to disprove them." Undoubtedly: and such teaching suffices on a subject like mathematics, where there is nothing at all to be said on the wrong side of the question. The peculiarity of the evidence of mathematical truths is that all the argument is on one side. There are no objections, and no answers to objections. But on every subject on which difference of opinion is possible the truth depends on a balance to be struck between two sets of conflicting reasons. Even in natural philosophy, there is always some other explanation possible of the same facts; some geocentric theory instead of heliocentric, some phlogiston instead of oxygen; and it has to be shown why that other theory cannot be the true one: and until this is shown, and until we know how it is shown, we do not understand the grounds of our opinion. But when we turn to subjects infinitely more complicated, to morals, religion, politics, social relations, and the business of life, three-fourths of the argument for every disputed opinion consist in dispelling the appearances which favor some opinion different from it. The greatest orator, save one, of antiquity, has left it on record that he always studied his adversary's case with as great, if not still greater, intensity than even his own. What Cicero practised as the means of forensic success requires to be imitated by all who study any subject in order to arrive at the truth. He who knows only his own side of the case, knows little of that. His reasons may be good, and no one may have been able to refute them. But if he is equally unable to refute the reasons on the opposite side; if he does not so much as know what they are, he has no ground for preferring either opinion. The rational position for him would be suspension of judgment; and unless he contents himself with that, he is either led by authority, or adopts, like the generality of the world, the side to which he feels most inclination. Nor is it enough that he should hear the arguments of adversaries from his own teachers, presented as they state them, and accompanied by what they offer as refutations. That is not the way to do justice to the arguments, or bring them into real contact with his own mind. He must be able to hear them from persons who actually believe them; who defend them in earnest, and do their very utmost for them. He must know them in their most plausible and persuasive form; he must feel the whole force of the difficulty which the true view of the subject has to encounter and dispose of;

else he will never really possess himself of the portion of truth which meets and removes that difficulty. Ninety-nine in a hundred of what are called educated men are in this condition; even of those who can argue fluently for their opinions. Their conclusion may be true, but it might be false for anything they know: they have never thrown themselves into the mental position of those who think differently from them, and considered what such persons may have to say; and consequently they do not, in any proper sense of the word, know the doctrine which they themselves profess. They do not know those parts of it which explain and justify the remainder; the considerations which show that a fact which seemingly conflicts with another is reconcilable with it, or that, of two apparently strong reasons, one and not the other ought to be preferred. All that part of the truth which turns the scale, and decides the judgment of a completely informed mind, they are strangers to; nor is it ever really known, but to those who have attended equally and impartially to both sides, and endeavored to see the reasons of both in the strongest light. So essential is this discipline to a real understanding of moral and human subjects, that if opponents of all important truths do not exist, it is indispensable to imagine them, and supply them with the strongest arguments which the most skilful devil's advocate can conjure up.

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If, however, the mischievous operation of the absence of free discussion, when the received opinions are true, were confined to leaving men ignorant of the grounds of those opinions, it might be thought that this, if an intellectual, is no moral evil, and does not affect the worth of the opinions, regarded in their influence on the character. The fact, however, is, that not only the grounds of the opinion are forgotten in the absence of discussion, but too often the meaning of the opinion itself. The words which convey it cease to suggest ideas, or suggest only a small portion of those they were originally employed to communicate. Instead of a vivid conception and a living belief, there remain only a few phrases retained by rote; or, if any part, the shell and husk only of the meaning is retained, the finer essence being lost. The great chapter in human history which this fact occupies and fills, cannot be too earnestly studied and meditated on.

It is illustrated in the experience of almost all ethical doctrines and religious creeds. They are all full of meaning and vitality to those who originate them, and to the direct disciples of the originators. Their meaning continues to be felt in undiminished strength, and is perhaps brought out into even fuller consciousness, so long as the struggle lasts to give the doctrine or creed an ascendancy over other creeds. At last it either prevails, and becomes the general opinion, or its progress stops; it keeps possession of the ground it has gained, but ceases to spread further. When either of these results has become apparent, controversy on the subject flags, and gradually dies away. The doctrine has taken its place, if not as a received opinion, as one of the admitted sects or divisions of opinion: those who hold it have generally inherited, not adopted it; and conversion from one of these doctrines to another, being now an exceptional fact, occupies little place in the thoughts of their professors. Instead of being, as at first, constantly on the alert either to defend themselves against the world, or to bring the world over to them, they have subsided into acquiescence, and neither listen, when they can help it, to arguments against their creed, nor trouble dissentients (if there be such) with arguments in its favor. From this time may usually be dated the decline in the living power of the doctrine. We often hear the teachers of all creeds lamenting the difficulty of keeping up in the minds of believers a lively apprehension of the truth which they nominally recognize, so that it may penetrate the feelings, and acquire a real mastery over the conduct. No such difficulty is complained of while the creed is still fighting for its existence: even the weaker combatants then know and feel what they are fighting for, and the difference between it and other doctrines; and in that period of every creed's existence, not a few persons may be found, who have realized its fundamental principles in all the forms of thought, have weighed and considered them in all their important bearings, and have experienced the full effect on the character which belief in that creed ought to produce in a mind thoroughly imbued with it. But when it has come to be an hereditary creed, and to be received passively, not actively — when the mind is no longer compelled, in the same degree as at first, to exercise its vital powers on the questions which its belief presents to it, there is a progressive tendency to forget all of the belief except the formularies, or to give it a dull and torpid assent, as if accepting it on trust dispensed

with the necessity of realizing it in consciousness, or testing it by personal experience, until it almost ceases to connect itself at all with the inner life of the human being. Then are seen the cases, so frequent in this age of the world as almost to form the majority, in which the creed remains as it were outside the mind, incrusting and petrifying it against all other influences addressed to the higher parts of our nature; manifesting its power by not suffering any fresh and living conviction to get in, but itself doing nothing for the mind or heart, except standing sentinel over them to keep them vacant.

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It still remains to speak of one of the principal causes which make diversity of opinion advantageous, and will continue to do so until mankind shall have entered a stage of intellectual advancement which at present seems at an incalculable distance. We have hitherto considered only two possibilities: that the received opinion may be false, and some other opinion, consequently, true; or that, the received opinion being true, a conflict with the opposite error is essential to a clear apprehension and deep feeling of its truth. But there is a commoner case than either of these; when the conflicting doctrines, instead of being one true and the other false, share the truth between them; and the nonconforming opinion is needed to supply the remainder of the truth, of which the received doctrine embodies only a part. Popular opinions, on subjects not palpable to sense, are often true, but seldom or never the whole truth. They are a part of the truth; sometimes a greater, sometimes a smaller part, but exaggerated, distorted, and disjointed from the truths by which they ought to be accompanied and limited. Heretical opinions, on the other hand, are generally some of these suppressed and neglected truths, bursting the bonds which kept them down, and either seeking reconciliation with the truth contained in the common opinion, or fronting it as enemies, and setting themselves up, with similar exclusiveness, as the whole truth. The latter case is hitherto the most frequent, as, in the human mind, one-sidedness has always been the rule, and many-sidedness the exception. Hence, even in revolutions of opinion, one part of the truth usually sets while another rises. Even progress, which ought to superadd, for the most part only substitutes, one partial and incomplete truth for another; improvement consisting chiefly in this, that the new fragment of truth is more wanted, more adapted to the needs of the time, than that which it displaces. Such being the partial character of prevailing opinions, even when resting on a true foundation, every opinion which embodies some part of that portion of truth which the common opinion omits, ought to be considered precious, with whatever amount of error and confusion that truth may be blended. No sober judge of human affairs will feel bound to be indignant because those who force on our notice truths which we should otherwise have overlooked, overlook some of those which we see. Rather, he will think that so long as popular truth is one-sided, it is more desirable than otherwise that unpopular truth should have one-sided assertors too; such being usually the most energetic, and the most likely to compel reluctant attention to the fragment of wisdom which they proclaim as if it were the whole.

Thus, in the eighteenth century, when nearly all the instructed, and all those of the uninstructed who were led by them, were lost in admiration of what is called civilization, and of the marvels of modern science, literature, and philosophy, and while greatly overrating the amount of unlikeness between the men of modern and those of ancient times, indulged the belief that the whole of the difference was in their own favor; with what a salutary shock did the paradoxes of Rousseau explode like bombshells in the midst, dislocating the compact mass of one-sided opinion, and forcing its elements to recombine in a better form and with additional ingredients. Not that the current opinions were on the whole farther from the truth than Rousseau's were; on the contrary, they were nearer to it; they contained more of positive truth, and very much less of error. Nevertheless there lay in Rousseau's doctrine, and has floated down the stream of opinion along with it, a considerable amount of exactly those truths which the popular opinion wanted; and these are the deposit which was left behind when the flood subsided. The superior worth of simplicity of life, the enervating and demoralizing effect of the trammels and hypocrisies of artificial society, are ideas which have never been entirely absent from cultivated minds since Rousseau wrote; and they will in time produce their due effect, though at present needing to be asserted as much as ever, and to be asserted by deeds, for words, on this subject, have nearly exhausted their power.

In politics, again, it is almost a commonplace, that a party of order or stability, and a party of progress or reform, are both necessary elements of a healthy state of political life, until the one or the other shall have so enlarged its mental grasp as to be a party equally of order and of progress, knowing and distinguishing what is fit to be preserved from what ought to be swept away. Each of these modes of thinking derives its utility from the deficiencies of the other; but it is in a great measure the opposition of the other that keeps each within the limits of reason and sanity. Unless opinions favorable to democracy and to aristocracy, to property and to equality, to co-operation and to competition, to luxury and to abstinence, to sociality and individuality, to liberty and discipline, and all the other standing antagonisms of practical life, are expressed with equal freedom, and enforced and defended with equal talent and energy, there is no chance of both elements obtaining their due; one scale is sure to go up, and the other down. Truth, in the great practical concerns of life, is so much a question of the reconciling and combining of opposites, that very few have minds sufficiently capacious and impartial to make the adjustment with an approach to correctness, and it has to be made by the rough process of a struggle between combatants fighting under hostile banners. On any of the great open questions just enumerated, if either of the two opinions has a better claim than the other, not merely to be tolerated, but to be encouraged and countenanced, it is the one which happens at the particular time and place to be in a minority. That is the opinion which, for the time being, represents the neglected interests, the side of human well-being which is in danger of obtaining less than its share. I am aware that there is not, in this country, any intolerance of differences of opinion on most of these topics. They are adduced to show, by admitted and multiplied examples, the universality of the fact, that only through diversity of opinion is there, in the existing state of human intellect, a chance of fair play to all sides of the truth. When there are persons to be found who form an exception to the apparent unanimity of the world on any subject, even if the world is in the right, it is always probable that dissentients have something worth hearing to say for themselves, and that truth would lose something by their silence.

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Before quitting the subject of freedom of opinion, it is fit to take some notice of those who say that the free expression of all opinions should be permitted, on condition that the manner be temperate, and do not pass the bounds of fair discussion. Much might be said on the impossibility of fixing where these supposed bounds are to be placed; for if the test be offence to those whose opinions are attacked, I think experience testifies that this offence is given whenever the attack is telling and powerful, and that every opponent who pushes them hard, and whom they find it difficult to answer, appears to them, if he shows any strong feeling on the subject, an intemperate opponent. But this, though an important consideration in a practical point of view, merges in a more fundamental objection. Undoubtedly the manner of asserting an opinion, even though it be a true one, may be very objectionable, and may justly incur severe censure. But the principal offences of the kind are such as it is mostly impossible, unless by accidental self-betrayal, to bring home to conviction. The gravest of them is, to argue sophistically, to suppress facts or arguments, to misstate the elements of the case, or misrepresent the opposite opinion. But all this, even to the most aggravated degree, is so continually done in perfect good faith, by persons who are not considered, and in many other respects may not deserve to be considered, ignorant or incompetent, that it is rarely possible, on adequate grounds, conscientiously to stamp the misrepresentation as morally culpable; and still less could law presume to interfere with this kind of controversial misconduct. With regard to what is commonly meant by intemperate discussion, namely invective, sarcasm, personality, and the like, the denunciation of these weapons would deserve more sympathy if it were ever proposed to interdict them equally to both sides; but it is only desired to restrain the employment of them against the prevailing opinion: against the unprevailing they may not only be used without general disapproval, but will be likely to obtain for him who uses them the praise of honest zeal and righteous indignation. Yet whatever mischief arises from their use is greatest when they are employed against the comparatively defenceless; and whatever unfair advantage can be derived by any opinion from this mode of asserting it, accrues almost exclusively to received opinions. The worst offence of this kind which can be committed by a polemic is to stig-

matize those who hold the contrary opinion as bad and immoral men. To calumny of this sort, those who hold any unpopular opinion are peculiarly exposed, because they are in general few and uninfluential, and nobody but themselves feels much interested in seeing justice done them; but this weapon is, from the nature of the case, denied to those who attack a prevailing opinion: they can neither use it with safety to themselves, nor, if they could, would it do anything but recoil on their own cause. In general, opinions contrary to those commonly received can only obtain a hearing by studied moderation of language, and the most cautious avoidance of unnecessary offense, from which they hardly ever deviate even in a slight degree without losing ground: while unmeasured vituperation employed on the side of the prevailing opinion really does deter people from professing contrary opinions, and from listening to those who profess them. For the interest, therefore, of truth and justice, it is far more important to restrain this employment of vituperative language than the other; and, for example, if it were necessary to choose, there would be much more need to discourage offensive attacks on infidelity than on religion. It is, however, obvious that law and authority have no business with restraining either, while opinion ought, in every instance, to determine its verdict by the circumstances of the individual case; condemning every one, on whichever side of the argument he places himself, in whose mode of advocacy either want of candor, or malignity, bigotry, or intolerance of feeling manifest themselves; but not inferring these vices from the side which a person takes, though it be the contrary side of the question to our own; and giving merited honor to every one, whatever opinion he may hold, who has calmness to see and honesty to state what his opponents and their opinions really are, exaggerating nothing to their discredit, keeping nothing back which tells, or can be supposed to tell, in their favor. This is the real morality of public discussion: and if often violated, I am happy to think that there are many controversialists who to a great extent observe it, and a still greater number who conscientiously strive towards it.

## Chapter III

### Of Individuality, as One of the Elements of Well-Being

Such being the reasons which make it imperative that human beings should be free to form opinions, and to express their opinions without reserve; and such the baneful consequences to the intellectual, and through that to the moral nature of man, unless this liberty is either conceded, or asserted in spite of prohibition; let us next examine whether the same reasons do not require that men should be free to act upon their opinions — to carry these out in their lives, without hindrance, either physical or moral, from their fellow-men, so long as it is at their own risk and peril. This last proviso is of course indispensable. No one pretends that actions should be as free as opinions. On the contrary, even opinions lose their immunity when the circumstances in which they are expressed are such as to constitute their expression a positive instigation to some mischievous act. An opinion that corn-dealers are starvers of the poor, or that private property is robbery, ought to be unmolested when simply circulated through the press, but may justly incur punishment when delivered orally to an excited mob assembled before the house of a corn-dealer, or when handed about among the same mob in the form of a placard. Acts, of whatever kind, which, without justifiable cause, do harm to others, may be, and in the more important cases absolutely require to be, controlled by the unfavorable sentiments, and, when needful, by the active interference of mankind. The liberty of the individual must be thus far limited; he must not make himself a nuisance to other people. But if he refrains from molesting others in what concerns them, and merely acts according to his own inclination and judgment in things which concern himself, the same reasons which show that opinion should be free, prove also that he should be allowed, without molestation, to carry his opinions into practice at his own cost. That mankind are not infallible; that their truths, for the most part, are only half-truths; that unity of opinion, unless resulting from the fullest and freest comparison of opposite opinions, is not desirable, and diversity not an evil, but a good, until mankind are much more capable than at present of recognizing all sides of the truth, are principles applicable to men's modes of action, not less than to their opin-

ions. As it is useful that while mankind are imperfect there should be different opinions, so it is that there should be different experiments of living; that free scope should be given to varieties of character, short of injury to others; and that the worth of different modes of life should be proved practically, when any one thinks fit to try them. It is desirable, in short, that in things which do not primarily concern others, individuality should assert itself. Where, not the person's own character, but the traditions or customs of other people are the rule of conduct, there is wanting one of the principal ingredients of human happiness, and quite the chief ingredient of individual and social progress.

In maintaining this principle, the greatest difficulty to be encountered does not lie in the appreciation of means towards an acknowledged end, but in the indifference of persons in general to the end itself. If it were felt that the free development of individuality is one of the leading essentials of well-being; that it is not only a co-ordinate element with all that is designated by the terms civilization, instruction, education, culture, but is itself a necessary part and condition of all those things; there would be no danger that liberty should be undervalued and the adjustment of the boundaries between it and social control would present no extraordinary difficulty. But the evil is, that individual spontaneity is hardly recognized by the common modes of thinking as having any intrinsic worth, or deserving any regard on its own account. The majority, being satisfied with the ways of mankind as they now are (for it is they who make them what they are), cannot comprehend why those ways should not be good enough for everybody; and what is more, spontaneity forms no part of the ideal of the majority of moral and social reformers, but is rather looked on with jealousy, as a troublesome and perhaps rebellious obstruction to the general acceptance of what these reformers, in their own judgment, think would be best for mankind. Few persons, out of Germany, even comprehend the meaning of the doctrine which Wilhelm von Humboldt, so eminent both as a *savant* and as a politician, made the text of a treatise — that "the end of man, or that which is prescribed by the eternal or immutable dictates of reason, and not suggested by vague and transient desires, is the highest and most harmonious development of his powers to a complete and consistent whole;" that, therefore, the object "towards which every human being must ceaselessly direct his efforts, and on which especially those who design to influence their fellow-men must ever keep their eyes, is the individuality of power and development;" that for this there are two requisites, "freedom, and variety of situations;" and that from the union of these arise "individual vigor and manifold diversity" which combine themselves in "originality." [1]

Little, however, as people are accustomed to a doctrine like that of Von Humboldt, and surprising as it may be to them to find so high a value attached to individuality, the question, one must nevertheless think, can only be one of degree. No one's idea of excellence in conduct is that people should do absolutely nothing but copy one another. No one would assert that people ought not to put into their mode of life, and into the conduct of their concerns, any impress whatever of their own judgment, or of their own individual character. On the other hand, it would be absurd to pretend that people ought to live as if nothing whatever had been known in the world before they came into it; as if experience had as yet done nothing towards showing that one mode of existence, or of conduct, is preferable to another. Nobody denies that people should be so taught and trained in youth as to know and benefit by the ascertained results of human experience. But it is the privilege and proper condition of a human being, arrived at the maturity of his faculties, to use and interpret experience in his own way. It is for him to find out what part of recorded experience is properly applicable to his own circumstances and character. The traditions and customs of other people are, to a certain extent, evidence of what their experience has taught *them;* presumptive evidence, and as such, have a claim to his deference: but, in the first place, their experience may be too narrow; or they may not have interpreted it rightly. Secondly, their interpretation of experience may be correct, but unsuitable to him. Customs are made for customary circumstances and customary characters; and his circumstances or his character may be uncustomary. Thirdly, though the customs be both good as customs, and suitable to him, yet to conform to custom, merely *as* custom, does not educate or

[1] *The Sphere and Duties of Government*, from the German of Baron Wilhelm von Humboldt, pp. 11–13. (Mill's note.)

develop in him any of the qualities which are the distinctive endowment of a human being. The human faculties of perception, judgment, discriminative feeling, mental activity, and even moral preference, are exercised only in making a choice. He who does anything because it is the custom makes no choice. He gains no practice either in discerning or in desiring what is best. The mental and moral, like the muscular powers, are improved only by being used. The faculties are called into no exercise by doing a thing merely because others do it, no more than by believing a thing only because others believe it. If the grounds of an opinion are not conclusive to the person's own reason, his reason cannot be strengthened, but is likely to be weakened, by his adopting it: and if the inducements to an act are not such as are consentaneous to his own feelings and character (where affection, or the rights of others, are not concerned) it is so much done towards rendering his feelings and character inert and torpid, instead of active and energetic.

He who lets the world, or his own portion of it, choose his plan of life for him, has no need of any other faculty than the ape-like one of imitation. He who chooses his plan for himself, employs all his faculties. He must use observation to see, reasoning and judgment to foresee, activity to gather materials for decision, discrimination to decide, and when he has decided, firmness of self-control to hold to his deliberate decision. And these qualities he requires and exercises exactly in proportion as the part of his conduct which he determines according to his own judgment and feelings is a large one. It is possible that he might be guided in some good path, and kept out of harm's way, without any of these things. But what will be his comparative worth as a human being? It really is of importance, not only what men do, but also what manner of men they are that do it. Among the works of man, which human life is rightly employed in perfecting and beautifying, the first in importance surely is man himself. Supposing it were possible to get houses built, corn grown, battles fought, causes tried, and even churches erected and prayers said, by machinery — by automatons in human form — it would be a considerable loss to exchange for these automatons even the men and women who at present inhabit the more civilized parts of the world, and who assuredly are but starved specimens of what nature can and will produce. Human nature is n a machine to be built after a model, and s to do exactly the work prescribed for it, b a tree, which requires to grow and develo itself on all sides, according to the tenden of the inward forces which make it a livi thing.

It will probably be conceded that it is d sirable people should exercise their unde standings, and that an intelligent followir of custom, or even occasionally an intellige deviation from custom, is better than a blir and simply mechanical adhesion to it. To certain extent it is admitted that our unde standing should be our own: but there is n the same willingness to admit that ou desires and impulses should be our ow likewise; or that to possess impulses of ou own, and of any strength, is anything but peril and a snare. Yet desires and impuls are as much a part of a perfect human bein as beliefs and restraints: and strong impuls are only perilous when not properly ba anced; when one set of aims and inclinatio is developed into strength, while other which ought to co-exist with them, remai weak and inactive. It is not because men desires are strong that they act ill; it is b cause their consciences are weak. There no natural connection between strong in pulses and a weak conscience. The natura connection is the other way. To say tha one person's desires and feelings are stronge and more various than those of another, merely to say that he has more of the ra material of human nature, and is therefor capable, perhaps of more evil, but certainl of more good. Strong impulses are bu another name for energy. Energy may b turned to bad uses; but more good ma always be made of an energetic nature, tha of an indolent and impassive one. Thos who have most natural feeling are alway those whose cultivated feelings may be mad the strongest. The same strong suscepti bilities which make the personal impulse vivid and powerful, are also the source fro whence are generated the most passionat love of virtue, and the sternest self-contro It is through the cultivation of these tha society both does its duty and protects it interests: not by rejecting the stuff of whic heroes are made, because it knows not how to make them. A person whose desires and impulses are his own — are the expression o his own nature, as it has been developed and modified by his own culture — is said to have a character. One whose desires and im-

pulses are not his own, has no character, no more than a steam-engine has a character. If, in addition to being his own, his impulses are strong, and are under the government of a strong will, he has an energetic character. Whoever thinks that individuality of desires and impulses should not be encouraged to unfold itself, must maintain that society has no need of strong natures — is not better for containing many persons who have much character — and that a high general average of energy is not desirable.

In some early states of society, these forces might be, and were, too much ahead of the power which society then possessed of disciplining and controlling them. There has been a time when the element of spontaneity and individuality was in excess, and the social principle had a hard struggle with it. The difficulty then was to induce men of strong bodies or minds to pay obedience to any rules which required them to control their impulses. To overcome this difficulty, law and discipline, like the Popes struggling against the Emperors, asserted a power over the whole man, claiming to control all his life in order to control his character — which society had not found any other sufficient means of binding. But society has now fairly got the better of individuality; and the danger which threatens human nature is not the excess, but the deficiency, of personal impulses and preferences. Things are vastly changed since the passions of those who were strong by station or by personal endowment were in a state of habitual rebellion against laws and ordinances, and required to be rigorously chained up to enable the persons within their reach to enjoy any particle of security. In our times, from the highest class of society down to the lowest, every one lives as under the eye of a hostile and dreaded censorship. Not only in what concerns others, but in what concerns only themselves, the individual or the family do not ask themselves — what do I prefer? or, what would suit my character and disposition? or, what would allow the best and highest in me to have fair play, and enable it to grow and thrive? They ask themselves, what is suitable to my position? what is usually done by persons of my station and pecuniary circumstances? or (worse still) what is usually done by persons of a station and circumstances superior to mine? I do not mean that they choose what is customary in preference to what suits their own inclination. It does not occur to them to have any inclination, except for what is customary. Thus the mind itself is bowed to the yoke: even in what people do for pleasure, conformity is the first thing thought of; they like in crowds; they exercise choice only among things commonly done: peculiarity of taste, eccentricity of conduct, are shunned equally with crimes: until by dint of not following their own nature they have no nature to follow: their human capacities are withered and starved: they become incapable of any strong wishes or native pleasures, and are generally without either opinions or feelings of home growth, or properly their own. Now is this, or is it not, the desirable condition of human nature?

It is so, on the Calvinistic theory. According to that, the one great offence of man is self-will. All the good of which humanity is capable is comprised in obedience. You have no choice; thus you must do, and no otherwise: "whatever is not a duty, is a sin." Human nature being radically corrupt, there is no redemption for any one until human nature is killed within him. To one holding this theory of life, crushing out any of the human faculties, capacities, and susceptibilities, is no evil: man needs no capacity, but that of surrendering himself to the will of God: and if he uses any of his faculties for any other purpose but to do that supposed will more effectually, he is better without them. This is the theory of Calvinism; and it is held, in a mitigated form, by many who do not consider themselves Calvinists; the mitigation consisting in giving a less ascetic interpretation to the alleged will of God; asserting it to be his will that mankind should gratify some of their inclinations; of course not in the manner they themselves prefer, but in the way of obedience, that is, in a way prescribed to them by authority; and, therefore, by the necessary condition of the case, the same for all.

In some such insidious form there is at present a strong tendency to this narrow theory of life, and to the pinched and hidebound type of human character which it patronizes. Many persons, no doubt, sincerely think that human beings thus cramped and dwarfed are as their Maker designed them to be; just as many have thought that trees are a much finer thing when clipped into pollards, or cut out into figures of animals, than as nature made them. But if it be any part of religion to believe that man was made by a good Being, it is more consistent with that faith to believe that this Being gave all human faculties that they might be culti-

vated and unfolded, not rooted out and consumed, and that he takes delight in every nearer approach made by his creatures to the ideal conception embodied in them, every increase in any of their capabilities of comprehension, of action, or of enjoyment. There is a different type of human excellence from the Calvinistic: a conception of humanity as having its nature bestowed on it for other purposes than merely to be abnegated. "Pagan self-assertion" is one of the elements of human worth, as well as "Christian self-denial." [1] There is a Greek ideal of self-development, which the Platonic and Christian ideal of self-government blends with, but does not supersede. It may be better to be a John Knox than an Alcibiades, but it is better to be a Pericles than either; nor would a Pericles, if we had one in these days, be without anything good which belonged to John Knox.

It is not by wearing down into uniformity all that is individual in themselves, but by cultivating it, and calling it forth, within the limits imposed by the rights and interests of others, that human beings become a noble and beautiful object of contemplation; and as the works partake the character of those who do them, by the same process human life also becomes rich, diversified, and animating, furnishing more abundant aliment to high thoughts and elevating feelings' and strengthening the tie which binds every individual to the race, by making the race infinitely better worth belonging to. In proportion to the development of his individuality, each person becomes more valuable to himself, and is therefore capable of being more valuable to others. There is a greater fulness of life about his own existence, and when there is more life in the units there is more in the mass which is composed of them. As much compression as is necessary to prevent the stronger specimens of human nature from encroaching on the rights of others cannot be dispensed with; but for this there is ample compensation even in the point of view of human development. The means of development which the individual loses by being prevented from gratifying his inclinations to the injury of others, are chiefly obtained at the expense of the development of other people. And even to himself there is a full equivalent in the better development of the social part of his nature, rendered possible by the restraint put upon the selfish part. To be held to rigid rules of justice for the sake of others, develops the feelings and capacities which have the good of others for their object. But to be restrained in things not affecting their good, by their mere dislike, pleasure, develops nothing valuable, except such force of character as may unfold itself in resisting the restraint. If acquiesced in, it dulls and blunts the whole nature. To give any fair play to the nature of each, it is essential that different persons should be allowed to lead different lives. In proportion as this latitude has been exercised in any age, has that age been noteworthy to posterity. Even despotism does not produce its worst effects, so long as individuality exists under it; and whatever crushes individuality is despotism, by whatever name it may be called, and whether it professes to be enforcing the will of God or the injunctions of men.

Having said that the individuality is the same thing with development, and that it is only the cultivation of individuality which produces, or can produce, well-developed human beings, I might here close the argument: for what more or better can be said of any condition of human affairs than that it brings human beings themselves nearer to the best thing they can be? or what worse can be said of any obstruction to good than that it prevents this? Doubtless, however, these considerations will not suffice to convince those who most need convincing; and it is necessary further to show, that these developed human beings are of some use to the undeveloped — to point out to those who do not desire liberty, and would not avail themselves of it, that they may be allowed some intelligible manner rewarded for allowing other people to make use of it without hindrance.

In the first place, then, I would suggest that they might possibly learn something from them. It will not be denied by anybody, that originality is a valuable element in human affairs. There is always need not persons not only to discover new truths, and point out when what were once truths are true no longer, but also to commence new practices, and set the example of more enlightened conduct, and better taste and sense in human life. This cannot well be gainsaid by anybody who does not believe that the world has already attained perfection in all its ways and practices. It is true that this benefit is not capable of being rendered to everybody alike: there are but few persons in comparison with the whole of mankind whose experiments, if adopted by others

1 Sterling's *Essays*. (Mill's note.)

would be likely to be any improvement on established practice. But these few are the salt of the earth; without them, human life would become a stagnant pool. Not only is it they who introduce good things which did not before exist; it is they who keep the life in those which already exist. If there were nothing new to be done, would human intellect cease to be necessary? Would it be a reason why those who do the old things should forget why they are done, and do them like cattle, not like human beings? There is only too great a tendency in the best beliefs and practices to degenerate into the mechanical; and unless there were a succession of persons whose ever-recurring originality prevents the grounds of those beliefs and practices from becoming merely traditional, such dead matter would not resist the smallest shock from anything really alive, and there would be no reason why civilization should not die out, as in the Byzantine Empire. Persons of genius, it is true, are, and are always likely to be, a small minority; but in order to have them, it is necessary to preserve the soil in which they grow. Genius can only breathe freely in an *atmosphere* of freedom. Persons of genius are, *ex vi termini*,[1] more individual than any other people — less capable, consequently, of fitting themselves, without hurtful compression, into any of the small number of molds which society provides in order to save its members the trouble of forming their own character. If from timidity they consent to be forced into one of these molds, and to let all that part of themselves which cannot expand under the pressure remain unexpanded, society will be little the better for their genius. If they are of a strong character, and break their fetters, they become a mark for the society which has not succeeded in reducing them to commonplace, to point out with solemn warning as "wild," "erratic," and the like; much as if one should complain of the Niagara river for not flowing smoothly between its banks like a Dutch canal.

I insist thus emphatically on the importance of genius, and the necessity of allowing it to unfold itself freely both in thought and in practice, being well aware that no one will deny the position in theory, but knowing also that almost every one, in reality, is totally indifferent to it. People think genius a fine thing if it enables a man to write an exciting poem, or paint a picture. But in its true sense, that of originality in thought and action, though no one says that it is not a thing to be admired, nearly all, at heart, think that they can do very well without it. Unhappily this is too natural to be wondered at. Originality is the one thing which unoriginal minds cannot feel the use of. They cannot see what it is to do for them: how should they? If they could see what it would do for them, it would not be originality. The first service which originality has to render them, is that of opening their eyes: which being once fully done, they would have a chance of being themselves original. Meanwhile, recollecting that nothing was ever yet done which some one was not the first to do, and that all good things which exist are the fruits of originality, let them be modest enough to believe that there is something still left for it to accomplish, and assure themselves that they are more in need of originality, the less they are conscious of the want.

In sober truth, whatever homage may be professed, or even paid, to real or supposed mental superiority, the general tendency of things throughout the world is to render mediocrity the ascendant power among mankind. In ancient history, in the Middle Ages, and in a diminishing degree through the long transition from feudality to the present time, the individual was a power in himself; and if he had either great talents or a high social position, he was a considerable power. At present individuals are lost in the crowd. In politics it is almost a triviality to say that public opinion now rules the world. The only power deserving the name is that of masses, and of governments while they make themselves the organ of the tendencies and instincts of masses. This is as true in the moral and social relations of private life as in public transactions. Those whose opinions go by the name of public opinion are not always the same sort of public: in America they are the whole white population; in England, chiefly the middle class. But they are always a mass, that is to say, collective mediocrity. And what is a still greater novelty, the mass do not now take their opinions from dignitaries in Church or State, from ostensible leaders, or from books. Their thinking is done for them by men much like themselves, addressing them or speaking in their name, on the spur of the moment, through the newspapers. I am not complaining of all this. I do not assert that anything better is compatible, as a general rule, with the present low state of the human

[1] by definition.

mind. But that does not hinder the government of mediocrity from being mediocre government. No government by a democracy or a numerous aristocracy, either in its political acts or in the opinions, qualities, and tone of mind which it fosters, ever did or could rise above mediocrity, except in so far as the sovereign. Many have let themselves be guided (which in their best times they always have done) by the counsels and influence of a more highly gifted and instructed One or Few. The initiation of all wise or noble things comes and must come from individuals; generally at first from some one individual. The honor and glory of the average man is that he is capable of following that initiative; that he can respond internally to wise and noble things, and be led to them with his eyes open. I am not countenancing the sort of "hero-worship" which applauds the strong man of genius for forcibly seizing on the government of the world and making it do his bidding in spite of itself. All he can claim is, freedom to point out the way. The power of compelling others into it is not only inconsistent with the freedom and development of all the rest, but corrupting to the strong man himself. It does seem, however, that when the opinions of masses of merely average men are everywhere become or becoming the dominant power, the counterpoise and corrective to that tendency would be the more and more pronounced individuality of those who stand on the higher eminences of thought. It is in these circumstances most especially, that exceptional individuals, instead of being deterred, should be encouraged in acting differently from the mass. In other times there was no advantage in their doing so, unless they acted not only differently but better. In this age, the mere example of non-conformity, the mere refusal to bend the knee to custom, is itself a service. Precisely because the tyranny of opinion is such as to make eccentricity a reproach, it is desirable, in order to break through that tyranny, that people should be eccentric. Eccentricity has always abounded when and where strength of character has abounded; and the amount of eccentricity in a society has generally been proportional to the amount of genius, mental vigor, and moral courage it contained. That so few now dare to be eccentric marks the chief danger of the time.

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## Chapter IV

### Of the Limits to the Authority of Society over the Individual

What, then, is the rightful limit to the sovereignty of the individual over himself? Where does the authority of society begin? How much of human life should be assigned to individuality, and how much to society?

Each will receive its proper share, if each has that which more particularly concerns it. To individuality should belong the part of life in which it is chiefly the individual that is interested; to society, the part which chiefly interests society.

Though society is not founded on a contract, and though no good purpose is answered by inventing a contract in order to deduce social obligations from it, every one who receives the protection of society owes a return for the benefit, and the fact of living in society renders it indispensable that each should be bound to observe a certain line of conduct towards the rest. This conduct consists, first, in not injuring the interests of one another; or rather certain interests, which either by express legal provision or by tacit understanding, ought to be considered as rights; and secondly, in each person's bearing his share (to be fixed on some equitable principle) of the labors and sacrifices incurred for defending the society or its members from injury and molestation. These conditions society is justified in enforcing, at all costs to those who endeavor to withhold fulfilment. Nor is this all that society may do. The acts of an individual may be hurtful to others, or wanting in due consideration for their welfare, without going to the length of violating any of their constituted rights. The offender may then be justly punished by opinion, though not by law. As soon as any part of a person's conduct affects prejudicially the interests of others, society has jurisdiction over it, and the question whether the general welfare will or will not be promoted by interfering with it, becomes open to discussion. But there is no room for entertaining any such question when a person's conduct affects the interests of no persons besides himself, or needs not affect them unless they like (all the persons concerned being of full age, and the ordinary amount of understanding). In all such cases, there should be perfect freedom, legal and social, to do the action and stand the consequences

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The distinction between the loss of con

sideration which a person may rightly incur by defect of prudence or of personal dignity, and the reprobation which is due to him for an offence against the rights of others, is not a merely nominal distinction. It makes a vast difference both in our feelings and in our conduct towards him whether he displeases us in things in which we think we have a right to control him, or in things in which we know that we have not. If he displeases us, we may express our distaste, and we may stand aloof from a person as well as from a thing that displeases us; but we shall not therefore feel called on to make his life uncomfortable. We shall reflect that he already bears, or will bear, the whole penalty of his error; if he spoils his life by mismanagement, we shall not, for that reason, desire to spoil it still further: instead of wishing to punish him, we shall rather endeavor to alleviate his punishment, by showing him how he may avoid or cure the evils his conduct tends to bring upon him. He may be to us an object of pity, perhaps of dislike, but not of anger or resentment; we shall not treat him like an enemy of society: the worst we shall think ourselves justified in doing is leaving him to himself, if we do not interfere benevolently by showing interest or concern for him. It is far otherwise if he has infringed the rules necessary for the protection of his fellow-creatures, individually or collectively. The evil consequences of his acts do not then fall on himself, but on others; and society, as the protector of all its members, must retaliate on him; must inflict pain on him for the express purpose of punishment, and must take care that it be sufficiently severe. In the one case, he is an offender at our bar, and we are called on not only to sit in judgment on him, but, in one shape or another, to execute our own sentence: in the other case, it is not our part to inflict any suffering on him, except what may incidentally follow from our using the same liberty in the regulation of our own affairs, which we allow to him in his.

The distinction here pointed out between the part of a person's life which concerns only himself, and that which concerns others, many persons will refuse to admit. How (it may be asked) can any part of the conduct of a member of society be a matter of indifference to the other members? No person is an entirely isolated being; it is impossible for a person to do anything seriously or permanently hurtful to himself, without mischief reaching at least to his near connections, and often far beyond them. If he injures his property, he does harm to those who directly or indirectly derived support from it, and usually diminishes, by a greater or less amount, the general resources of the community. If he deteriorates his bodily or mental faculties, he not only brings evil upon all who depended on him for any portion of their happiness, but disqualifies himself for rendering the services which he owes to his fellow-creatures generally; perhaps becomes a burden on their affection or benevolence; and if such conduct were very frequent, hardly any offence that is committed would detract more from the general sum of good. Finally, if by his vices or follies a person does no direct harm to others, he is nevertheless (it may be said) injurious by his example; and ought to be compelled to control himself, for the sake of those whom the sight or knowledge of his conduct might corrupt or mislead.

And even (it will be added) if the consequences of misconduct could be confined to the vicious or thoughtless individual, ought society to abandon to their own guidance those who are manifestly unfit for it? If protection against themselves is confessedly due to children and persons under age, is not society equally bound to afford it to persons of mature years who are equally incapable of self-government? If gambling, or drunkenness, or incontinence, or idleness, or uncleanliness, are as injurious to happiness, and as great a hindrance to improvement, as many or most of the acts prohibited by law, why (it may be asked) should not law, so far as is consistent with practicability and social convenience, endeavor to repress these also? And as a supplement to the unavoidable imperfections of law, ought not opinion at least to organize a powerful police against these vices, and visit rigidly with social penalties those who are known to practice them? There is no question here (it may be said) about restricting individuality, or impeding the trial of new and original experiments in living. The only things it is sought to prevent are things which have been tried and condemned from the beginning of the world until now; things which experience has shown not to be useful or suitable to any person's individuality. There must be some length of time and amount of experience after which a moral or prudential truth may be regarded as established: and it is merely desired to prevent generation after generation from falling over the same precipice which has been fatal to their predecessors.

I fully admit that the mischief which a person does to himself may seriously affect, both through their sympathies and their interests, those nearly connected with him and, in a minor degree, society at large. When, by conduct of this sort, a person is led to violate a distinct and assignable obligation to any other person or persons, the case is taken out of the self-regarding class, and becomes amenable to moral disapprobation in the proper sense of the term. If, for example, a man, through intemperance or extravagance, becomes unable to pay his debts, or, having undertaken the moral responsibility of a family, becomes from the same cause incapable of supporting or educating them, he is deservedly reprobated, and might be justly punished; but it is for the breach of duty to his family or creditors, not for the extravagance. If the resources which ought to have been devoted to them, had been diverted from them for the most prudent investment, the moral culpability would have been the same. George Barnwell [1] murdered his uncle to get money for his mistress, but if he had done it to set himself up in business, he would equally have been hanged. Again, in the frequent case of a man who causes grief to his family by addiction to bad habits, he deserves reproach for his unkindness or ingratitude; but so he may for cultivating habits not in themselves vicious, if they are painful to those with whom he passes his life, or who from personal ties are dependent on him for their comfort. Whoever fails in the consideration generally due to the interests and feelings of others, not being compelled by some more imperative duty, or justified by allowable self-preference, is a subject of moral disapprobation for that failure, but not for the cause of it, nor for the errors, merely personal to himself, which may have remotely led to it. In like manner, when a person disables himself, by conduct purely self-regarding, from the performance of some definite duty incumbent on him to the public, he is guilty of a social offence. No person ought to be punished simply for being drunk; but a soldier or a policeman should be punished for being drunk on duty. Whenever, in short, there is a definite damage, or a definite risk of damage, either to an individual or to the public, the case is taken out of the province of liberty, and placed in that of morality or law.

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1 George Barnwell was the hero of a play by that name, by George Lillo, produced in 1731.

## Chapter V

### Applications

I have already observed that, owing to the absence of any recognized general principles liberty is often granted where it should be withheld, as well as withheld where it should be granted; and one of the cases in which, in the modern European world, the sentiment of liberty is the strongest, is a case where in my view, it is altogether misplaced. A person should be free to do as he likes in his own concerns; but he ought not to be free to do as he likes in acting for another, under the pretext that the affairs of the other are his own affairs. The State, while it respects the liberty of each in what specially regards himself, is bound to maintain a vigilant control over his exercise of any power which it allows him to possess over others. This obligation is almost entirely disregarded in the case of the family relations, a case, in its direct influence on human happiness, more important than all others taken together. The almost despotic power of husbands over wives needs not be enlarged upon here, because nothing more is needed for the complete removal of the evil than that wives should have the same rights, and should receive the protection of law in the same manner, as all other persons; and because, on this subject, the defenders of established injustice do not avail themselves of the plea of liberty, but stand forth openly as the champions of power. It is in the case of children that misapplied notions of liberty are a real obstacle to the fulfilment by the State of its duties. One would almost think that a man's children were supposed to be literally, and not metaphorically, a part of himself, so jealous is opinion of the smallest interference of law with his absolute and exclusive control over them; more jealous than of almost any interference with his own freedom of action: so much less do the generality of mankind value liberty than power. Consider, for example, the case of education. Is it not almost a self-evident axiom, that the State should require and compel the education, up to a certain standard, of every human being who is born its citizen? Yet who is there that is not afraid to recognize and assert this truth? Hardly any one indeed will deny that it is one of the most sacred duties of the parents (or, as law and usage now stand, the father), after summoning a human being into the world, to give to that being an education fitting him to perform his part well in life

towards others and towards himself. But while this is unanimously declared to be the father's duty, scarcely anybody, in this country, will bear to hear of obliging him to perform it. Instead of his being required to make any exertion or sacrifice for securing education to his child, it is left to his choice to accept it or not when it is provided gratis! It still remains unrecognized, that to bring a child into existence without a fair prospect of being able, not only to provide food for its body, but instruction and training for its mind, is a moral crime, both against the unfortunate offspring and against society; and that if the parent does not fulfil this obligation, the State ought to see it fulfilled, at the charge, as far as possible, of the parent.

Were the duty of enforcing universal education once admitted there would be an end to the difficulties about what the State should teach, and how it should teach, which now convert the subject into a mere battlefield for sects and parties, causing the time and labor which should have been spent in educating to be wasted in quarrelling about education. If the government would make up its mind to require for every child a good education, it might save itself the trouble of providing one. It might leave to parents to obtain the education where and how they pleased, and content itself with helping to pay the school fees of the poorer classes of children, and defraying the entire school expenses of those who have no one else to pay for them. The objections which are urged with reason against State education do not apply to the enforcement of education by the State, but to the State's taking upon itself to direct that education; which is a totally different thing. That the whole or any large part of the education of the people should be in State hands, I go as far as any one in deprecating. All that has been said of the importance of individuality of character, and diversity in opinions and modes of conduct, involves, as of the same unspeakable importance, diversity of education. A general State education is a mere contrivance for molding people to be exactly like one another: and as the mold in which it casts them is that which pleases the predominant power in the government, whether this be a monarch, a priesthood, an aristocracy, or the majority of the existing generation; in proportion as it is efficient and successful, it establishes a despotism over the mind, leading by natural tendency to one over the body. An education established and controlled by the State should only exist, if it exist at all, as one among many competing experiments, carried on for the purpose of example and stimulus, to keep the others up to a certain standard of excellence. Unless, indeed, when society in general is in so backward a state that it could not or would not provide for itself any proper institutions of education unless the government undertook the task: then, indeed, the government may, as the less of two great evils, take upon itself the business of schools and universities, as it may that of joint stock companies, when private enterprise, in a shape fitted for undertaking great works of industry, does not exist in the country. But in general, if the country contains a sufficient number of persons qualified to provide education under government auspices, the same persons would be able and willing to give an equally good education on the voluntary principle, under the assurance of remuneration afforded by a law rendering education compulsory, combined with State aid to those unable to defray the expense.

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I have reserved for the last place a large class of questions respecting the limits of government interference, which, though closely connected with the subject of this Essay, do not, in strictness, belong to it. These are cases in which the reasons against interference do not turn upon the principle of liberty: the question is not about restraining the actions of individuals, but about helping them; it is asked whether the government should do, or cause to be done, something for their benefit, instead of leaving it to be done by themselves, individually or in voluntary combination.

The objections to government interference, when it is not such as to involve infringement of liberty, may be of three kinds.

The first is, when the thing to be done is likely to be better done by individuals than by the government. Speaking generally, there is no one so fit to conduct any business, or to determine how or by whom it shall be conducted, as those who are personally interested in it. This principle condemns the interferences, once so common, of the legislature, or the officers of government, with the ordinary processes of industry. But this part of the subject has been sufficiently enlarged upon by political economists, and is not particularly related to the principles of this Essay.

The second objection is more nearly allied to our subject. In many cases, though indi-

viduals may not do the particular thing so well, on the average, as the officers of government, it is nevertheless desirable that it should be done by them, rather than by the government, as a means to their own mental education — a mode of strengthening their active faculties, exercising their judgment, and giving them a familiar knowledge of the subjects with which they are thus left to deal. This is a principal, though not the sole, recommendation of jury trial (in cases not political); of free and popular local and municipal institutions; of the conduct of industrial and philanthropic enterprises by voluntary associations. These are not questions of liberty, and are connected with that subject only by remote tendencies; but they are questions of development. It belongs to a different occasion from the present to dwell on these things as parts of national education; as being, in truth, the peculiar training of a citizen, the practical part of the political education of a free people, taking them out of the narrow circle of personal and family selfishness, and accustoming them to the comprehension of joint interests, the management of joint concerns — habituating them to act from public or semi-public motives, and guide their conduct by aims which unite instead of isolating them from one another. Without these habits and powers, a free constitution can neither be worked nor preserved; as is exemplified by the too-often transitory nature of political freedom in countries where it does not rest upon a sufficient basis of local liberties. The management of purely local business by the localities, and of the great enterprises of industry by the union of those who voluntarily supply the pecuniary means, is further recommended by all the advantages which have been set forth in this Essay as belonging to individuality of development, and diversity of modes of action. Government operations tend to be everywhere alike. With individuals and voluntary associations, on the contrary, there are varied experiments, and endless diversity of experience. What the State can usefully do is to make itself a central depository, and active circulator and diffuser, of the experience resulting from many trials. Its business is to enable each experimentalist to benefit by the experiments of others; instead of tolerating no experiments but its own.

The third and most cogent reason for restricting the interference of government is the great evil of adding unnecessarily to its power. Every function superadded to those already exercised by the government causes its influence over hopes and fears to be more widely diffused, and converts, more and more, the active and ambitious part of the public into hangers-on of the government or of some party which aims at becoming the government. If the roads, the railways, the banks, the insurance offices, the great joint stock companies, the universities, and the public charities, were all of them branches of the government; if, in addition, the municipal corporations and local boards, with all that now devolves on them, became departments of the central administration; if the employés of all these different enterprises were appointed and paid by the government and looked to the government for every rise in life; not all the freedom of the press and popular constitution of the legislature would make this or any other country free otherwise than in name. And the evil would be greater, the more efficiently and scientifically the administrative machinery was constructed — the more skilful the arrangements for obtaining the best qualified hands and heads with which to work it. In England it has of late been proposed that all the members of the civil service of government should be selected by competitive examination, to obtain for these employments the most intelligent and instructed persons procurable; and much has been said and written for and against this proposal. One of the arguments most insisted on by its opponents is that the occupation of a permanent official servant of the State does not hold out sufficient prospects of emolument and importance to attract the highest talents, which will always be able to find a more inviting career in the professions, or in the service of companies and other public bodies. One would not have been surprised if this argument had been used by the friends of the proposition, as an answer to its principal difficulty. Coming from the opponents it is strange enough. What is urged as an objection is the safety-valve of the proposed system. If indeed all the high talent of the country *could* be drawn into the service of the government, a proposal tending to bring about that result might well inspire uneasiness. If every part of the business of society which required organized concert, or large and comprehensive views, were in the hands of the government, and if government offices were universally filled by the ablest men, all the enlarged culture and practised intelligence in the country,

except the purely speculative, would be concentrated in a numerous bureaucracy, to whom alone the rest of the community would look for all things: the multitude for direction and dictation in all they had to do; the able and aspiring for personal advancement. To be admitted into the ranks of this bureaucracy, and when admitted, to rise therein, would be the sole objects of ambition. Under this *régime*, not only is the outside public ill-qualified, for want of practical experience, to criticize or check the mode of operation of the bureaucracy, but even if the accidents of despotic or the natural working of popular institutions occasionally raise to the summit a ruler or rulers of reforming inclinations, no reform can be effected which is contrary to the interest of the bureaucracy. Such is the melancholy condition of the Russian empire, as shown in the accounts of those who have had sufficient opportunity of observation. The Czar himself is powerless against the bureaucratic body; he can send any one of them to Siberia, but he cannot govern without them, or against their will. On every decree of his they have a tacit veto, by merely refraining from carrying it into effect. In countries of more advanced civilization and of a more insurrectionary spirit, the public, accustomed to expect everything to be done for them by the State, or at least to do nothing for themselves without asking from the State not only leave to do it, but even how it is to be done, naturally hold the State responsible for all evil which befalls them, and when the evil exceeds their amount of patience, they rise against the government, and make what is called a revolution; whereupon somebody else, with or without legitimate authority from the nation, vaults into the seat, issues his orders to the bureaucracy, and everything goes on much as it did before; the bureaucracy being unchanged, and nobody else being capable of taking their place.

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## THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY (1800–1859)

Thomas Babington Macaulay was a happy and precocious child. His mother for whom he had a passionate devotion was of Quaker lineage; his father, an ex-governor of Sierra Leone, was a Presbyterian who devoted most of his life, after the birth of his eldest son, to anti-slavery agitation, and edited in that cause the *Christian Observer*. Before he was nine, the child had made for himself a "Compendium of Universal History," an accounting for dates from the creation to the year 1800, the date of his own birth.

At eighteen, he was sent to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he chiefly distinguished himself for his friendliness and his eloquent and witty conversation. It was at Cambridge under the influence of his friend, Charles Austin, that he made the one notable change of opinion in his whole life. He came to the University a Tory, and became a Whig, a cause of unnecessary alarm at first to his pious father, who could not foresee that his son would maintain moderation as a fetish throughout a life lived in stormy semi-revolutionary times.

Knight's *Quarterly Magazine* from time to time published short historical and classical essays by Macaulay, but his serious entry into the field of English literature was his essay on Milton, published in August, 1825, in the *Edinburgh Review*. The essay excited applause both from the public and from his fellow writers. The following year he was called to the bar, but he wrote more than he practised, and two years later was made a Commissioner in Bankruptcy by Lord Lyndhurst. His father's firm, Babington and Macaulay, having dwindled almost to nothing, the small security of the commissionership was fortunate both for Macaulay and his family, for whom he always felt constant affection and responsibility.

Macaulay entered Parliament in the midst of the battle over the Reform Bill, and his first speech on the subject swept England as his essay on Milton had. Sir Robert Peel said of it, "Portions were as beautiful as anything I have ever heard or read." His parliamentary career was soon halted by the necessity of accepting a place on the Supreme Council of India, at a salary of ten thousand pounds a year, by which he hoped to reinstate the family fortunes which were growing acutely distressful. His five years in India were largely spent as president of a commission to study Indian jurisprudence, in drafting a new Indian penal code. In his leisure he formed a plan for writing a history of England. Upon his return to England in 1838, he entered Parliament again as member for Edinburgh and in the following year became Secretary at War in Lord Melbourne's cabinet. *The Lays of Ancient Rome* were published in 1842, and after a year he collected and published his *Essays*. He began to work on his *History* in earnest, and from that time gradually relinquished interest in active political life. The first two volumes of the *History of England* appeared in December, 1848, and, before the publication of Volumes III and IV, seven years later, had been translated into twelve European tongues. Macaulay died in 1859.

Macaulay was distinctly a man of his own time, which he was never weary of contrasting to its advantage with earlier periods. He shared its admiration of material prosperity, and its trust in political progress. Although he had something of the romantic feeling for the past, inherited from Sir Walter Scott, he was rather of the realistic mind which we associate with the early eighteenth century. The most famous chapter of his *History* is the third, in which he writes in great detail of the social and material life of all classes in England at the time of the Restoration. He wrote many biographical essays for the *Edinburgh Review* on Englishmen (Bacon, Johnson, Hastings, Clive, Temple), and on European subjects (Machiavelli, Ranke's *History of the Popes*). His prose style was clear and epigrammatic. He enjoyed paradox, such as the contrast between Bacon's squalid private character and his splendid public service. He also gave popular form in his verse to stories from classical history, in his *Lays of Ancient Rome* and *Lays of Ancient Greece*. Altogether it is not too much to say that the current ideas of historical events and characters are largely those of Macaulay. Doubtless his absorption in his own time is a reason for the decline in his reputation. Men who cared for spiritual rather than material things, such as Carlyle, Ruskin, and Arnold, reprobated Macaulay's complacency and trust in machinery, mechanical or political. Carlyle passed the severest verdict on him in saying: "He had no vision."

The standard edition of Macaulay's works is edited by his nephew, G. O. Trevelyan, who has also written the chief biography. A brief life by J. Cotter Morrison is included in the English Men of Letters series.

## MILTON

The *Essay on Milton*, published in the *Edinburgh Review* for 1825, marked the beginning of Macaulay's literary career. The essay shows Macaulay's opinions and style fully formed. As a Whig in politics he believed in the supremacy of Parliament over the Crown. As a Liberal he defended freedom of opinion and speech. Born himself into the middle class, he admired the moral virtues of the Puritans. He was thus prepared to sympathize with Milton in his life, and to defend his views. He had already achieved that mastery of antithesis and epigram, best seen in his contrast of Roundhead and Cavalier, and in his arraignment of Charles I; and his reading had furnished him with a multitude of allusions — both of which remained marked qualities of his style.

### 1825

Towards the close of the year 1823, Mr. Lemon, deputy keeper of the state papers, in the course of his researches among the presses of his office met with a large Latin manuscript. With it were found corrected copies of the foreign dispatches written by Milton while he filled the office of secretary, and several papers relating to the Popish Trials [1] and the Rye House Plot.[2] The whole was wrapped up in an envelope, superscribed, "To Mr. Skinner, Merchant." On examination the large manuscript proved to be the long-lost essay on the *Doctrines of Christianity*, which, according to Wood and Toland,[3] Milton finished after the Restoration, and deposited with Cyriac Skinner. Skinner, it is well known, held the same political opinions with his illustrious friend. It is therefore probable, as Mr. Lemon conjectures, that he may have fallen under the suspicions of the government during that persecution of the Whigs which followed the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament; and that, in consequence of a general seizure of his papers, this work may have been brought to the office in which it has been found. But whatever the adventures of the manuscript may have been, no doubt can exist that it is a genuine relic of the great poet.

Mr. Sumner,[1] who was commanded by his Majesty to edit and translate the treatise, has acquitted himself of his task in a manner honorable to his talents and to his character. His version is not, indeed, very easy or elegant; but it is entitled to the praise of clearness and fidelity. His notes abound with interesting quotations, and have the rare merit of really elucidating the text. The preface is evidently the work of a sensible and candid man, firm in his own religious opinions, and tolerant towards those of others.

The book itself will not add much to the fame of Milton. It is, like all his Latin works, well written, though not exactly in the style of the prize essays of Oxford and Cambridge. There is no elaborate imitation of classical antiquity, no scrupulous purity, none of the ceremonial cleanness which characterizes the diction of our academical Pharisees. The author does not attempt to polish and brighten his composition into the Ciceronian gloss and brilliancy. He does not, in short, sacrifice sense and spirit to pedantic refinements. The nature of this subject compelled him to use many words

1 These followed the unfounded charges of Titus Oates that there was a plot to overthrow Protestantism and establish the Roman Catholic Church in 1678.

2 A conspiracy to murder Charles II and his brother James in 1683.

3 Early editors of Milton.

1 A chaplain of George IV, later Bishop of Winchester.

"That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp."[1]

But he writes with as much ease and freedom as if Latin were his mother tongue; and, where he is least happy, his failure seems to arise from the carelessness of a native, not from the ignorance of a foreigner. We may apply to him what Denham with great felicity says of Cowley. He wears the garb, but not the clothes, of the ancients.

Throughout the volume are discernible the traces of a powerful and independent mind, emancipated from the influence of authority, and devoted to the search of truth. Milton professes to form his system from the Bible alone; and his digest of scriptural texts is certainly among the best that have appeared. But he is not always so happy in his inferences as in his citations.

Some of the heterodox doctrines which he avows seem to have excited considerable amazement, particularly his Arianism, and his theory on the subject of polygamy. Yet we can scarcely conceive that any person could have read the *Paradise Lost* without suspecting him of the former; nor do we think that any reader, acquainted with the history of his life, ought to be much startled at the latter. The opinions which he has expressed respecting the nature of the Deity, the eternity of matter, and the observation of the Sabbath, might, we think, have caused more just surprise.

But we will not go into the discussion of these points. The book, were it far more orthodox or far more heretical than it is, would not much edify or corrupt the present generation. The men of our time are not to be converted or perverted by quartos. A few more days and this essay will follow the *Defensio Populi*[2] to the dust and silence of the upper shelf. The name of its author, and the remarkable circumstances attending its publication, will secure to it a certain degree of attention. For a month or two it will occupy a few minutes of chat in every drawing-room, and a few columns in every magazine; and it will then, to borrow the elegant language of the play-bills, be withdrawn to make room for the forthcoming novelties.

We wish, however, to avail ourselves of the interest, transient as it may be, which this work has excited. The dexterous Capuchins never choose to preach on the life and miracles of a saint till they have awakened the devotional feelings of their auditors by exhibiting some relic of him, — a thread of his garment, a lock of his hair, or a drop of his blood. On the same principle, we intend to take advantage of the late interesting discovery, and, while this memorial of a great and good man is still in the hands of all, to say something of his moral and intellectual qualities. Nor, we are convinced, will the severest of our readers blame us if, on an occasion like the present, we turn for a short time from the topics of the day to commemorate, in all love and reverence, the genius and virtues of John Milton, the poet, the statesman, the philosopher, the glory of English literature, the champion and the martyr of English liberty.

It is by his poetry that Milton is best known, and it is of his poetry that we wish first to speak. By the general suffrage of the civilized world, his place has been assigned among the greatest masters of the art. His detractors, however, though outvoted, have not been silenced. There are many critics, and some of great name, who contrive in the same breath to extol the poems and to decry the poet. The works they acknowledge, considered in themselves, may be classed among the noblest productions of the human mind. But they will not allow the author to rank with those great men who, born in the infancy of civilization, supplied by their own powers the want of instruction; and, though destitute of models themselves, bequeathed to posterity models which defy imitation. Milton, it is said, inherited what his predecessors created: he lived in an enlightened age; he received a finished education; and we must, therefore, if we would form a just estimate of his powers, make large deductions in consideration of these advantages.

We venture to say, on the contrary, paradoxical as the remark may appear, that no poet has ever had to struggle with more unfavorable circumstances than Milton. He doubted, as he has himself owned, whether he had not been born "an age too late." For this notion Johnson has thought fit to make him the butt of much clumsy ridicule.[1] The poet, we believe, understood the nature of his art better than the critic. He knew that his poetical genius derived no advantage from the civilization which surrounded him, or from the learning which he had acquired; and he looked back with something like regret to the ruder age of simple words and vivid impressions.

1 From Milton's eleventh sonnet.
2 Milton's *Defence of the English People.*

1 In the *Life of Milton*, by Samuel Johnson.

We think that, as civilization advances, poetry almost necessarily declines. Therefore, though we fervently admire those great works of imagination which have appeared in dark ages, we do not admire them the more because they have appeared in dark ages. On the contrary, we hold that the most wonderful and splendid proof of genius is a great poem produced in a civilized age. We cannot understand why those who believe in that most orthodox article of literary faith, that the earliest poets are generally the best, should wonder at the rule as if it were the exception. Surely, the uniformity of the phenomenon indicates a corresponding uniformity in the cause.

The fact is, that common observers reason from the progress of the experimental sciences to that of the imitative arts. The improvement of the former is gradual and slow. Ages are spent in collecting materials, ages more in separating and combining them. Even when a system has been formed, there is still something to add, to alter, or to reject. Every generation enjoys the use of a vast hoard bequeathed to it by antiquity, and transmits that hoard, augmented by fresh acquisitions, to future ages. In these pursuits, therefore, the first speculators lie under great disadvantages, and, even when they fail, are entitled to praise. Their pupils, with far inferior intellectual powers, speedily surpass them in actual attainments. Every girl who has read Mrs. Marcet's[1] little dialogues on political economy could teach Montague[2] or Walpole many lessons in finance. Any intelligent man may now, by resolutely applying himself for a few years to mathematics, learn more than the great Newton knew after half a century of study and meditation.

But it is not thus with music, with painting, or with sculpture. Still less is it thus with poetry. The progress of refinement rarely supplies these arts with better objects of imitation. It may indeed improve the instruments which are necessary to the mechanical operations of the musician, the sculptor, and the painter. But language, the machine of the poet, is best fitted for his purpose in its rudest state. Nations, like individuals, first perceive and then abstract. They advance from particular images to general terms. Hence the vocabulary of an enlightened society is philosophical; that of a half-civilized people is poetical.

This change in the language of men is partly the cause and partly the effect of a corresponding change in the nature of their intellectual operations — of a change by which science gains and poetry loses. Generalization is necessary to the advancement of knowledge, but particularity is indispensable to the creations of the imagination. In proportion as men know more and think more, they look less at individuals and more at classes. They therefore make better theories and worse poems. They give us vague phrases instead of images, and personified qualities instead of men. They may be better able to analyze human nature than their predecessors. But analysis is not the business of the poet. His office is to portray, not to dissect. He may believe in a moral sense, like Shaftesbury;[1] he may refer all human actions to self-interest, like Helvetius;[2] or he may never think about the matter at all. His creed on such subjects will no more influence his poetry, properly so called, than the notions which a painter may have conceived respecting the lachrymal glands, or the circulation of the blood, will affect the tears of his Niobe or the blushes of his Aurora. If Shakespeare had written a book on the motives of human actions, it is by no means certain that it would have been a good one. It is extremely improbable that it would have contained half so much able reasoning on the subject as is to be found in *The Fable of the Bees*. But could Mandeville[3] have created an Iago? Well as he knew how to resolve characters into their elements, would he have been able to combine those elements in such a manner as to make up a man — a real, living, individual man?

Perhaps no person can be a poet, or can even enjoy poetry, without a certain unsoundness of mind, if anything which gives so much pleasure ought to be called unsoundness. By poetry we mean not all writing in verse, nor even all good writing in verse. Our definition excludes many metrical compositions which, on other grounds, deserve the highest praise. By poetry we mean the art of employing words in such a manner as to produce an illusion on the imagination, the

1 Mrs. Jane Marcet (1769–1858).
2 Charles Montague (1661–1712), afterwards Lord Halifax, Chancellor of the Exchequer under William III.

1 Anthony Ashley Cooper (1671–1713), third Earl of Shaftesbury, one of the most noted forerunners of the Utilitarian school of thought.
2 Claude Helvetius (1715–71), a French philosopher.
3 Bernard Mandeville (1670–1733), whose chief work, *The Fable of the Bees*, is a satire on political society.

art of doing by means of words what the painter does by means of colors. Thus the greatest of poets has described it, in lines universally admired for the vigor and felicity of their diction, and still more valuable on account of the just notion which they convey of the art in which he excelled:

"As imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

These are the fruits of the "fine frenzy" which he ascribes to the poet, — a fine frenzy, doubtless, but still a frenzy. Truth, indeed, is essential to poetry; but it is the truth of madness. The reasonings are just, but the premises are false. After the first suppositions have been made, everything ought to be consistent; but those first suppositions require a degree of credulity which almost amounts to a partial and temporary derangement of the intellect. Hence, of all people, children are the most imaginative. They abandon themselves without reserve to every illusion. Every image which is strongly presented to their mental eye produces on them the effect of reality. No man, whatever his sensibility may be, is ever affected by Hamlet or Lear as a little girl is affected by the story of poor Red Riding Hood. She knows that it is all false, that wolves cannot speak, that there are no wolves in England. Yet in spite of her knowledge she believes; she weeps; she trembles; she dares not go into a dark room lest she should feel the teeth of the monster at her throat. Such is the despotism of the imagination over uncultivated minds.

In a rude state of society, men are children with a greater variety of ideas. It is therefore in such a state of society that we may expect to find the poetical temperament in its highest perfection. In an enlightened age there will be much intelligence, much science, much philosophy, abundance of just classification and subtle analysis, abundance of wit and eloquence, abundance of verses, and even of good ones; but little poetry. Men will judge and compare, but they will not create. They will talk about the old poets, and comment on them, and to a certain degree enjoy them. But they will scarcely be able to conceive the effect which poetry produced on their ruder ancestors, — the agony, the ecstasy, the plenitude of belief. The Greek Rhapsodists,[1] according to Plato, could scarce recite Homer without falling into convulsions. The Mohawk hardly feels the scalping-knife while he shouts his death song. The power which the ancient bards of Wales and Germany exercised over their auditors seems to modern readers almost miraculous. Such feelings are very rare in a civilized community, and most rare among those who participate most in its improvements. They linger longest among the peasantry.

Poetry produces an illusion on the eye of the mind, as a magic lantern produces an illusion on the eye of the body. And, as the magic lantern acts best in a dark room, poetry effects its purpose most completely in a dark age. As the light of knowledge breaks in upon its exhibitions, as the outlines of certainty become more and more definite, and the shades of probability more and more distinct, the hues and lineaments of the phantoms which the poet calls up grow fainter and fainter. We cannot unite the incompatible advantages of reality and deception, the clear discernment of truth, and the exquisite enjoyment of fiction.

He who, in an enlightened and literary society, aspires to be a great poet, must first become a little child. He must take to pieces the whole web of his mind. He must unlearn much of that knowledge which has perhaps constituted hitherto his chief title to superiority. His very talents will be a hindrance to him. His difficulties will be proportioned to his proficiency in the pursuits which are fashionable among his contemporaries; and that proficiency will in general be proportioned to the vigor and activity of his mind. And it is well if, after all his sacrifices and exertions, his works do not resemble a lisping man or a modern ruin. We have seen in our own time great talents, intense labor, and long meditation employed in this struggle against the spirit of the age, and employed, we will not say absolutely in vain, but with dubious success and feeble applause.

If these reasonings be just, no poet has ever triumphed over greater difficulties than Milton. He received a learned education; he was a profound and elegant classical scholar; he had studied all the mysteries of Rabbinical literature; he was intimately acquainted with every language of modern Europe from which either pleasure or information was then to be derived. He was perhaps the only great poet of later times who has been distinguished by the excellence of

[1] professional reciters of verse.

his Latin verse. The genius of Petrarch was scarcely of the first order; and his poems in the ancient language, though much praised by those who have never read them, are wretched compositions. Cowley, with all his admirable wit and ingenuity, had little imagination; nor indeed do we think his classical diction comparable to that of Milton. The authority of Johnson is against us on this point. But Johnson had studied the bad writers of the Middle Ages till he had become utterly insensible to the Augustan elegance, and was as ill qualified to judge between two Latin styles as a habitual drunkard to set up for a wine-taster.

Versification in a dead language is an exotic, a far-fetched, costly, sickly imitation of that which elsewhere may be found in healthful and spontaneous perfection. The soils on which this rarity flourishes are in general as ill suited to the production of vigorous native poetry as the flower-pots of a hot-house to the growth of oaks. That the author of the *Paradise Lost* should have written the *Epistle to Manso* was truly wonderful. Never before were such marked originality and such exquisite mimicry found together. Indeed, in all the Latin poems of Milton, the artificial manner indispensable to such works is admirably preserved, while, at the same time, his genius gives to them a peculiar charm, an air of nobleness and freedom, which distinguishes them from all other writings of the same class. They remind us of the amusements of those angelic warriors who composed the cohort of Gabriel:

> "About him exercised heroic games
> The unarmed youth of heaven; but nigh at hand
> Celestial armory, shields, helms, and spears,
> Hung high, with diamond flaming and with gold." [1]

We cannot look upon the sportive exercises for which the genius of Milton ungirds itself, without catching a glimpse of the gorgeous and terrible panoply which it is accustomed to wear. The strength of his imagination triumphed over every obstacle. So intense and ardent was the fire of his mind that it not only was not suffocated beneath the weight of fuel, but penetrated the whole superincumbent mass with its own heat and radiance.

It is not our intention to attempt anything like a complete examination of the poetry of Milton. The public has long been agreed as to the merit of the most remarkable pa sages, the incomparable harmony of th numbers, and the excellence of that sty which no rival has been able to equal and n parodist to degrade, which displays in the highest perfection the idiomatic powers o the English tongue, and to which ever ancient and every modern language has co tributed something of grace, of energy, or o music. In the vast field of criticism o which we are entering, innumerable reape have already put their sickles. Yet th harvest is so abundant that the negligen search of a straggling gleaner may be re warded with a sheaf.

The most striking characteristic of th poetry of Milton is the extreme remotenes of the associations by means of which it act on the reader. Its effect is produced, nc so much by what it expresses, as by what i suggests; not so much by the ideas which i directly conveys, as by other ideas whic are connected with them. He electrifies th mind through conductors. The most un imaginative man must understand the *Iliad* Homer gives him no choice, and require from him no exertion, but takes the whol upon himself, and sets the images in so clea a light that it is impossible to be blind t them. The works of Milton cannot be com prehended or enjoyed unless the mind of th reader coöperate with that of the writer. H does not paint a finished picture, or play fo a mere passive listener. He sketches, an leaves others to fill up the outline. H strikes the keynote, and expects his heare to make out the melody.

We often hear of the magical influence o poetry. The expression in general means no thing; but, applied to the writings of Milton it is most appropriate. His poetry acts lik an incantation. Its merit lies less in it obvious meaning than in its occult powe There would seem, at first sight, to be n more in his words than in other words. Bu they are words of enchantment. No soone are they pronounced than the past is presen and the distant near. New forms of beauty start at once into existence, and all th burial-places of the memory give up thei dead. Change the structure of the sentence substitute one synonym for another, and th whole effect is destroyed. The spell lose its power; and he who should then hope t conjure with it would find himself as muc mistaken as Cassim in the Arabian tale, when he stood crying, "Open Wheat,"

[1] *Paradise Lost*, IV, 551–54.

[1] Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves.

"Open Barley," to the door which obeyed no sound but "Open Sesame." The miserable failure of Dryden [1] in his attempt to translate into his own diction some parts of the *Paradise Lost* is a remarkable instance of this.

In support of these observations we may remark, that scarcely any passages in the poems of Milton are more generally known, or more frequently repeated, than those which are little more than muster-rolls of names. They are not always more appropriate or more melodious than other names. But they are charmed names. Every one of them is the first link in a long chain of associated ideas. Like the dwelling-place of our infancy revisited in manhood, like the song of our country heard in a strange land, they produce upon us an effect wholly independent of their intrinsic value. One transports us back to a remote period of history. Another places us among the novel scenes and manners of a distant region. A third evokes all the dear classical recollections of childhood — the schoolroom, the dog-eared Virgil, the holiday, and the prize. A fourth brings before us the splendid phantoms of chivalrous romance, the trophied lists, the embroidered housings, the quaint devices, the haunted forests, the enchanted gardens, the achievements of enamored knights, and the smiles of rescued princesses.

In none of the works of Milton is his peculiar manner more happily displayed than in the *Allegro* and the *Penseroso*. It is impossible to conceive that the mechanism of language can be brought to a more exquisite degree of perfection. These poems differ from others as attar of roses differs from ordinary rosewater, the close-packed essence from the thin, diluted mixture. They are, indeed, not so much poems as collections of hints, from each of which the reader is to make out a poem for himself. Every epithet is a text for a stanza.

The *Comus* and the *Samson Agonistes* are works which, though of very different merit, offer some marked points of resemblance. Both are lyric poems in the form of plays. There are, perhaps, no two kinds of composition so essentially dissimilar as the drama and the ode. The business of the dramatist is to keep himself out of sight, and to let nothing appear but his characters. As soon as he attracts notice to his personal feelings, the illusion is broken. The effect is as unpleasant as that which is produced on the stage by the voice of a prompter or the entrance of a scene-shifter. Hence it was that the tragedies of Byron were his least successful performances. They resemble those pasteboard pictures invented by the friend of children, Mr. Newbery, in which a single movable head goes round twenty different bodies, so that the same face looks out upon us, successively, from the uniform of a hussar, the furs of a judge, and the rags of a beggar. In all the characters — patriots and tyrants, haters and lovers — the frown and sneer of Harold were discernible in an instant. But this species of egotism, though fatal to the drama, is the inspiration of the ode. It is the part of the lyric poet to abandon himself without reserve to his own devotions.

Between these hostile elements many great men have endeavored to effect an amalgamation, but never with complete success. The Greek drama, on the model of which the *Samson* was written, sprang from the ode. The dialogue was ingrafted on the chorus, and naturally partook of its character. The genius of the greatest of the Athenian dramatists coöperated with the circumstances under which tragedy made its first appearance. Æschylus was, head and heart, a lyric poet. In his time the Greeks had far more intercourse with the East than in the days of Homer; and they had not yet acquired that immense superiority in war, in science, and in the arts, which, in the following generation, led them to treat the Asiatics with contempt. From the narrative of Herodotus it should seem that they still looked up, with the veneration of disciples, to Egypt and Assyria. At this period, accordingly, it was natural that the literature of Greece should be tinctured with the Oriental style. And that style, we think, is discernible in the works of Pindar and Æschylus. The latter often reminds us of the Hebrew writers. The Book of Job, indeed, in conduct and diction, bears a considerable resemblance to some of his dramas. Considered as plays, his works are absurd; considered as choruses, they are above all praise. If, for instance, we examine the address of Clytemnestra to Agamemnon on his return, or the description of the seven Argive chiefs, by the principles of dramatic writing, we shall instantly condemn them as monstrous. But if we forget the characters, and think only of the poetry, we shall admit that it has never been surpassed in energy and magnifi-

[1] In *The State of Innocence*, an opera by Dryden, based on *Paradise Lost*.

cence. Sophocles made the Greek drama as dramatic as was consistent with its original form. His portraits of men have a sort of similarity; but it is the similarity, not of a painting, but of a bas-relief. It suggests a resemblance, but it does not produce an illusion. Euripides attempted to carry the reform further. But it was a task far beyond his powers, perhaps beyond any powers. Instead of correcting what was bad, he destroyed what was excellent. He substituted crutches for stilts, bad sermons for good odes.

Milton, it is well known, admired Euripides highly — much more highly than, in our opinion, Euripides deserved. Indeed, the caresses which this partiality leads our countryman to bestow on "sad Electra's poet" [1] sometimes remind us of the beautiful Queen of Fairyland kissing the long ears of Bottom. At all events, there can be no doubt that this veneration for the Athenian, whether just or not, was injurious to the *Samson Agonistes*. Had Milton taken Æschylus for his model, he would have given himself up to the lyric inspiration, and poured out profusely all the treasures of his mind, without bestowing a thought on those dramatic proprieties which the nature of the work rendered it impossible to preserve. In the attempt to reconcile things in their own nature inconsistent, he has failed, as every one else must have failed. We cannot identify ourselves with the characters, as in a good play. We cannot identify ourselves with the poet, as in a good ode. The conflicting ingredients, like an acid and an alkali mixed, neutralize each other. We are by no means insensible to the merits of this celebrated piece, to the severe dignity of the style, the graceful and pathetic solemnity of the opening speech, or the wild and barbaric melody which gives so striking an effect to the choral passages. But we think it, we confess, the least successful effort of the genius of Milton.

The *Comus* is framed on the model of the Italian masque, as the *Samson* is framed on the model of the Greek tragedy. It is certainly the noblest performance of the kind which exists in any language. It is as far superior to the *Faithful Shepherdess* [2] as the *Faithful Shepherdess* is to the *Aminta* [3] or the *Aminta* to the *Pastor Fido*.[4] It was well for Milton that he had here no Euripides to mislead him. He understood and loved the literature of modern Italy. But he did not feel for it the same veneration which he entertained for the remains of Athenian and Roman poetry, consecrated by so many lofty and endearing recollections. The faults, moreover, of his Italian predecessors were of a kind to which his mind had a deadly antipathy. He could stoop to a plain style, sometimes even to a bald style; but false brilliancy was his utter aversion. His Muse had no objection to a russet attire; but she turned with disgust from the finery of Guarini, as tawdry and as paltry as the rags of a chimney-sweeper on May Day.[1] Whatever ornaments she wears are of massive gold, not only dazzling to the sight, but capable of standing the severest test of the crucible.

Milton attended in the *Comus* to the distinction which he afterwards neglected in the *Samson*. He made his masque what it ought to be, essentially lyrical, and dramatic only in semblance. He has not attempted a fruitless struggle against a defect inherent in the nature of that species of composition; and he has therefore succeeded, wherever success was not impossible. The speeches must be read as majestic soliloquies; and he who so reads them will be enraptured with their eloquence, their sublimity, and their music. The interruptions of the dialogue, however, impose a constraint upon the writer, and break the illusion of the reader. The finest passages are those which are lyric in form as well as in spirit. "I should much commend," said the excellent Sir Henry Wotton in a letter to Milton, "the tragical part, if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain Dorique [2] delicacy in your songs and odes, whereunto, I must plainly confess to you, I have seen yet nothing parallel in our language." The criticism was just. It is when Milton escapes from the shackles of the dialogue, when he is discharged from the labor of uniting two incongruous styles, when he is at liberty to indulge his choral raptures without reserve, that he rises even above himself. Then, like his own Good Genius bursting from the earthly form and weeds of Thyrsis,[3] he stands forth in celestial freedom and beauty; he seems to cry exultingly,

1 So called in Milton's eighth sonnet.
2 A pastoral drama by John Fletcher (1579–1625).
3 By the Italian poet Tasso (1544–95), more famous for his *Jerusalem Delivered*.
4 By Guarini (1537–1612).

1 The first of May was a holiday for chimney sweeps.
2 The Doric mood, in which the *Pastorals* of Theocritus were written, has come to typify the pastoral genre.
3 Thyrsis, a traditional character name in pastoral drama, used by Milton in *Comus*.

"Now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run," [1]

to skim the earth, to soar above the clouds, to bathe in the elysian dew of the rainbow, and to inhale the balmy smells of nard and cassia, which the musky wings of the zephyr scatter through the cedared alleys of the Hesperides.

There are several of the minor poems of Milton on which we would willingly make a few remarks. Still more willingly would we enter into a detailed examination of that admirable poem, the *Paradise Regained*, which, strangely enough, is scarcely ever mentioned except as an instance of the blindness of the parental affection which men of letters bear towards the offspring of their intellects. That Milton was mistaken in preferring this work, excellent as it is, to the *Paradise Lost*, we readily admit. But we are sure that the superiority of the *Paradise Lost* to the *Paradise Regained* is not more decided than the superiority of the *Paradise Regained* to every poem which has since made its appearance. Our limits, however, prevent us from discussing the point at length. We hasten on to that extraordinary production which the general suffrage of critics has placed in the highest class of human compositions.

The only poem of modern times which can be compared with the *Paradise Lost* is the *Divine Comedy*. The subject of Milton, in some points, resembled that of Dante; but he has treated it in a widely different manner. We cannot, we think, better illustrate our opinion respecting our own great poet, than by contrasting him with the father of Tuscan literature.

The poetry of Milton differs from that of Dante as the hieroglyphics of Egypt differed from the picture-writing of Mexico. The images which Dante employs speak for themselves; they stand simply for what they are. Those of Milton have a signification which is often discernible only to the initiated. Their value depends less on what they directly represent than on what they remotely suggest. However strange, however grotesque, may be the appearance which Dante undertakes to describe, he never shrinks from describing it. He gives us the shape, the color, the sound, the smell, the taste; he counts the numbers; he measures the size. His similes are the illustrations of a traveler. Unlike those of other poets, and especially of Milton, they are introduced in a plain, business-like manner; not for the sake of any beauty in the objects from which they are drawn, not for the sake of any ornament which they may impart to the poem, but simply in order to make the meaning of the writer as clear to the reader as it is to himself. The ruins of the precipice which led from the sixth to the seventh circle of hell were like those of the rock which fell into the Adige on the south of Trent. The cataract of Phlegethon [1] was like that of Aqua Cheta at the monastery of St. Benedict. The place where the heretics were confined in burning tombs resembled the vast cemetery of Arles.

Now let us compare with the exact details of Dante the dim intimations of Milton. We will cite a few examples. The English poet has never thought of taking the measure of Satan. He gives us merely a vague idea of vast bulk. In one passage the fiend lies stretched out, huge in length, floating many a rood, equal in size to the earth-born enemies of Jove, or to the sea monster which the mariner mistakes for an island.[2] When he addresses himself to battle against the guardian angels, he stands like Teneriffe or Atlas; his stature reaches the sky. Contrast with these descriptions the lines in which Dante has described the gigantic spectre of Nimrod: "His face seemed to me as long and as broad as the ball of St. Peter's at Rome, and his other limbs were in proportion; so that the bank, which concealed him from the waist downwards, nevertheless showed so much of him that three tall Germans would in vain have attempted to reach to his hair." We are sensible that we do no justice to the admirable style of the Florentine poet. But Mr. Cary's translation is not at hand; and our version, however rude, is sufficient to illustrate our meaning.

Once more, compare the lazar house in the eleventh book of the *Paradise Lost* [3] with the last ward of Malebolge [4] in Dante. Milton avoids the loathsome details, and takes refuge in indistinct but solemn and tremendous imagery: Despair hurrying from couch to couch to mock the wretches with his attendance; Death shaking his dart over them, but, in spite of supplications, delaying to strike. What says Dante? "There was

1 *Comus*, 1012, 1013.

1 Phlegethon, the burning river, one of the streams in the Greek Hades and in Dante's *Inferno*. Aqua Cheta is a river of Romagna.

2 *Paradise Lost*, I, 194; IV, 985.

3 Book XI, 477 *seq.*

4 Malebolge; the eighth circle of Hell. The word means, approximately, "horrible place."

such a moan there as there would be if all the sick who, between July and September, are in the hospitals of Valdichiana, and of the Tuscan swamps, and of Sardinia, were in one pit together; and such a stench was issuing forth as is wont to issue from decayed limbs." [1]

We will not take upon ourselves the invidious office of settling precedency between two such writers. Each in his own department is incomparable; and each, we may remark, has wisely, or fortunately, taken a subject adapted to exhibit his peculiar talent to the greatest advantage. The *Divine Comedy* is a personal narrative. Dante is the eye-witness and ear-witness of that which he relates. He is the very man who has heard the tormented spirits crying out for the second death; [2] who has read the dusky characters [3] on the portal within which there is no hope; who has hidden his face from the terrors of the Gorgon; [4] who has fled from the hooks and the seething pitch of Barbariccia and Draghignazzo.[5] His own hands have grasped the shaggy sides of Lucifer.[6] His own feet have climbed the mountain of expiation. His own brow has been marked by the purifying angel.[7] The reader would throw aside such a tale in incredulous disgust unless it were told with the strongest air of veracity; with a sobriety even in its horrors; with the greatest precision and multiplicity in its details. The narrative of Milton in this respect differs from that of Dante, as the adventures of Amadis [8] differ from those of Gulliver. The author of *Amadis* would have made his book ridiculous if he had introduced those minute particulars which give such a charm to the work of Swift — the nautical observations, the affected delicacy about names, the official documents transcribed at full length, and all the unmeaning gossip and scandal of the court, springing out of nothing, and tending to nothing. We are not shocked at being told that a man who lived, nobody knows when, saw many very strange sights, and we can easily abandon ourselves to the illusion of the romance. But when Lemuel Gulliver, surgeon, resident at Rotherhithe, tells us of pygmies and giants, flying islands, and philosophizing horses, nothing but such circumstantial touches could produce for a single moment a deception on the imagination.

Of all the poets who have introduced into their works the agency of supernatural beings, Milton has succeeded best. Here Dante decidedly yields to him; and, as this is a point on which many rash and ill considered judgments have been pronounced, we feel inclined to dwell on it a little longer. The most fatal error which a poet can possibly commit in the management of his machinery is that of attempting to philosophize too much. Milton has been often censured for ascribing to spirits many functions of which spirits must be incapable. But these objections, though sanctioned by eminent names, originate, we venture to say, in profound ignorance of the art of poetry.

What is spirit? What are our own minds, the portion of spirit with which we are best acquainted? We observe certain phenomena. We cannot explain them into materia causes. We therefore infer that there exists something which is not material. But of this something we have no idea. We can define it only by negatives. We can reason about it only by symbols. We use the word but we have no image of the thing; and the business of poetry is with images, and not with words. The poet uses words indeed, but they are merely the instruments of his art, not its objects. They are the material which he is to dispose in such a manner as to present a picture to the mental eye. And if they are not so disposed, they are no more entitled to be called poetry than a bale of canvas and a box of colors to be called a painting.

Logicians may reason about abstractions, but the great mass of men must have images. The strong tendency of the multitude in all ages and nations to idolatry can be explained on no other principle. The first inhabitant of Greece, there is reason to believe, worshiped one invisible Deity. But the necessity of having something more definite to adore produced, in a few centuries, the innumerable crowd of gods and goddesses. In like manner the ancient Persians thought it impious to exhibit the Creator under a human form. Yet even these transferred to the sun the worship which, in speculation, they considered due only to the Supreme Mind. The history of the Jews is the record of a continued struggle between pure Theism supported by the most terrible sanctions

1 *Inferno*, XXIX, 46–51.
2 i.e., for the death of the soul. *Inferno*, I, 117.
3 "All hope abandon, ye who enter here." *Inferno*, III, 9.
4 *Inferno*, IX, 56.
5 The names of fiends. *Inferno*, XXI, 120, 121.
6 *Inferno*, final canto. 7 *Purgatorio*, IX, 112.
8 The hero of *Amadis of Gaul*, an early Spanish romance of chivalry.

and the strangely fascinating desire of having some visible and tangible object of adoration. Perhaps none of the secondary causes which Gibbon has assigned for the rapidity with which Christianity spread over the world, while Judaism scarcely ever acquired a proselyte, operated more powerfully than this feeling. God, the uncreated, the incomprehensible, the invisible, attracted few worshipers. A philosopher might admire so noble a conception, but the crowd turned away in disgust from words which presented no image to their minds. It was before Deity embodied in a human form, walking among men, partaking of their infirmities, leaning on their bosoms, weeping over their graves, slumbering in the manger, bleeding on the cross, that the prejudices of the Synagogue, and the doubts of the Academy, and the pride of the Portico, and the fasces of the Lictor,[1] and the swords of thirty legions, were trumbled in the dust. Soon after Christianity had achieved its triumph, the principle which had assisted it began to corrupt it. It became a new paganism. Patron saints assumed the offices of household gods. St. George[2] took the place of Mars. St. Elmo[3] consoled the mariner for the loss of Castor and Pollux. The Virgin Mother and Cecilia succeeded to Venus and the Muses. The fascination of sex and loveliness was again joined to that of celestial dignity, and the homage of chivalry was blended with that of religion. Reformers have often made a stand against these feelings, but never with more than apparent and partial success. The men who demolished the images in cathedrals have not always been able to demolish those which were enshrined in their minds. It would not be difficult to show that in politics the same rule holds good. Doctrines, we are afraid, must generally be embodied before they can excite a strong public feeling. The multitude is more easily interested for the most unmeaning badge, or the most insignificant name, than for the most important principle.

From these considerations we infer that no poet, who should affect that metaphysical accuracy for the want of which Milton has been blamed, would escape a disgraceful failure. Still, however, there was another extreme which, though far less dangerous, was also to be avoided. The imaginations of men are in a great measure under the control of their opinions. The most exquisite art of poetical coloring can produce no illusion when it is employed to represent that which is at once perceived to be incongruous and absurd. Milton wrote in an age of philosophers and theologians. It was necessary, therefore, for him to abstain from giving such a shock to their understandings as might break the charm which it was his object to throw over their imaginations. This is the real explanation of the indistinctness and inconsistency with which he has often been reproached. Dr. Johnson acknowledges that it was absolutely necessary that the spirits should be clothed with material forms. "But," says he, "the poet should have secured the consistency of his system by keeping immateriality out of sight, and seducing the reader to drop it from his thoughts." This is easily said; but what if Milton could not seduce his readers to drop immateriality from their thoughts? What if the contrary opinion had taken so full a possession of the minds of men as to leave no room even for the half belief which poetry requires? Such we suspect to have been the case. It was impossible for the poet to adopt altogether the material or the immaterial system. He therefore took his stand on the debatable ground. He left the whole in ambiguity. He has doubtless, by so doing, laid himself open to the charge of inconsistency. But, though philosophically in the wrong, we cannot but believe that he was poetically in the right. This task, which almost any other writer would have found impracticable, was easy to him. The peculiar art which he possessed of communicating his meaning circuitously through a long succession of associated ideas, and of intimating more than he expressed, enabled him to disguise those incongruities which he could not avoid.

Poetry which relates to the beings of another world ought to be at once mysterious and picturesque. That of Milton is so. That of Dante is picturesque, indeed, beyond any that ever was written. Its effect approaches to that produced by the pencil or the chisel. But it is picturesque to the exclusion of all mystery. This is a fault on the right side, a fault inseparable from the plan of Dante's poem, which, as we have already observed, rendered the utmost accuracy of description necessary. Still it is a fault. The supernatural agents excite an interest, but it is not the interest which is

1 The attendant of Roman executives, who carried as his badge of authority the *fasces*, an axe in a bundle of rods.

2 St. George of Cappadocia, the patron saint of England.

3 St. Elmo replaced Castor and Pollux and became the patron of Italian sailors.

proper to supernatural agents. We feel that we could talk to the ghosts and demons without any emotion of unearthly awe. We could, like Don Juan, ask them to supper, and eat heartily in their company. Dante's angels are good men with wings. His devils are spiteful, ugly executioners. His dead men are merely living men in strange situations. The scene which passes between the poet and Farinata is justly celebrated. Still, Farinata[1] in the burning tomb is exactly what Farinata would have been at an *auto da fé*. Nothing can be more touching than the first interview of Dante and Beatrice. Yet what is it but a lovely woman chiding, with sweet, austere composure, the lover for whose affection she is grateful, but whose vices she reprobates? The feelings which give the passage its charm would suit the streets of Florence as well as the summit of the Mount of Purgatory.

The spirits of Milton are unlike those of almost all other writers. His fiends, in particular, are wonderful creations. They are not metaphysical abstractions. They are not wicked men. They are not ugly beasts. They have no horns, no tails, none of the fee-faw-fum of Tasso and Klopstock. They have just enough in common with human nature to be intelligible to human beings. Their characters are, like their forms, marked by a certain dim resemblance to those of men, but exaggerated to gigantic dimensions, and veiled in mysterious gloom.

Perhaps the gods and dæmons of Æschylus may best bear a comparison with the angels and devils of Milton. The style of the Athenian had, as we have remarked, something of the Oriental character; and the same peculiarity may be traced in his mythology. It has nothing of the amenity and elegance which we generally find in the superstitions of Greece. All is rugged, barbaric, and colossal. The legends of Æschylus seem to harmonize less with the fragrant groves and graceful porticos, in which his countrymen paid their vows to the God of Light and Goddess of Desire, than with those huge and grotesque labyrinths of eternal granite in which Egypt enshrined her mystic Osiris, or in which Hindostan still bows down to her seven-headed idols. His favorite gods are those of the elder generation, the sons of heaven and earth, compared with whom Jupiter himself was a stripling and an upstart — the gigantic Titans and the inexorable Furies. Foremost among his creations of this class stands Prometheus, half fiend, half redeemer, the friend of man, the sullen and implacable enemy of Heaven. Prometheus bears undoubtedly a considerable resemblance to the Satan of Milton. In both we find the same impatience of control, the same ferocity, the same uncouerable pride. In both characters, also, are mingled, though in very different proportions, some kind and generous feeling. Prometheus, however, is hardly superhuman enough. He talks too much of his chains and his uneasy posture; he is rather too much depressed and agitated. His resolution seems to depend on the knowledge which he possesses that he holds the fate of his torturer in his hands, and that the hour of his release will surely come. But Satan is a creature of another sphere. The might of his intellectual nature is victorious over the extremity of pain. Amidst agonies which cannot be conceived without horror, he deliberates, resolves, and even exults. Against the sword of Michael, against the thunder of Jehovah, against the flaming lake and the marl burning with solid fire, against the prospect of an eternity of unintermitted misery, his spirit bears up unbroken, resting on its own innate energies, requiring no support from anything external, nor even from hope itself.

To return for a moment to the parallel which we have been attempting to draw between Milton and Dante, we would add that the poetry of these great men has in a considerable degree taken its character from their moral qualities. They are not egotists. They rarely obtrude their idiosyncrasies on their readers. They have nothing in common with those modern beggars for fame who extort a pittance from the compassion of the inexperienced by exposing the nakedness and sores of their minds. Yet it would be difficult to name two writers whose works have been more completely, though unconsciously, designedly, colored by their personal feelings.

The character of Milton was peculiarly distinguished by loftiness of spirit, that of Dante by intensity of feeling. In every line of the *Divine Comedy* we discern the asperity which is produced by pride struggling with misery. There is perhaps no work in the world so deeply and uniformly sorrowful. The melancholy of Dante was no fantastic caprice. It was not, as far as at the distance of time can be judged, the effect of external circumstances. It was from within

1 *Inferno*, x, 32.

Neither love nor glory, neither the conflicts of earth nor the hope of heaven, could dispel it. It turned every consolation and every pleasure into its own nature. It resembled that noxious Sardinian soil of which the intense bitterness is said to have been perceptible even in its honey. His mind was, in the noble language of the Hebrew poet, "a land of darkness, as darkness itself, and where the light was as darkness."[1] The gloom of his character discolors all the passions of men and all the face of nature, and tinges with its own livid hue the flowers of Paradise and the glories of the eternal throne. All the portraits of him are singularly characteristic. No person can look on the features, noble even to ruggedness, the dark furrows of the cheek, the haggard and woeful stare of the eye, the sullen and contemptuous curve of the lip, and doubt that they belong to a man too proud and too sensitive to be happy.

Milton was, like Dante, a statesman and a lover; and, like Dante, he had been unfortunate in ambition and in love. He had survived his health and his sight, the comforts of his home, and the prosperity of his party. Of the great men by whom he had been distinguished at his entrance into life, some had been taken away from the evil to come; some had carried into foreign climates their unconquerable hatred of oppression; some were pining in dungeons; and some had poured forth their blood on scaffolds. Venal and licentious scribblers, with just sufficient talent to clothe the thoughts of a pandar in the style of a bellman, were now the favorite writers of the sovereign and of the public. It was a loathsome herd, which could be compared to nothing so fitly as to the rabble of *Comus* — grotesque monsters, half bestial, half human, dropping with wine, bloated with gluttony, and reeling in obscene dances. Amidst these that fair Muse was placed, like the chaste lady of the masque, lofty, spotless, and serene, to be chattered at, and pointed at, and grinned at, by the whole rout of satyrs and goblins. If ever despondency and asperity could be excused in any man, they might have been excused in Milton. But the strength of his mind overcame every calamity. Neither blindness, nor gout, nor age, nor penury, nor domestic afflictions, nor political disappointments, nor abuse, nor proscription, nor neglect, had power to disturb his sedate and majestic patience. His spirits do not seem to have been high, but they were singularly equable. His temper was serious, perhaps stern; but it was a temper which no sufferings could render sullen or fretful. Such as it was when, on the eve of great events, he returned from his travels, in the prime of health and manly beauty, loaded with literary distinctions and glowing with patriotic hopes — such it continued to be when, after having experienced every calamity which is incident to our nature, old, poor, sightless, and disgraced, he retired to his hovel to die.

Hence it was that, though he wrote the *Paradise Lost* at a time of life when images of beauty and tenderness are in general beginning to fade, even from those minds in which they have not been effaced by anxiety and disappointment, he adorned it with all that is most lovely and delightful in the physical and in the moral world. Neither Theocritus nor Ariosto had a finer or a more healthful sense of the pleasantness of external objects, or loved better to luxuriate amidst sunbeams and flowers, the songs of nightingales, the juice of summer fruits, and the coolness of shady fountains. His conception of love unites all the voluptuousness of the Oriental harem, and all the gallantry of the chivalric tournament, with all the pure and quiet affection of an English fireside. His poetry reminds us of the miracles of Alpine scenery. Nooks and dells beautiful as fairyland are embosomed in its most rugged and gigantic elevations. The roses and myrtles bloom unchilled on the verge of the avalanche.

Traces, indeed, of the peculiar character of Milton may be found in all his works, but it is most strongly displayed in the Sonnets. Those remarkable poems have been undervalued by critics who have not understood their nature. They have no epigrammatic point. There is none of the ingenuity of Filicaja[1] in the thought, none of the hard and brilliant enamel of Petrarch in the style. They are simple but majestic records of the feelings of the poet, as little tricked out for the public eye as his diary would have been. A victory, an expected attack upon the city, a momentary fit of depression or exultation, a jest thrown out against one of his books, a dream which for a short time restored to him that beautiful face over which the grave had closed forever, led him to musings which, without effort, shaped themselves into verse. The unity of sentiment and severity of style which characterize these little pieces remind us of the Greek Anthol-

[1] Job, x, 22.

[1] Vincenzo da Filicaia (1642–1707), Florentine poet and scholar.

ogy,[1] or perhaps still more of the Collects of the English Liturgy. The noble poem on the Massacres of Piedmont is strictly a collect in verse.

The Sonnets are more or less striking, according as the occasions which gave birth to them are more or less interesting. But they are, almost without exception, dignified by a sobriety and greatness of mind to which we know not where to look for a parallel. It would, indeed, be scarcely safe to draw any decided inferences as to the character of a writer from passages directly egotistical. But the qualities which we have ascribed to Milton, though perhaps most strongly marked in those parts of his works which treat of his personal feelings, are distinguishable in every page, and impart to all his writings, prose and poetry, English, Latin, and Italian, a strong family likeness.

His public conduct was such as was to be expected from a man of a spirit so high and of an intellect so powerful. He lived at one of the most memorable eras in the history of mankind — at the very crisis of the great conflict between Oromasdes and Arimanes,[2] liberty and despotism, reason and prejudice. That great battle was fought for no single generation, for no single land. The destinies of the human race were staked on the same cast with the freedom of the English people. Then were first proclaimed those mighty principles which have since worked their way into the depths of the American forests, which have roused Greece from the slavery and degradation of two thousand years, and which, from one end of Europe to the other, have kindled an unquenchable fire in the hearts of the oppressed, and loosed the knees of the oppressors with an unwonted fear.

Of those principles, then struggling for their infant existence, Milton was the most devoted and eloquent literary champion. We need not say how much we admire his public conduct. But we cannot disguise from ourselves that a large portion of his countrymen still think it unjustifiable. The Civil War, indeed, has been more discussed, and is less understood, than any event in English history. The friends of liberty labored under the disadvantage of which the lion in the fable complained so bitterly.[3] Though they were the conquerors, their enemies were the painters. As a body, the Roundheads had done their utmost to decry and ruin literature; and literature was even with them, as, in the long run, it always is with its enemies. The best book on their side of the question is the charming narrative of Mrs. Hutchinson.[1] May's[2] *History of the Parliament* is good, but it breaks off at the most interesting crisis of the struggle. The performance of Ludlow[3] is foolish and violent; and most of the later writers who have espoused the same cause — Oldmixon,[4] for instance, and Catherine Macaulay[5] — have, to say the least, been more distinguished by zeal than either by candor or by skill. On the other side are the most authoritative and the most popular historical works in our language — that of Clarendon and that of Hume. The former is not only ably written and full of valuable information, but has also an air of dignity and sincerity which makes even the prejudices and errors with which it abounds respectable. Hume, from whose fascinating narrative the great mass of the reading public are still contented to take their opinions, hated religion so much that he hated liberty for having been allied with religion, and has pleaded the cause of tyranny with the dexterity of an advocate, while affecting the impartiality of a judge.

The public conduct of Milton must be approved or condemned, according as the resistance of the people to Charles I shall appear to be justifiable or criminal. We shall therefore make no apology for dedicating a few pages to the discussion of that interesting and most important question. We shall not argue it on general grounds. We shall not recur to those primary principles from which the claim of any government to the obedience of its subjects is to be deduced. We are entitled to that vantage-ground, but we will relinquish it. We are, on this point, so confident of superiority that we are not unwilling to imitate the ostentatious generosity of those ancient knights who vowed to joust without helmet or shield against all enemies, and to give their antagonists the advantage of sun and wind. We will take the naked constitutional question. We confidently affirm that every reason which can be urged in favor of the Revolution of 1688 may be urged with at least equal force in favor of what is called the Great Rebellion.

1 The collection of Greek lyric verse from 400 B.C. to 500 A.D.

2 Persian deities, Oromasdes representing the principle of good, Arimanes, the principle of evil.

3 *Spectator* No. 11.

1 Mrs. Lucy Hutchinson (1620–59), whose life of her husband was published in 1806.

2 Thomas May (1594–1650).

3 General Edmund Ludlow (1620–93), whose *Memoirs* are referred to.

4 John Oldmixon (1673–1742).

5 Mrs. Catherine Macaulay (1733–91).

In one respect only, we think, can the warmest admirers of Charles venture to say that he was a better sovereign than his son. He was not, in name and profession, a Papist; we say in name and profession, because both Charles himself and his creature Laud, while they abjured the innocent badges of Popery, retained all its worst vices — a complete subjection of reason to authority, a weak preference of form to substance, a childish passion for mummeries, an idolatrous veneration for the priestly character, and, above all, a merciless intolerance. This, however, we waive. We will concede that Charles was a good Protestant, but we say that his Protestantism does not make the slightest distinction between his case and that of James.

The principles of the Revolution have often been grossly misrepresented, and never more than in the course of the present year. There is a certain class of men who, while they profess to hold in reverence the great names and great actions of former times, never look at them for any other purpose than in order to find in them some excuse for existing abuses. In every venerable precedent they pass by what is essential and take only what is accidental; they keep out of sight what is beneficial, and hold up to public imitation all that is defective. If, in any part of any great example, there be anything unsound, these flesh flies detect it with an unerring instinct, and dart upon it with a ravenous delight. If some good end has been attained in spite of them, they feel, with their prototype, that their

> "Labor must be to pervert that end,
> And out of good still to find means of evil." [1]

To the blessings which England has derived from the Revolution these people are utterly insensible. The expulsion of a tyrant, the solemn recognition of popular rights — liberty, security, toleration — all go for nothing with them. One sect [2] there was which, from unfortunate temporary causes, it was thought necessary to keep under close restraint. One part of the empire [3] there was so unhappily circumstanced that at that time its misery was necessary to our happiness, and its slavery to our freedom. These are the parts of the Revolution which the politicians of whom we speak love to contemplate, and which seem to them, not indeed to vindicate, but in some degree to palliate, the good which it has produced.

1 *Paradise Lost*, I, 164, 165.
2 Roman Catholics. 3 Ireland.

Talk to them of Naples, of Spain, or of South America: they stand forth zealots for the doctrine of Divine Right, which has now come back to us, like a thief from transportation, under the *alias* of Legitimacy. But mention the miseries of Ireland. Then William is a hero. Then Somers and Shrewsbury [1] are great men. Then the Revolution is a glorious era! The very same persons who, in this country, never omit an opportunity of reviving every wretched Jacobite slander respecting the Whigs of that period, have no sooner crossed St. George's Channel than they begin to fill their bumpers to the glorious and immortal memory.[2] They may truly boast that they look not at men, but at measures. So that evil be done, they care not who does it; the arbitrary Charles or the liberal William, Ferdinand the Catholic or Frederick the Protestant.[3] On such occasions their deadliest opponents may reckon upon their candid construction. The bold assertions of these people have of late impressed a large portion of the public with an opinion that James II was expelled simply because he was a Catholic, and that the Revolution was essentially a Protestant revolution.

But this certainly was not the case, nor can any person who has acquired more knowledge of the history of those times than is to be found in Goldsmith's *Abridgment* believe that, if James had held his own religious opinions without wishing to make proselytes, or if, wishing even to make proselytes, he had contented himself with exerting only his constitutional influence for that purpose, the Prince of Orange would ever have been invited over. Our ancestors, we suppose, knew their own meaning; and, if we may believe them, their hostility was primarily, not to Popery, but to tyranny. They did not drive out a tyrant because he was a Catholic, but they excluded Catholics from the Crown because they thought them likely to be tyrants. The ground on which they, in their famous resolution,[4] declared the throne vacant, was this: "that James had broken the fundamental laws of the kingdom." Every man, therefore, who approves of the Revolution of 1688 must hold that the breach of fundamental laws on the part of the sovereign justifies resistance. The question,

1 John, Lord Somers (1652–1716), Charles Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury (1660–1718), respectively Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State under William III.
2 The Whig toast to the memory of William III.
3 Frederick the Great, King of Prussia; Ferdinand V., King of Spain.
4 The Declaration of Right, 1689.

then, is this: Had Charles I broken the fundamental laws of England?

No person can answer in the negative unless he refuses credit, not merely to all the accusations brought against Charles by his opponents, but to the narratives of the warmest Royalists, and to the confessions of the king himself. If there be any truth in any historian of any party who has related the events of that reign, the conduct of Charles, from his accession to the meeting of the Long Parliament had been a continued course of oppression and treachery. Let those who applaud the Revolution and condemn the Rebellion mention one act of James II to which a parallel is not to be found in the history of his father. Let them lay their fingers on a single article in the Declaration of Right, presented by the two houses to William and Mary, which Charles is not acknowledged to have violated. He had, according to the testimony of his own friends, usurped the functions of the legislature, raised taxes without the consent of Parliament, and quartered troops on the people in the most illegal and vexatious manner. Not a single session of Parliament had passed without some unconstitutional attack on the freedom of debate. The right of petition was grossly violated. Arbitrary judgments, exorbitant fines, and unwarranted imprisonments were grievances of daily occurrence. If these things do not justify resistance, the Revolution was treason; if they do, the great Rebellion was laudable.

But, it is said, why not adopt milder measures? Why, after the king had consented to so many reforms and renounced so many oppressive prerogatives, did the Parliament continue to rise in their demands at the risk of provoking a civil war? The ship money [1] had been given up, the Star Chamber [2] had been abolished, provision had been made for the frequent convocation and secure deliberation of Parliaments. Why not pursue an end confessedly good by peaceable and regular means? We recur again to the analogy of the Revolution. Why was James driven from the throne? Why was he not retained upon conditions? He, too, had offered to call a free Parliament, and to submit to its decision all the matters in dispute. Yet we are in the habit of praising our forefathers, who preferred a revolution, a disputed succession, a dynasty of strangers, twenty years of foreign and intestine war, a standing army, and a national debt, to the rule, however restricted, of a tried and proved tyrant. The Long Parliament acted on the same principle, and is entitled to the same praise. They could not trust the king. He had, no doubt, passed salutary laws; but what assurance was there that he would not break them? He had renounced oppressive prerogatives, but where was the security that he would not resume them? The nation had to deal with a man whom no tie could bind; a man who made and broke promises with equal facility; a man whose honor had been a hundred times pawned and never redeemed.

Here, indeed, the Long Parliament stands on still stronger ground than the Convention of 1688. No action of James can be compared to the conduct of Charles with respect to the Petition of Right.[1] The Lords and Commons present him with a bill in which the constitutional limits of his power are marked out. He hesitates; he evades; at last he bargains to give his assent for five subsidies. The bill receives his solemn assent; the subsidies are voted; but no sooner is the tyrant relieved than he returns at once to all the arbitrary measures which he had bound himself to abandon, and violates all the clauses of the very act which he had been paid to pass.

For more than ten years the people had seen the rights which were theirs by a double claim — by immemorial inheritance and by recent purchase — infringed by the perfidious king who had recognized them. At length circumstances compelled Charles to summon another Parliament. Another chance was given to our fathers; were they to throw it away as they had thrown away the former? Were they again to be cozened by *le Roi le veut?* [2] Were they again to advance their money on pledges which had been forfeited over and over again? Were they to lay a second Petition of Right at the foot of the throne, to grant another lavish aid in exchange for another unmeaning ceremony, and then to take their departure, till, after ten years more of fraud and oppression, their prince should again require a supply, and again repay it with a perjury? They were compelled to choose whether they would trust a tyrant or conquer him. We think that they chose wisely and nobly.

1 A method of taxation employed by Charles I.

2 The Court of the Star Chamber was an unconstitutional device of Charles I.

1 The Petition of Right, presented to Charles I in 1628, declared against taxation without the consent of Parliament, unlawful imprisonment, quartering of troops, etc.

2 "The King so wills," the formula of royal consent to a Parliamentary Act.

The advocates of Charles, like the advocates of other malefactors against whom overwhelming evidence is produced, generally decline all controversy about the facts, and content themselves with calling testimony to character. He had so many private virtues! And had James II no private virtues? Was Oliver Cromwell, his bitterest enemies themselves being judges, destitute of private virtues? And what, after all, are the virtues ascribed to Charles? A religious zeal, not more sincere than that of his son, and fully as weak and narrow-minded, and a few of the ordinary household decencies which half the tombstones in England claim for those who lie beneath them. A good father! A good husband! Ample apologies indeed for fifteen years of persecution, tyranny, and falsehood!

We charge him with having broken his coronation oath, and we are told that he kept his marriage vow! We accuse him of having given up his people to the merciless inflictions of the most hot-headed and hard-hearted of prelates,[1] and the defense is that he took his little son on his knee and kissed him! We censure him for having violated the articles of the Petition of Right, after having, for good and valuable consideration, promised to observe them; and we are informed that he was accustomed to hear prayers at six o'clock in the morning! It is to such considerations as these, together with his Vandyke dress, his handsome face, and his peaked beard, that he owes, we verily believe, most of his popularity with the present generation.

For ourselves, we own that we do not understand the common phrase, "a good man, but a bad king." We can as easily conceive a good man and an unnatural father, or a good man and a treacherous friend. We cannot, in estimating the character of an individual, leave out of our consideration his conduct in the most important of all human relations; and if in that relation we find him to have been selfish, cruel, and deceitful, we shall take the liberty to call him a bad man, in spite of all his temperance at table and all his regularity at chapel.

We cannot refrain from adding a few words respecting a topic on which the defenders of Charles are fond of dwelling. If, they say, he governed his people ill, he at least governed them after the example of his predecessors. If he violated their privileges, it was because those privileges had not been accurately defined. No act of oppression has ever been imputed to him which has not a parallel in the annals of the Tudors. This point Hume has labored, with an art which is as discreditable in a historical work as it would be admirable in a forensic address. The answer is short, clear, and decisive. Charles had assented to the Petition of Right. He had renounced the oppressive powers said to have been exercised by his predecessors, and he had renounced them for money. He was not entitled to set up his antiquated claims against his own recent release.

These arguments are so obvious that it may seem superfluous to dwell upon them, but those who have observed how much the events of that time are misrepresented and misunderstood will not blame us for stating the case simply. It is a case of which the simplest statement is the strongest.

The enemies of the Parliament, indeed, rarely choose to take issue on the great points of the question. They content themselves with exposing some of the crimes and follies to which public commotions necessarily give birth. They bewail the unmerited fate of Strafford. They execrate the lawless violence of the army. They laugh at the scriptural names of the preachers. Major-generals fleecing their districts; soldiers reveling on the spoils of a ruined peasantry; upstarts, enriched by the public plunder, taking possession of the hospitable firesides and hereditary trees of the old gentry; boys smashing the beautiful windows of cathedrals; Quakers riding naked through the market-place; Fifth-monarchy men[1] shouting for King Jesus; agitators lecturing from the tops of tubs on the fate of Agag — all these, they tell us, were the offspring of the Great Rebellion.

Be it so. We are not careful to answer in this matter. These charges, were they infinitely more important, would not alter our opinion of an event which alone has made us to differ from the slaves who crouch beneath despotic sceptres. Many evils, no doubt, were produced by the Civil War. They were the price of our liberty. Has the acquisition been worth the sacrifice? It is the nature of the devil of tyranny to tear and rend the body which he leaves. Are the miseries of continued possession less horrible than the struggles of the tremendous exorcism?

If it were possible that a people brought up

1 Archbishop Laud (1573–1645).

1 Believers in establishing by force a Kingdom of Christ, a fifth monarchy in succession to those of Assyria, Persia, Greece, Rome.

under an intolerant and arbitrary system could subvert that system without acts of cruelty and folly, half the objections to despotic power would be removed. We should, in that case, be compelled to acknowledge that it at least produces no pernicious effects on the intellectual and moral character of a nation. We deplore the outrages which accompany revolutions. But the more violent the outrages, the more assured we feel that a revolution was necessary. The violence of those outrages will always be proportioned to the ferocity and ignorance of the people, and the ferocity and ignorance of the people will be proportioned to the oppression and degradation under which they have been accustomed to live. Thus it was in our Civil War. The heads of the Church and State reaped only that which they had sown. The government had prohibited free discussion; it had done its best to keep the people unacquainted with their duties and their rights. The retribution was just and natural. If our rulers suffered from popular ignorance, it was because they had themselves taken away the key of knowledge. If they were assailed with blind fury, it was because they had exacted an equally blind submission.

It is the character of such revolutions that we always see the worst of them at first. Till men have been some time free, they know not how to use their freedom. The natives of wine countries are generally sober. In climates where wine is a rarity intemperance abounds. A newly liberated people may be compared to a northern army encamped on the Rhine or the Xeres.[1] It is said that, when soldiers in such a situation first find themselves able to indulge without restraint in such a rare and expensive luxury, nothing is to be seen but intoxication. Soon, however, plenty teaches discretion, and, after wine has been for a few months their daily fare, they become more temperate than they had ever been in their own country. In the same manner, the final and permanent fruits of liberty are wisdom, moderation, and mercy. Its immediate effects are often atrocious crimes, conflicting errors, skepticism on points the most clear, dogmatism on points the most mysterious. It is just at this crisis that its enemies love to exhibit it. They pull down the scaffolding from the half-finished edifice; they point to the flying dust, the falling bricks, the comfortless rooms, the frightful irregularity of the whole appearance, and then ask in scorn where the promised splendor and comfort is to be found. If such miserable sophisms were to prevail, there would never be a good house or a good government in the world.

Ariosto tells a pretty story[2] of a fairy who, by some mysterious law of her nature, was condemned to appear at certain seasons in the form of a foul and poisonous snake. Those who injured her during the period of her disguise were forever excluded from participation in the blessings which she bestowed. But to those who, in spite of her loathsome aspect, pitied and protected her she afterwards revealed herself in the beautiful and celestial form which was natural to her; accompanied their steps, granted all their wishes, filled their houses with wealth, made them happy in love and victorious in war. Such a spirit is Liberty. At times she takes the form of a hateful reptile. She grovels, she hisses, she stings. But woe to those who in disgust shall venture to crush her! And happy are those who, having dared to receive her in her degraded and frightful shape, shall at length be rewarded by her in the time of her beauty and her glory!

There is only one cure for the evils which newly acquired freedom produces, and that cure is freedom. When a prisoner first leaves his cell he cannot bear the light of day; he is unable to discriminate colors or recognize faces. But the remedy is, not to remand him into his dungeon, but to accustom him to the rays of the sun. The blaze of truth and liberty may at first dazzle and bewilder nations which have become half blind in the house of bondage. But let them gaze on, and they will soon be able to bear it. In a few years men learn to reason. The extremes of violence of opinions subsides. Hostile theories correct each other. The scattered elements of truth cease to contend, and begin to coalesce. And at length a system of justice and order is educed out of the chaos.

Many politicians of our time are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition that no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story who resolved not to go into the water till he had learned to swim. If men are to wait for liberty till they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait forever.

Therefore it is that we decidedly approve of the conduct of Milton and the other wise

[1] Xeres: a Spanish town near Cadiz.

[2] *Orlando Furioso*, XLIII, 72.

and good men who, in spite of much that was ridiculous and hateful in the conduct of their associates, stood firmly by the cause of public liberty. We are not aware that the poet has been charged with personal participation in any of the blamable excesses of that time. The favorite topic of his enemies is the line of conduct which he pursued with regard to the execution of the king. Of that celebrated proceeding we by no means approve. Still we must say, in justice to the many eminent persons who concurred in it, and in justice more particularly to the eminent person who defended it, that nothing can be more absurd than the imputations which, for the last hundred and sixty years, it has been the fashion to cast upon the Regicides.[1] We have, throughout, abstained from appealing to first principles. We will not appeal to them now. We recur again to the parallel case of the Revolution. What essential distinction can be drawn between the execution of the father and the deposition of the son? What constitutional maxim is there which applies to the former and not to the latter? The king can do no wrong. If so, James was as innocent as Charles could have been. The minister, only, ought to be responsible for the acts of the sovereign. If so, why not impeach Jeffreys and retain James? The person of a king is sacred. Was the person of James considered sacred at the Boyne? To discharge cannon against an army in which a king is known to be posted is to approach pretty near to regicide. Charles, too, it should always be remembered, was put to death by men who had been exasperated by the hostilities of several years, and who had never been bound to him by any other tie than that which was common to them with all their fellow-citizens. Those who drove James from his throne, who seduced his army, who alienated his friends, who first imprisoned him in his palace and then turned him out of it, who broke in upon his very slumbers by imperious messages, who pursued him with fire and sword from one part of the empire to another, who hanged, drew, and quartered his adherents, and attainted his innocent heir, were his nephew and his two daughters. When we reflect on all these things, we are at a loss to conceive how the same persons who, on the 5th of November,[2] thank God for wonderfully conducting his servant William, and for making all opposition fall before him until he became our king and governor, can, on the 30th of January,[1] contrive to be afraid that the blood of the Royal Martyr may be visited on themselves and their children.

We disapprove, we repeat, of the execution of Charles; not because the constitution exempts the king from responsibility, for we know that all such maxims, however excellent, have their exceptions; nor because we feel any peculiar interest in his character, for we think that his sentence describes him with perfect justice as "a tyrant, a traitor, a murderer, and a public enemy"; but because we are convinced that the measure was most injurious to the cause of freedom. He whom it removed was a captive and a hostage; his heir, to whom the allegiance of every Royalist was instantly transferred, was at large. The Presbyterians could never have been perfectly reconciled to the father; they had no such rooted enmity to the son. The great body of the people, also, contemplated that proceeding with feelings which, however unreasonable, no government could safely venture to outrage.

But though we think the conduct of the Regicides blamable, that of Milton appears to us in a very different light. The deed was done. It could not be undone. The evil was incurred, and the object was to render it as small as possible. We censure the chiefs of the army for not yielding to the popular opinion, but we cannot censure Milton for wishing to change that opinion. The very feeling which would have restrained us from committing the act would have led us, after it had been committed, to defend it against the ravings of servility and superstition. For the sake of public liberty, we wish that the thing had not been done while the people disapproved of it. But, for the sake of public liberty, we should also have wished the people to approve of it when it was done. If anything more were wanting to the justification of Milton, the book of Salmasius [2] would furnish it. That miserable performance is now with justice considered only as a beacon to word-catchers who wish to become statesmen. The celebrity of the man who refuted it, the "*Æneæ magni dextra*," [3] gives it all its fame with the present generation. In that age the state of things was different. It was not then fully understood how vast an interval separates the mere classical scholar

1 Members of the High Court of Justice which tried Charles I.

2 The anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot, and of the landing of William III in England.

1 The anniversary of the execution of Charles I.

2 Claude Salmasius (1588–1683), French professor of Leyden who wrote a *Defense of Charles I.*

3 "The right hand of great Æneas."

from the political philosopher. Nor can it be doubted that a treatise which, bearing the name of so eminent a critic, attacked the fundamental principles of all free governments, must, if suffered to remain unanswered, have produced a most pernicious effect on the public mind.

We wish to add a few words relative to another subject, on which the enemies of Milton delight to dwell — his conduct during the administration of the Protector. That an enthusiastic votary of liberty should accept office under a military usurper seems, no doubt, at first sight, extraordinary. But all the circumstances in which the country was then placed were extraordinary. The ambition of Oliver was of no vulgar kind. He never seems to have coveted despotic power. He at first fought sincerely and manfully for the Parliament, and never deserted it till it had deserted its duty. If he dissolved it by force, it was not till he found that the few members who remained after so many deaths, secessions, and expulsions were desirous to appropriate to themselves a power which they held only in trust, and to inflict upon England the curse of a Venetian oligarchy. But, even when thus placed by violence at the head of affairs, he did not assume unlimited power. He gave the country a constitution far more perfect than any which had at that time been known in the world. He reformed the representative system in a manner which has extorted praise even from Lord Clarendon. For himself he demanded, indeed, the first place in the Commonwealth, but with powers scarcely so great as those of a Dutch stadtholder or an American president. He gave the Parliament a voice in the appointment of ministers, and left to it the whole legislative authority, not even reserving to himself a veto on its enactments; and he did not require that the chief magistracy should be hereditary in his family. Thus far, we think, if the circumstances of the time and the opportunities which he had of aggrandizing himself be fairly considered, he will not lose by comparison with Washington or Bolivar. Had his moderation been met by corresponding moderation, there is no reason to think that he would have overstepped the line which he had traced for himself. But when he found that his Parliaments questioned the authority under which they met, and that he was in danger of being deprived of the restricted power which was absolutely necessary to his personal safety, then it must be acknowledged he adopted a more arbitrary policy.

Yet, though we believe that the intentions of Cromwell were at first honest, though we believe that he was driven from the noble course which he had marked out for himself by the almost irresistible force of circumstances, though we admire, in common with all men of all parties, the ability and energy of his splendid administration, we are no pleading for arbitrary and lawless power even in his hands. We know that a good constitution is infinitely better than the best despot. But we suspect that, at the time of which we speak, the violence of religious and political enmities rendered a stable and happy settlement next to impossible. The choice lay, not between Cromwell and liberty, but between Cromwell and the Stuarts. That Milton chose well no man can doubt who fairly compares the events of the Protectorate with those of the thirty years which succeeded it, the darkest and most disgraceful in the English annals. Cromwell was evidently laying, though in an irregular manner, the foundations of an admirable system. Never before had religious liberty and the freedom of discussion been enjoyed in a greater degree. Never had the national honor been better upheld abroad, or the sea of justice better filled at home. And it was rarely that any opposition which stopped short of open rebellion provoked the resentment of the liberal and magnanimous usurper. The institutions which he had established, as set down in the Instrument of Government and the Humble Petition and Advice,[1] were excellent. His practice, it is true, too often departed from the theory of these institutions. But had he lived a few years longer, it is probable that his institutions would have survived him, and that his arbitrary practice would have died with him. His power had not been consecrated by ancient prejudices. It was upheld only by his great personal qualities. Little, therefore, was to be dreaded from a second Protector, unless he were also a second Oliver Cromwell. The events which followed his decease are the most complete vindication of those who exerted themselves to uphold his authority. His death dissolved the whole frame of society. The army rose against the Parliament, the different corps of the army against each other. Sect raved against sect. Party plotted against party. The Presby-

[1] The petition that Cromwell accept the title of King and govern with the advice of Parliament.

terians, in their eagerness to be revenged on the Independents,[1] sacrificed their own liberty, and deserted all their old principles. Without casting one glance on the past, or requiring one stipulation for the future, they threw down their freedom at the feet of the most frivolous and heartless of tyrants.

Then came those days, never to be recalled without a blush, the days of servitude without loyalty and sensuality without love; of dwarfish talents and gigantic vices; the paradise of cold hearts and narrow minds; the golden age of the coward, the bigot, and the slave. The king cringed to his rival[2] that he might trample on his people; sank into a viceroy of France, and pocketed with complacent infamy her degrading insults and her more degrading gold. The caresses of harlots and the jests of buffoons regulated the policy of the State. The government had just ability enough to deceive, and just religion enough to persecute. The principles of liberty were the scoff of every grinning courtier, and the Anathema Maranatha[3] of every fawning dean. In every high place, worship was paid to Charles and James, Belial and Moloch;[4] and England propitiated those obscene and cruel idols with the blood of her best and bravest children. Crime succeeded to crime, and disgrace to disgrace, till the race, accursed of God and man, was a second time driven forth to wander on the face of the earth, and to be a byword and a shaking of the head to the nations.

Most of the remarks which we have hitherto made on the public character of Milton apply to him only as one of a large body. We shall proceed to notice some of the peculiarities which distinguished him from his contemporaries. And for that purpose it is necessary to take a short survey of the parties into which the political world was at that time divided. We must premise that our observations are intended to apply only to those who adhered, from a sincere preference, to one or to the other side. In days of public commotion every faction, like an Oriental army, is attended by a crowd of campfollowers, a useless and heartless rabble, who prowl round its line of march in the hope of picking up something under its protection, but desert it in the day of battle, and often join to exterminate it after a defeat. England, at the time of which we are treating, abounded with fickle and selfish politicians, who transferred their support to every government as it rose; who kissed the hand of the king in 1640, and spat in his face in 1649; who shouted with equal glee when Cromwell was inaugurated in Westminster Hall, and when he was dug up to be hanged at Tyburn; who dined on calves' heads or on broiled rumps, and cut down oak branches or stuck them up, as circumstances altered, without the slightest shame or repugnance. These we leave out of the account. We take our estimate of parties from those who really deserve to be called partisans.

We would speak first of the Puritans, the most remarkable body of men, perhaps, which the world has ever produced. The odious and ridiculous parts of their character lie on the surface. He that runs may read them; nor have there been wanting attentive and malicious observers to point them out. For many years after the Restoration they were the theme of unmeasured invective and derision. They were exposed to the utmost licentiousness of the press and of the stage, at the time when the press and the stage were most licentious. They were not men of letters; they were, as a body, unpopular; they could not defend themselves; and the public would not take them under its protection. They were therefore abandoned, without reserve, to the tender mercies of the satirists and dramatists. The ostentatious simplicity of their dress, their sour aspect, their nasal twang, their stiff posture, their long graces, their Hebrew names, the scriptural phrases which they introduced on every occasion, their contempt of human learning, their detestation of polite amusements, were indeed fair game for the laughers. But it is not from the laughers alone that the philosophy of history is to be learned. And he who approaches this subject should carefully guard against the influence of that potent ridicule which has already misled so many excellent writers.

> "*Ecco il fonte del riso, ed ecco il rio*
> *Che mortali perigli in se contiene:*
> *Hor qui tener a fren nostro desio,*
> *Ed esser cauti molto a noi conviene.*"[1]

Those who roused the people to resistance; who directed their measures through a long series of eventful years; who formed, out of

1 The Independents, of whom Milton was one, desired no general church government.

2 Louis XIV of France.

3 1 Corinthians, XVI, 22.

4 *Paradise Lost*, II, 43–225.

1 "'See here the fount of laughter! see the stream
To which such fatal qualities belong!'
'Now,' they exclaimed, 'let us avoid the dream
Of warm desire, and in resolve be strong.'"
Tasso, *Jerusalem Delivered*, XV, 57, Fairfax's translation.

the most unpromising materials, the finest army that Europe had ever seen; who trampled down king, church, and aristocracy; who, in the short intervals of domestic sedition and rebellion, made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth, — were no vulgar fanatics. Most of their absurdities were mere external badges, like the signs of freemasonry or the dresses of friars. We regret that these badges were not more attractive. We regret that a body to whose courage and talents mankind has owed inestimable obligations, had not the lofty elegance which distinguished some of the adherents of Charles I, or the easy good-breeding for which the court of Charles II was celebrated. But, if we must make our choice, we shall, like Bassanio in the play,[1] turn from the specious caskets which contain only the death's-head and the fool's-head, and fix on the plain leaden chest which conceals the treasure.

The Puritans were men whose minds had derived a peculiar character from the daily contemplation of superior beings and eternal interests. Not content with acknowledging in general terms an overruling Providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being, for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know Him, to serve Him, to enjoy Him, was with them the great end of existence. They rejected with contempt the ceremonious homage which other sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on the intolerable brightness, and to commune with Him face to face. Hence originated their contempt for terrestrial distinctions. The difference between the greatest and the meanest of mankind seemed to vanish when compared with the boundless interval which separated the whole race from Him on whom their own eyes were constantly fixed. They recognized no title to superiority but His favor; and, confident of that favor, they despised all the accomplishments and all the dignities of the world. If they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, they were deeply read in the oracles of God. If their names were not found in the registers of heralds, they were recorded in the Book of Life. If their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials, legions of ministering angels had charge over them. Their palaces were houses not made with hands their diadems, crowns of glory which should never fade away. On the rich and the eloquent, on nobles and priests, they looked down with contempt; for they esteemed themselves rich in a more precious treasure and eloquent in a more sublime language nobles by the right of an earlier creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand. The very meanest of them was a being to whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged, on whose slightest action the spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest; who had been destined before heaven and earth were created, to enjoy a felicity which should continue when heaven and earth should have passed away. Events which short-sighted politicians ascribed to earthly causes had been ordained on his account. For his sake empires had risen and flourished, and decayed. For his sake the Almighty had proclaimed His will by the pen of the Evangelist and the harp of the prophet. He had been wrested by no common deliverer from the grasp of no common foe. He had been ransomed by the sweat of no vulgar agony, by the blood of no earthly sacrifice. It was for him that the sun had been darkened, that the rocks had been rent that the dead had risen, that all nature had shuddered at the sufferings of her expiring God.

Thus the Puritan was made up of two different men: the one all self-abasement penitence, gratitude, passion; the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker but he set his foot on the neck of his king In his devotional retirement, he prayed with convulsions, and groans, and tears. He was half maddened by glorious or terrible illusions. He heard the lyres of angels or the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the Beatific Vision, or woke screaming from dreams of everlasting fire. Like Vane,[1] he thought himself intrusted with the sceptre of the millennial year. Like Fleetwood,[2] he cried in the bitterness of his soul that God had hid His face from him. But when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace behind them. People who saw nothing of the godly but their uncouth visages, and heard nothing from them but their groans and their whining hymns, might laugh at

1 *Merchant of Venice*, III, II.

1 Sir Henry Vane the Younger (1612–62).
2 Charles Fleetwood (1620–70), Cromwell's son-in-law

them. But those had little reason to laugh who encountered them in the hall of debate or in the field of battle. These fanatics brought to civil and military affairs a coolness of judgment and an immutability of purpose which some writers have thought inconsistent with their religious zeal, but which were in fact the necessary effects of it. The intensity of their feelings on one subject made them tranquil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear. Death had lost its terrors and pleasure its charms. They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world. Enthusiasm had made them Stoics, had cleared their mind from every vulgar passion and prejudice, and raised them above the influence of danger and of corruption. It sometimes might lead them to pursue unwise ends, but never to choose unwise means. They went through the world, like Sir Artegal's iron man Talus [1] with his flail, crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings, but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities; insensible to fatigue, to pleasure, and to pain; not to be pierced by any weapon, not to be withstood by any barrier.

Such we believe to have been the character of the Puritans. We perceive the absurdity of their manners. We dislike the sullen gloom of their domestic habits. We acknowledge that the tone of their minds was often injured by straining after things too high for mortal reach; and we know that, in spite of their hatred of Popery, they too often fell into the worst vices of that bad system — intolerance and extravagant austerity; that they had their anchorites and their crusades, their Dunstans and their De Montforts, their Dominics and their Escobars. Yet, when all circumstances are taken into consideration, we do not hesitate to pronounce them a brave, a wise, an honest, and a useful body.

The Puritans espoused the cause of civil liberty mainly because it was the cause of religion. There was another party, by no means numerous, but distinguished by learning and ability, which acted with them on very different principles. We speak of those whom Cromwell was accustomed to call the heathens, men who were, in the phraseology of that time, doubting Thomases or careless gallios [2] with regard to religious subjects, but passionate worshipers of freedom. Heated by the study of ancient literature, they set up their country as their idol, and proposed to themselves the heroes of Plutarch as their examples. They seem to have borne some resemblance to the Brissotines [1] of the French Revolution. But it is not very easy to draw the line of distinction between them and their devout associates, whose tone and manner they sometimes found it convenient to affect, and sometimes, it is probable, imperceptibly adopted.

We now come to the Royalists. We shall attempt to speak of them, as we have spoken of their antagonists, with perfect candor. We shall not charge upon a whole party the profligacy and baseness of the horse boys, gamblers, and bravoes, whom the hope of license and plunder attracted from all the dens of Whitefriars to the standard of Charles, and who disgraced their associates by excesses which, under the stricter discipline of the parliamentary armies, were never tolerated. We will select a more favorable specimen. Thinking as we do that the cause of the king was the cause of bigotry and tyranny, we yet cannot refrain from looking with complacency on the character of the honest old Cavaliers. We feel a national pride in comparing them with the instruments which the despots of other countries are compelled to employ — with the mutes who throng their ante-chambers, and the Janissaries who mount guard at their gates. Our Royalist countrymen were not heartless, dangling courtiers, bowing at every step, and simpering at every word. They were not mere machines for destruction, dressed up in uniforms, caned into skill, intoxicated into valor, defending without love, destroying without hatred. There was a freedom in their subserviency, a nobleness in their very degradation. The sentiment of individual independence was strong within them. They were indeed misled, but by no base or selfish motive. Compassion and romantic honor, the prejudices of childhood and the venerable names of history, threw over them a spell potent as that of Duessa; and, like the Red Cross Knight,[2] they thought that they were doing battle for an injured beauty while they defended a false and loathsome sorceress. In truth, they scarcely entered at all into the merits of the political question. It was not for a treacherous king or an intolerant church

1 *Faërie Queene*, V. Artegal personifies Justice.
2 See Acts, XVIII, 17.

1 Or Girondists, the moderate party of the French Revolutionists.
2 In the *Faërie Queene*, I.

that they fought, but for the old banner which had waved in so many battles over the heads of their fathers, and for the altars at which they had received the hands of their brides. Though nothing could be more erroneous than their political opinions they possessed, in a far greater degree than their adversaries, those qualities which are the grace of private life. With many of the vices of the Round Table, they had also many of its virtues — courtesy, generosity, veracity, tenderness, and respect for women. They had far more both of profound and of polite learning than the Puritans. Their manners were more engaging, their tempers more amiable, their tastes more elegant, and their households more cheerful.

Milton did not strictly belong to any of the classes which we have described. He was not a Puritan. He was not a freethinker. He was not a Royalist. In his character the noblest qualities of every party were combined in harmonious union. From the Parliament and from the court, from the conventicle and from the Gothic cloister, from the gloomy and sepulchral circles of the Roundheads, and from the Christmas revel of the hospitable Cavalier, his nature selected and drew to itself whatever was great and good, while it rejected all the base and pernicious ingredients by which those finer elements were defiled. Like the Puritans, he lived

"As ever in his great Taskmaster's eye." [1]

Like them, he kept his mind continually fixed on an Almighty Judge and an eternal reward. And hence he acquired their contempt of external circumstances, their fortitude, their tranquillity, their inflexible resolution. But not the coolest skeptic or the most profane scoffer was more perfectly free from the contagion of their frantic delusions, their savage manners, their ludicrous jargon, their scorn of science, and their aversion to pleasure. Hating tyranny with a perfect hatred, he had nevertheless all the estimable and ornamental qualities which were almost entirely monopolized by the party of the tyrant. There was none who had a stronger sense of the value of literature, a finer relish for every elegant amusement, or a more chivalrous delicacy of honor and love. Though his opinions were democratic, his tastes and his associations were such as harmonize best with monarchy and aristocracy. He was under the influence of all the feelings by which the gallant Cavaliers were misled. But of those feelings he was the master and not the slave. Like the hero [1] of Homer, he enjoyed all the pleasures of fascination; but he was not fascinated. He listed to the song of the Sirens; yet he glided by without being seduced to their fatal shore. He tasted the cup of Circe, but he bore about him a sure antidote against the effects of its bewitching sweetness. The illusions which captivated his imagination never impaired his reasoning powers. The statesman was proof against the splendor, the solemnity, and the romance which enchanted the poet. Any person who will contrast the sentiments expressed in his treatises on Prelacy [2] with the exquisite lines on ecclesiastical architecture and music in the "Penseroso," which was published about the same time, will understand our meaning. This is an inconsistency which, more than anything else, raises his character in our estimation, because it shows how many private tastes and feelings he sacrificed in order to do what he considered his duty to mankind. It is the very struggle of the noble Othello. His heart relents, but his hand is firm. He does naught in hate, but all in honor. He kisses the beautiful deceiver before he destroys her.

That from which the public character of Milton derives its great and peculiar splendor still remains to be mentioned. If he exerted himself to overthrow a foresworn king and a persecuting hierarchy, he exerted himself in conjunction with others. But the glory of the battle which he fought for the species of freedom which is the most valuable, and which was then the least understood, the freedom of the human mind, is all his own. Thousands and tens of thousands among his contemporaries raised their voices against ship money and the Star Chamber. But there were few indeed who discerned the more fearful evils of moral and intellectual slavery and the benefits which would result from the liberty of the press [3] and the unfettered exercise of private judgment. These were the objects which Milton justly conceived to be the most important. He was desirous that the people should think for themselves as well as tax themselves, and should be emancipated from the dominion of prejudice as well as from that of Charles. He knew that those who, with the best intentions, overlooked these schemes of reform, and contented themselves with pulling down the king and

1 From Milton's seventh sonnet.

1 Ulysses. 2 pamphlets on church government.
3 Milton's *Areopagitica*.

imprisoning the malignants, acted like the heedless brothers in his own poem,[1] who, in their eagerness to disperse the train of the sorcerer, neglected the means of liberating the captive. They thought only of conquering when they should have thought of disenchanting.

"Oh, ye mistook, ye should have snatched his wand,
And bound him fast; without his rod reversed,
And backward mutters of dissevering power,
We cannot free the Lady that sits here
In stony fetters fixed, and motionless." [2]

To reverse the rod, to spell the charm backward, to break the ties which bound a stupefied people to the seat of enchantment, was the noble aim of Milton. To this all his public conduct was directed. For this he joined the Presbyterians; for this he forsook them. He fought their perilous battle, but he turned away with disdain from their insolent triumph. He saw that they, like those whom they had vanquished, were hostile to the liberty of thought. He therefore joined the Independents, and called upon Cromwell to break the secular chain, and to save free conscience from the paw of the Presbyterian wolf. With a view to the same great object, he attacked the licensing system,[3] in that sublime treatise which every statesman should wear as a sign upon his hand and as frontlets between his eyes. His attacks were, in general, directed less against particular abuses than against those deeply seated errors on which almost all abuses are founded — the servile worship of eminent men and the irrational dread of innovation.

That he might shake the foundations of these debasing sentiments more effectually, he always selected for himself the boldest literary services. He never came up in the rear when the outworks had been carried and the breach entered. He pressed into the forlorn hope. At the beginning of the changes, he wrote with incomparable energy and eloquence against the bishops. But, when his opinion seemed likely to prevail, he passed on to other subjects, and abandoned prelacy to the crowd of writers who now hastened to insult a falling party. There is no more hazardous enterprise than that of bearing the torch of truth into those dark and infected recesses in which no light has ever shone. But it was the choice and the pleasure of Milton to penetrate the noisome vapors, and to brave the terrible explosion. Those who most disapprove of his opinions must respect the hardihood with which he maintained them. He, in general, left to others the credit of expounding and defending the popular parts of his religious and political creed. He took his own stand upon those which the great body of his countrymen reprobated as criminal, or derided as paradoxical. He stood up for divorce and regicide.[1] He attacked the prevailing systems of education.[2] His radiant and beneficent career resembled that of the god of light and fertility:

"*Nitor in adversum; nec me, qui cætera, vincit Impetus, et rapido contrarius evehor orbi.*" [3]

It is to be regretted that the prose writings of Milton should in our time be so little read. As compositions, they deserve the attention of every man who wishes to become acquainted with the full power of the English language. They abound with passages compared with which the finest declamations of Burke sink into insignificance. They are a perfect field of cloth of gold. The style is stiff with gorgeous embroidery. Not even in the earlier books of the *Paradise Lost* has the great poet ever risen higher than in those parts of his controversial works in which his feelings, excited by conflict, find a vent in bursts of devotional and lyric rapture. It is, to borrow his own majestic language, "a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies."

We had intended to look more closely at these performances, to analyze the peculiarities of the diction, to dwell at some length on the sublime wisdom of the *Areopagitica* and the nervous rhetoric of the *Iconoclast*, and to point out some of those magnificent passages which occur in the treatise *Of Reformation* and the *Animadversions on the Remonstrant*. But the length to which our remarks have already extended renders this impossible.

We must conclude. And yet we can scarcely tear ourselves away from the subject. The days immediately following the publication of this relic of Milton appear to be peculiarly set apart and consecrated to his memory. And we shall scarcely be censured if, on this his festival, we be found lingering near his shrine, how worthless soever may be

1 *Comus.* 2 *Comus*, lines 815–19.
3 In *Areopagitica.*

1 In the *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (1643); and *Eikonoklastes* (1649).
2 In *Of Education* (1644).
3 A reference to the sun, in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, II, 72, 73: "I contend against opposition; nor does that force which conquers all else subdue me, and I ride on in a contrary way to the rapid heavens."

the offering which we bring to it. While this book lies on our table, we seem to be contemporaries of the writer. We are transported a hundred and fifty years back. We can almost fancy that we are visiting him in his small lodging; that we see him sitting at the old organ beneath the faded green hangings; that we can catch the quick twinkle of his eyes, rolling in vain to find the day; that we are reading in the lines of his noble countenance the proud and mournful history of his glory and his affliction. We image to ourselves the breathless silence in which we should listen to his slightest word; the passionate veneration with which we should kneel to kiss his hand and weep upon it; the earnestness with which we should endeavor to console him, if indeed such a spirit could need consolation, for the neglect of an age unworthy of his talents and his virtues; the eagerness with which we should contest with his daughters, or with his Quaker friend Ellwood,[1] the privilege of reading Homer to him, or of taking down the immortal accents which flowed from his lips.

These are perhaps foolish feelings. Yet we cannot be ashamed of them; nor shall we be sorry if what we have written shall in any degree excite them in other minds. We are not much in the habit of idolizing either the living or the dead. And we think that there is no more certain indication of a weak and ill-regulated intellect than that propensity which, for want of a better name, we will venture to christen Boswellism. But there are a few characters which have stood the closest scrutiny and the severest tests, which have been tried in the furnace and have proved pure, which have been weighed in the balance and have not been found wanting, which have been declared sterling by the general consent of mankind, and which are visibly stamped with the image and superscription of the Most High. These great men we trust that we know how to prize, and of these was Milton. The sight of his books, the sound of his name, are pleasant to us. His thoughts resemble those celestial fruits and flowers which the Virgin Martyr[1] of Massinger sent down from the gardens of Paradise to the earth, and which were distinguished from the productions of other soils, not only by superior bloom and sweetness, but by miraculous efficacy to invigorate and to heal. They are powerful, not only to delight, but to elevate and purify. Nor do we envy the man who can study either the life or the writings of the great poet and patriot without aspiring to emulate, not indeed the sublime works with which his genius has enriched our literature, but the zeal with which he labored for the public good, the fortitude with which he endured every private calamity, the lofty disdain with which he looked down on temptations and dangers, the deadly hatred which he bore to bigots and tyrants, and the faith which he so sternly kept with his country and with his fame.

1 Thomas Ellwood (1639–1713), in whose *Autobiography* there is an account of Milton.

2 In Massinger's play of that name.

## FRANCIS BACON

### 1837

The essay on Bacon, written in review of *The Works of Francis Bacon, Lord Chancellor of England.* A New Edition. By Basil Montagu, Esq., 16 vols., London, 1825–1834, appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* for July, 1837. It is one of the longest and most characteristic of Macaulay's essays. Beginning with an account of Bacon's life and character, it continues with an appreciation of his philosophy with which Macaulay was in entire sympathy. The extracts here given bear witness to Macaulay's own practical habit of mind, his reliance on applied science as a means of promoting welfare, and his belief in the machinery of well-being as a test of civilization — an attitude to which such prophets as Carlyle, Ruskin, and Matthew Arnold were sternly opposed.

Two words form the key of the Baconian doctrine, Utility and Progress. The ancient philosophy disdained to be useful, and was content to be stationary. It dealt largely in theories of moral perfection, which were so sublime that they never could be more than theories; in attempts to solve insoluble enigmas; in exhortations to the attainment of unattainable frames of mind. It could not condescend to the humble office of ministering to the comfort of human beings. All the schools contemned that office as degrading: some censured it as immoral. Once indeed Posidonius, a distinguished writer of the age of Cicero and Cæsar, so far forgot himself as to enumerate, among the humbler blessings which mankind owed to philosophy, the discovery of the principle of the arch, and the introduction of the use of metals. This eulogy was considered as an affront, and was taken up with proper spirit. Seneca vehemently disclaims these insulting compliments. Philosophy, according to him, has nothing to do with teaching men to rear arched roofs over their heads. The true

philosopher does not care whether he has an arched roof or any roof. Philosophy has nothing to do with teaching men the uses of metals. She teaches us to be independent of all material substances, of all mechanical contrivances. The wise man lives according to nature. Instead of attempting to add to the physical comforts of his species, he regrets that his lot was not cast in that golden age when the human race had no protection against the cold but the skins of wild beasts, no screen from the sun but a cavern. To impute to such a man any share in the invention or improvement of a plough, a ship, or a mill is an insult. "In my own time," says Seneca, "there have been inventions of this sort, transparent windows, tubes for diffusing warmth equally through all parts of a building, shorthand, which has been carried to such a perfection that a writer can keep pace with the most rapid speaker. But the inventing of such things is drudgery for the lowest slaves; philosophy lies deeper. It is not her office to teach men how to use their hands. The object of her lessons is to form the soul. *Non est, inquam, instrumentorum ad usus necessarios opifex.*" [1] If the *non* were left out, this last sentence would be no bad description of the Baconian philosophy, and would, indeed, very much resemble several expressions in the *Novum Organum*. "We shall next be told," exclaims Seneca, "that the first shoemaker was a philosopher." For our own part, if we are forced to make our choice between the first shoemaker and the author of the three books "On Anger," we pronounce for the shoemaker. It may be worse to be angry than to be wet. But shoes have kept millions from being wet; and we doubt whether Seneca ever kept anybody from being angry.

It is very reluctantly that Seneca can be brought to confess that any philosopher had ever paid the smallest attention to anything that could possibly promote what vulgar people would consider as the well-being of mankind. He labors to clear Democritus from the disgraceful imputation of having made the first arch, and Anacharsis from the charge of having contrived the potter's wheel. He is forced to own that such a thing might happen; and it may also happen, he tells us, that a philosopher may be swift of foot. But it is not in his character of philosopher that he either wins a race or invents a machine. No, to be sure. The business of a philosopher was to declaim in praise of poverty with two millions sterling out at usury, to meditate epigrammatic conceits about the evils of luxury, in gardens which moved the envy of sovereigns, to rant about liberty, while fawning on the insolent and pampered freedmen of a tyrant, to celebrate the divine beauty of virtue with the same pen which had just before written a defence of the murder of a mother by a son.

From the cant of this philosophy, a philosophy meanly proud of its own unprofitableness, it is delightful to turn to the lessons of the great English teacher. We can almost forgive all the faults of Bacon's life when we read that singularly graceful and dignified passage: "*Ego certe, ut de me ipso, quod res est, loquar, et in iis quæ nunc edo, et in iis quæ in posterum meditor, dignitatem ingenii et nominis mei, si qua sit, sæpius sciens et volens projicio, dum commodis humanis inserviam; quique architectus fortasse in philosophia et scientiis esse debeam, etiam operarius, et bajulus, et quidvis demum fio, cum haud pauca quæ omnino fieri necesse sit, alii autem ob innatam superbiam subterfugiant, ipsi sustineam et exsequar.*" [1] This *philanthropia*, which, as he said in one of the most remarkable of his early letters, "was so fixed in his mind, as it could not be removed," this majestic humility, this persuasion that nothing can be too insignificant for the attention of the wisest, which is not too insignificant to give pleasure or pain to the meanest, is the great characteristic distinction, the essential spirit of the Baconian philosophy. We trace it in all that Bacon has written on Physics, on Laws, on Morals. And we conceive that from this peculiarity all the other peculiarities of his system directly and almost necessarily sprang.

The spirit which appears in the passage of Seneca to which we have referred tainted the whole body of the ancient philosophy from the time of Socrates downwards, and took possession of intellects with which that of Seneca cannot for a moment be compared. It pervades the dialogues of Plato. It may be distinctly traced in many parts of the works of Aristotle. Bacon has dropped hints from which it may be inferred that, in his

1 It is not, I say, a maker of instruments for necessary use. Seneca, *Epist.* 90.

1 "As for myself, to speak the truth, I have frequently neglected the glory of my order, name, and learning, both in the works I now publish and those which I have already designed to execute, in following out my direct purpose of advancing the happiness of mankind; so that I may fairly say, though marked out by nature to be the architect of philosophy and the sciences I have submitted to become a common workman and laborer, there being many mean things necessary to the erection of the structure, which others, out of a natural disdain, refused to attend to." *De Augmentis*, lib. VII, cap. I.

opinion, the prevalence of this feeling was in a great measure to be attributed to the influence of Socrates. Our great countryman evidently did not consider the revolution which Socrates effected in philosophy as a happy event, and constantly maintained that the earlier Greek speculators, Democritus in particular, were, on the whole, superior to their more celebrated successors.[1]

Assuredly if the tree which Socrates planted and Plato watered is to be judged of by its flowers and leaves, it is the noblest of trees. But if we take the homely test of Bacon, if we judge of the tree by its fruits, our opinion of it may perhaps be less favorable. When we sum up all the useful truths which we owe to that philosophy, to what do they amount? We find, indeed, abundant proofs that some of those who cultivated it were men of the first order of intellect. We find among their writings incomparable specimens both of dialectical and rhetorical art. We have no doubt that the ancient controversies were of use, in so far as they served to exercise the faculties of the disputants; for there is no controversy so idle that it may not be of use in this way. But, when we look for something more, for something which adds to the comforts or alleviates the calamities of the human race, we are forced to own ourselves disappointed. We are forced to say with Bacon that this celebrated philosophy ended in nothing but disputation, that it was neither a vineyard nor an olive-ground, but an intricate wood of briars and thistles, from which those who lost themselves in it brought back many scratches and no food.[2] . . .

The difference between the philosophy of Bacon and that of his predecessors cannot, we think, be better illustrated than by comparing his views on some important subjects with those of Plato. We select Plato, because we conceive that he did more than any other person towards giving to the minds of speculative men that bent which they retained till they received from Bacon a new impulse in a diametrically opposite direction.

It is curious to observe how differently these great men estimated the value of every kind of knowledge. Take Arithmetic for example. Plato, after speaking slightly of the convenience of being able to reckon and compute in the ordinary transactions of life, passes to what he considers as a far more important advantage. The study of the properties of numbers, he tells us, habituates the mind to the contemplation of pure truth, and raises us above the material universe. He would have his disciples apply themselves to this study, not that they may be able to buy or sell, not that they may qualify themselves to be shopkeepers or travelling merchants, but that they may learn to withdraw their minds from the ever-shifting spectacle of this visible and tangible world, and to fix them on the immutable essences of things.[1]

Bacon, on the other hand, valued this branch of knowledge, only on account of its uses with reference to that visible and tangible world which Plato so much despised. He speaks with scorn of the mystical arithmetic of the later Platonists, and laments the propensity of mankind to employ, on mere matters of curiosity, powers the whole exertion of which is required for purposes of solid advantage. He advises arithmeticians to leave these trifles, and to employ themselves in framing convenient expressions, which may be of use in physical researches.[2]

The same reasons which led Plato to recommend the study of arithmetic led him to recommend also the study of mathematics. The vulgar crowd of geometricians, he says, will not understand him. They have practice always in view. They do not know that the real use of the science is to lead men to the knowledge of abstract, essential, eternal truth.[3] Indeed, if we are to believe Plutarch, Plato carried this feeling so far that he considered geometry as degraded by being applied to any purpose of vulgar utility. Archytas, it seems, had framed machines of extraordinary power on mathematical principles.[4] Plato remonstrated with his friend, and declared that this was to degrade a noble intellectual exercise into a low craft, fit only for carpenters and wheelwrights. The office of geometry, he said, was to discipline the mind, not to minister to the base wants of the body. His interference was successful; and from that time, according to Plutarch, the science of mechanics was considered as unworthy of the attention of a philosopher.

Archimedes in a later age imitated and surpassed Archytas. But even Archimedes was not free from the prevailing notion that geometry was degraded by being employed

1 *Novum Organum*, lib. I, aph. 71, 79. *De Augmentis*, lib. III, cap. IV. *De principiis, atque originibus. Cogitata et visa. Redargutio philosophiarum.* (Macaulay's note.)

2 *Novum Organum*, lib. I, aph. 73. (Macaulay's note.)

1 Plato's *Republic*, book VII. (Macaulay's note.)

2 *De Augmentis*, lib. III, cap. 6. (Macaulay's note.)

3 Plato's *Republic*, book VII. (Macaulay's note.)

4 Plutarch, *Sympos.*, VIII, and *Life of Marcellus*. The machines of Archytas are also mentioned by Aulus Gellius and Diogenes Laertius. (Macaulay's note.)

to produce anything useful. It was with difficulty that he was induced to stoop from speculation to practice. He was half ashamed of those inventions which were the wonder of hostile nations, and always spoke of them slightingly as mere amusements, as trifles in which a mathematician might be suffered to relax his mind after intense application to the higher parts of his science.

The opinion of Bacon on this subject was diametrically opposed to that of the ancient philosophers. He valued geometry chiefly, if not solely, on account of those uses, which to Plato appeared so base. And it is remarkable that the longer Bacon lived the stronger this feeling became. When in 1605 he wrote the two books on the *Advancement of Learning*, he dwelt on the advantages which mankind derived from mixed mathematics; but he at the same time admitted that the beneficial effect produced by mathematical study on the intellect, though a collateral advantage, was "no less worthy than that which was principal and intended." But it is evident that his views underwent a change. When, near twenty years later, he published the *De Augmentis*, which is the *Treatise on the Advancement of Learning*, greatly expanded and carefully corrected, he made important alterations in the part which related to mathematics. He condemned with severity the high pretensions of the mathematicians, "delicias et fastum mathematicorum." [1] Assuming the well-being of the human race to be the end of knowledge, he pronounced that mathematical science could claim no higher rank than that of an appendage or auxiliary to other sciences. Mathematical science, he says, is the handmaid of natural philosophy; she ought to demean herself as such; and he declares that he cannot conceive by what ill chance it has happened that she presumes to claim precedence over her mistress. He predicts — a prediction which would have made Plato shudder — that as more and more discoveries are made in physics, there will be more and more branches of mixed mathematics. Of that collateral advantage the value of which, twenty years before, he rated so highly, he says not one word. This omission cannot have been the effect of mere inadvertence. His own treatise was before him. From that treatise he deliberately expunged whatever was favorable to the study of pure mathematics, and inserted several keen reflections on the ardent votaries of that study. This fact, in our opinion, admits of only one explanation. Bacon's love of those pursuits which directly tend to improve the condition of mankind, and his jealousy of all pursuits merely curious, had grown upon him, and had, it may be, become immoderate. He was afraid of using any expression which might have the effect of inducing any man of talents to employ in speculations, useful only to the mind of the speculator, a single hour which might be employed in extending the empire of man over matter.[1] If Bacon erred here, we must acknowledge that we greatly prefer his error to the opposite error of Plato. We have no patience with a philosophy which, like those Roman matrons who swallowed abortives in order to preserve their shapes, takes pains to be barren for fear of being homely. . . .

On the greatest and most useful of all human inventions, the invention of alphabetical writing, Plato did not look with much complacency. He seems to have thought that the use of letters had operated on the human mind as the use of the go-cart in learning to walk, or of corks in learning to swim, is said to operate on the human body. It was a support which, in his opinion, soon became indispensable to those who used it, which made vigorous exertion first unnecessary and then impossible. The powers of the intellect would, he conceived, have been more fully developed without this delusive aid. Men would have been compelled to exercise the understanding and the memory, and, by deep and assiduous meditation, to make truth thoroughly their own. Now, on the contrary, much knowledge is traced on paper, but little is engraved in the soul. A man is certain that he can find information at a moment's notice when he wants it. He therefore suffers it to fade from his mind. Such a man cannot in strictness be said to know anything. He has the show without the reality of wisdom. These opinions Plato has put into the mouth of an ancient king of Egypt.[2] But it is evident from the context that they were his own; and so they were understood to be by Quinctilian.[3] Indeed they are in perfect accordance with the whole Platonic system.

Bacon's views, as may easily be supposed, were widely different.[4] The powers of the memory, he observes, without the help of

1 pretensions and pride of the mathematicians.

1 Compare the passage relating to mathematics in the Second Book of the *Advancement of Learning*, with the *De Augmentis*, lib. III, cap. 6. (Macaulay's note.)

2 Plato's *Phædrus*. (Macaulay's note.)

3 Quinctilian, XI. (Macaulay's note.)

4 *De Augmentis*, lib. V, cap. 5. (Macaulay's note.)

writing, can do little towards the advancement of any useful science. He acknowledges that the memory may be disciplined to such a point as to be able to perform very extraordinary feats. But on such feats he sets little value. The habits of his mind, he tells us, are such that he is not disposed to rate highly any accomplishment, however rare, which is of no practical use to mankind. As to these prodigious achievements of the memory, he ranks them with the exhibitions of rope-dancers and tumblers. "These two performances," he says, "are much of the same sort. The one is an abuse of the powers of the body; the other is an abuse of the powers of the mind. Both may perhaps excite our wonder; but neither is entitled to our respect."

To Plato, the science of medicine appeared to be of very disputable advantages.[1] He did not indeed object to quick cures for acute disorders, or for injuries produced by accidents. But the art which resists the slow sap of a chronic disease, which repairs frames enervated by lust, swollen by gluttony, or inflamed by wine, which encourages sensuality by mitigating the natural punishment of the sensualist, and prolongs existence when the intellect has ceased to retain its entire energy, had no share of his esteem. A life protracted by medical skill he pronounced to be a long death. The exercise of the art of medicine ought, he said, to be tolerated, so far as that art may serve to cure the occasional distempers of men whose constitutions are good. As to those who have bad constitutions, let them die; and the sooner the better. Such men are unfit for war, for magistracy, for the management of their domestic affairs, for severe study and speculation. If they engage in any vigorous mental exercise, they are troubled with giddiness and fulness of the head, all which they lay to the account of philosophy. The best thing that can happen to such wretches is to have done with life at once. He quotes mythical authority in support of this doctrine; and reminds his disciples that the practice of the sons of Æsculapius, as described by Homer, extended only to the cure of external injuries.

Far different was the philosophy of Bacon. Of all the sciences, that which he seems to have regarded with the greatest interest was the science which, in Plato's opinion, would not be tolerated in a well-regulated community. To make men perfect was no part of Bacon's plan. His humble aim was to make imperfect men comfortable. The beneficence of his philosophy resembled the beneficence of the common Father, whose sun rises on the evil and good, whose rain descends for the just and the unjust. In Plato's opinion man was made for philosophy; in Bacon's opinion philosophy was made for man; it was a means to an end; and that end was to increase the pleasures and to mitigate the pains of millions who are not and cannot be philosophers. That a valetudinarian who took great pleasure in being wheeled along his terrace, who relished his boiled chicken and his weak wine and water, and who enjoyed a hearty laugh over the Queen of Navarre's tales, should be treated as a *caput lupinum*[1] because he could not read the *Timæus* without a headache, was a notion which the humane spirit of the English school of wisdom altogether rejected. Bacon would not have thought it beneath the dignity of a philosopher to contrive an improved garden chair for such a valetudinarian, to devise some way of rendering his medicines more palatable, to invent repasts which he might enjoy, and pillows on which he might sleep soundly; and this though there might not be the smallest hope that the mind of the poor invalid would ever rise to the contemplation of the ideal beautiful and the ideal good. As Plato had cited the religious legends of Greece to justify his contempt for the more recondite parts of the art of healing, Bacon vindicated the dignity of that art by appealing to the example of Christ, and reminded men that the great Physician of the soul did not disdain to be also the physician of the body. . . .

The boast of the ancient philosophers was that their doctrine formed the minds of men to a high degree of wisdom and virtue. This was indeed the only practical good which the most celebrated of those teachers even pretended to effect; and undoubtedly, if they had effected this, they would have deserved far higher praise than if they had discovered the most salutary medicines or constructed the most powerful machines. But the truth is that, in those very matters in which alone they professed to do any good to mankind, in those very matters for the sake of which they neglected all the vulgar interests of mankind, they did nothing, or worse than nothing. They promised what was impracticable; they despised what was practicable; they filled the world with long words and long beards; and they left it as wicked and as ignorant as they found it.

1 Plato's *Republic*, book III. (Macaulay's note.)

1 A wolf's head, i.e., a dunce.

An acre in Middlesex is better than a principality in Utopia. The smallest actual good is better than the most magnificent promises of impossibilities. The wise man of the Stoics would, no doubt, be a grander object than a steam-engine. But there are steam-engines. And the wise man of the Stoics is yet to be born. A philosophy which should enable a man to feel perfectly happy while in agonies of pain would be better than a philosophy which assuages pain. But we know that there are remedies which will assuage pain; and we know that the ancient sages liked the toothache just as little as their neighbors. A philosophy which should extinguish cupidity would be better than a philosophy which should devise laws for the security of property. But it is possible to make laws which shall, to a very great extent, secure property. And we do not understand how any motives which the ancient philosophy furnished could extinguish cupidity. We know indeed that the philosophers were no better than other men. From the testimony of friends as well as of foes, from the confessions of Epictetus and Seneca, as well as from the sneers of Lucian and the fierce invectives of Juvenal, it is plain that these teachers of virtue had all the vices of their neighbors, with the additional vice of hypocrisy. Some people may think the object of the Baconian philosophy a low object, but they cannot deny that, high or low, it has been attained. They cannot deny that every year makes an addition to what Bacon called "fruit." They cannot deny that mankind have made, and are making, great and constant progress in the road which he pointed out to them. Was there any such progressive movement among the ancient philosophers? After they had been declaiming eight hundred years, had they made the world better than when they began? Our belief is that, among the philosophers themselves, instead of a progressive improvement there was a progressive degeneracy. An abject superstition which Democritus or Anaxagoras would have rejected with scorn, added the last disgrace to the long dotage of the Stoic and Platonic schools. Those unsuccessful attempts to articulate which are so delightful and interesting in a child, shock and disgust in an aged paralytic; and in the same way, those wild and mythological fictions which charm us, when we hear them lisped by Greek poetry in its infancy, excite a mixed sensation of pity and loathing, when mumbled by Greek philosophy in its old age. We know that guns, cutlery, spy-glasses, clocks, are better in our time than they were in the time of our fathers, and were better in the time of our fathers than they were in the time of our grandfathers. We might, therefore, be inclined to think that, when a philosophy which boasted that its object was the elevation and purification of the mind, and which for this object neglected the sordid office of ministering to the comforts of the body, had flourished in the highest honor during many hundreds of years, a vast moral amelioration must have taken place. Was it so? Look at the schools of this wisdom four centuries before the Christian era and four centures after that era. Compare the men whom those schools formed at those two periods. Compare Plato and Libanius. Compare Pericles and Julian. This philosophy confessed, nay boasted, that for every end but one it was useless. Had it attained that one end?

Suppose that Justinian, when he closed the schools of Athens, had called on the last few sages who still haunted the Portico,[1] and lingered round the ancient plane-trees, to show their title to public veneration: suppose that he had said: "A thousand years have elapsed since, in this famous city, Socrates posed Protagoras and Hippias;[2] during those thousand years a large proportion of the ablest men of every generation has been employed in constant efforts to bring to perfection the philosophy which you teach; that philosophy has been munificently patronized by the powerful; its professors have been held in the highest esteem by the public; it has drawn to itself almost all the sap and vigor of the human intellect: and what has it effected? What profitable truth has it taught us which we should not equally have known without it? What has it enabled us to do which we should not have been equally able to do without it?" Such questions, we suspect, would have puzzled Simplicius and Isidore. Ask a follower of Bacon what the new philosophy, as it was called in the time of Charles the Second, has effected for mankind, and his answer is ready; "It has lengthened life; it has mitigated pain; it has extinguished diseases; it has increased the fertility of the soil; it has given new securities to the mariner; it has furnished new arms to the warrior; it has spanned great rivers and estuaries with bridges of form unknown to our fathers; it

1 The Portico, in Athens, was the teaching place of Zeno the Stoic, as the Academy was of Plato.
2 In Plato's dialogue *Protagoras*.

has guided the thunderbolt innocuously from heaven to earth; it has lighted up the night with the splendor of the day; it has extended the range of the human vision; it has multiplied the power of the human muscles; it has accelerated motion; it has annihilated distance; it has facilitated intercourse, correspondence, all friendly offices, all despatch of business; it has enabled man to descend to the depths of the sea, to soar into the air, to penetrate securely into the noxious recesses of the earth, to traverse the land in cars which whirl along without horses, and the ocean in ships which run ten knots an hour against the wind. These are but a part of its fruits, and of its first fruits. For it is a philosophy which never rests, which has never attained, which is never perfect. Its law is progress. A point which yesterday was invisible is its goal to-day, and will be its starting-post to-morrow."

Great and various as the powers of Bacon were, he owes his wide and durable fame chiefly to this, that all those powers received their direction from common sense. His love of the vulgar useful, his strong sympathy with the popular notions of good and evil, and the openness with which he avowed that sympathy, are the secret of his influence. There was in his system no cant, no illusion. He had no anointing for broken bones, no fine theories *de finibus*, no arguments to persuade men out of their senses. He knew that men, and philosophers as well as other men, do actually love life, health, comfort, honor, security, the society of friends, and do actually dislike death, sickness, pain, poverty, disgrace, danger, separation from those to whom they are attached. He knew that religion, though it often regulates and moderates these feelings, seldom eradicates them; nor did he think it desirable for mankind that they should be eradicated. The plan of eradicating them by conceits like those of Seneca, or syllogisms like those of Chrysippus, was too preposterous to be for a moment entertained by a mind like his. He did not understand what wisdom there could be in changing names where it was impossible to change things; in denying that blindness, hunger, the gout, the rack, were evils, and calling them *ἀποπροήγμενα*;[1] in refusing to acknowledge that health, safety, plenty, were good things, and dubbing them by the name of *ἀδιάφορα*.[2] In his opinions on all these subjects, he was not a Stoic, nor an Epicurean, nor an Academic, but what would have been called by Stoics, Epicureans, and Academics, a mere *ἰδιώτης*, a mere common man. And it was precisely because he was so that his name makes so great an era in the history of the world. It was because he dug deep that he was able to pile high. It was because, in order to lay his foundations he went down into those parts of human nature which lie low, but which are not liable to change, that the fabric which he reared has risen to so stately an elevation, and stands with such immovable strength. . . .

By stimulating men to the discovery of new truth, Bacon stimulated them to employ the inductive method, the only method, even the ancient philosophers and the schoolmen themselves being judges, by which new truth can be discovered. By stimulating men to the discovery of useful truth, he furnished them with a motive to perform the inductive process well and carefully. His predecessors had been, in his phrase, not interpreters, but anticipators of nature. They had been content with the first principles at which they had arrived by the most scanty and slovenly induction. And why was this? It was, we conceive, because their philosophy proposed to itself no practical end, because it was merely an exercise of the mind. A man who wants to contrive a new machine or a new medicine has a strong motive to observe accurately and patiently, and to try experiment after experiment. But a man who merely wants a theme for disputation or declamation has no such motive. He is therefore content with premises grounded on assumption, or on the most scanty and hasty induction. Thus, we conceive, the schoolmen acted. On their foolish premises they often argued with great ability; and as their object was "assensum subjugare, non res,"[1] to be victorious in controversy not to be victorious over nature, they were consistent. For just as much logical skill could be shown in reasoning on false as on true premises. But the followers of the new philosophy, proposing to themselves the discovery of useful truth as their object, must have altogether failed of attaining that object if they had been content to build theories on superficial induction.

Bacon has remarked[2] that, in ages when philosophy was stationary, the mechanical arts went on improving. Why was this?

1 A term in Stoic philosophy for the lesser goods.
2 indifferent.

1 *Novum Organum*, lib. 1, aph. 29. (Macaulay's note.) "To conquer assent, not facts."
2 *De Augmentis*, lib. 1. (Macaulay's note.)

Evidently because the mechanic was not content with so careless a mode of induction as served the purpose of the philosopher. And why was the philosopher more easily satisfied than the mechanic? Evidently because the object of the mechanic was to mold things, whilst the object of the philosopher was only to mold words. Careful induction is not at all necessary to the making of a good syllogism. But it is indispensable to the making of a good shoe. Mechanics, therefore, have always been, as far as the range of their humble but useful callings extended, not anticipators but interpreters of nature. And when a philosophy arose, the object of which was to do on a large scale what the mechanic does on a small scale, to extend the power and to supply the wants of man, the truth of the premises, which logically is a matter altogether unimportant, became a matter of the highest importance; and the careless induction with which men of learning had previously been satisfied gave place, of necessity, to an induction far more accurate and satisfactory.

What Bacon did for inductive philosophy may, we think, be fairly stated thus. The objects of preceding speculators were objects which could be attained without careful induction. Those speculators, therefore, did not perform the inductive process carefully. Bacon stirred up men to pursue an object which could be attained only by induction, and by induction carefully performed; and consequently induction was more carefully performed. We do not think that the importance of what Bacon did for inductive philosophy has ever been overrated. But we think that the nature of his services is often mistaken, and was not fully understood even by himself. It was not by furnishing philosophers with rules for performing the inductive process well, but by furnishing them with a motive for performing it well, that he conferred so vast a benefit on society.

To give to the human mind a direction which it shall retain for ages is the rare prerogative of a few imperial spirits. It cannot, therefore, be uninteresting to inquire what was the moral and intellectual constitution which enabled Bacon to exercise so vast an influence on the world.

In the temper of Bacon — we speak of Bacon the philosopher, not of Bacon the lawyer and politician — there was a singular union of audacity and sobriety. The promises which he made to mankind might, to a superficial reader, seem to resemble the rants which a great dramatist has put into the mouth of an Oriental conqueror half-crazed by good fortune and by violent passions:

> "He shall have chariots easier than air,
> Which I will have invented; and thyself
> That art the messenger shall ride before him,
> On a horse cut out of an entire diamond,
> That shall be made to go with golden wheels,
> I know not how yet." [1]

But Bacon performed what he promised. In truth, Fletcher would not have dared to make Arbaces promise, in his wildest fits of excitement, the tithe of what the Baconian philosophy has performed.

The true philosophical temperament may, we think, be described in four words, much hope, little faith; a disposition to believe that anything, however extraordinary, may be done; an indisposition to believe that anything extraordinary has been done. In these points the constitution of Bacon's mind seems to us to have been absolutely perfect. He was at once the Mammon and the Surly [2] of his friend Ben. Sir Epicure did not indulge in visions more magnificent and gigantic. Surly did not sift evidence with keener and more sagacious incredulity.

Closely connected with this peculiarity of Bacon's temper was a striking peculiarity of his understanding. With great minuteness of observation, he had an amplitude of comprehension such as has never yet been vouchsafed to any other human being. The small fine mind of Labruyère had not a more delicate tact than the large intellect of Bacon. The *Essays* contain abundant proofs that no nice feature of character, no peculiarity in the ordering of a house, a garden, or a court-masque, would escape the notice of one whose mind was capable of taking in the whole world of knowledge. His understanding resembled the tent which the fairy Paribanou gave to Prince Ahmed. Fold it; and it seemed a toy for the hand of a lady. Spread it; and the armies of powerful Sultans might repose beneath its shade.

In keenness of observation he has been equalled, though perhaps never surpassed. But the largeness of his mind was all his own. The glance with which he surveyed the intellectual universe resembled that which the Archangel, from the golden threshold of heaven, darted down into the new creation:

1 From *A King and No King*, by John Fletcher.
2 Sir Epicure Mammon and Surly are characters in Ben Jonson's *Alchemist*.

"Round he surveyed, — and well might, where he stood
So high above the circling canopy
Of night's extended shade, — from eastern point
Of Libra, to the fleecy star which bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
Beyond the horizon." [1]

His knowledge differed from that of other men, as a terrestrial globe differs from an Atlas which contains a different country on every leaf. The towns and roads of England, France, and Germany are better laid down in the Atlas than on the globe. But while we are looking at England we see nothing of France; and while we are looking at France we see nothing of Germany. We may go to the Atlas to learn the bearings and distances of York and Bristol, or of Dresden and Prague. But it is useless if we want to know the bearings and distances of France and Martinique, or of England and Canada. On the globe we shall not find all the market towns in our own neighborhood; but we shall learn from it the comparative extent and the relative position of all the kingdoms of the earth. "I have taken," said Bacon, in a letter written when he was only thirty-one, to his uncle Lord Burleigh, "I have taken all knowledge to be my province." In any other young man, indeed in any other man, this would have been a ridiculous flight of presumption. There have been thousands of better mathematicians, astronomers, chemists, physicians, botanists, mineralogists, than Bacon. No man would go to Bacon's works to learn any particular science or art, any more than he would go to a twelve-inch globe in order to find his way from Kennington turnpike to Clapham Common. The art which Bacon taught was the art of inventing arts. The knowledge in which Bacon excelled all men was a knowledge of the mutual relations of all departments of knowledge.

The mode in which he communicated his thoughts was peculiar to him. He had no touch of that disputatious temper which he often censured in his predecessors. He effected a vast intellectual revolution in opposition to a vast mass of prejudices; yet he never engaged in any controversy: nay, we cannot at present recollect, in all his philosophical works, a single passage of a controversial character. All those works might with propriety have been put into the form which he adopted in the work entitled *Cogitata et visa:* [1] "Franciscus Baconus sic cogitavit." These are thoughts which have occurred to me: weigh them well: and take them or leave them.

Borgia said of the famous expedition of Charles the Eighth, that the French had conquered Italy, not with steel, but with chalk; for that the only exploit which they had found necessary for the purpose of taking military occupation of any place had been to mark the doors of the houses where they meant to quarter. Bacon often quoted this saying, and loved to apply it to the victories of his own intellect.[2] His philosophy he said, came as a guest, not as an enemy. She found no difficulty in gaining admittance without a contest, into every understanding fitted, by its structure and by its capacity, to receive her. In all this we think that he acted most judiciously; first, because, as he has himself remarked, the difference between his school and other schools was a difference so fundamental that there was hardly any common ground on which a controversial battle could be fought; and, secondly, because his mind, eminently observant, preeminently discursive and capacious, was, we conceive, neither formed by nature nor disciplined by habit for dialectical combat.

Though Bacon did not arm his philosophy with the weapons of logic, he adorned her profusely with all the decorations of rhetoric. His eloquence, though not untainted with the vicious taste of his age, would alone have entitled him to a high rank in literature. He had a wonderful talent for packing thought close, and rendering it portable. In wit, if by wit be meant the power of perceiving analogies between things which appear to have nothing in common, he never had an equal, not even Cowley, not even the author of *Hudibras*. Indeed, he possessed this faculty, or rather this faculty possessed him, to a morbid degree. When he abandoned himself to it without reserve, as he did in the *Sapientia Veterum*,[3] and at the end of the second book of the *De Augmentis*, the feats which he performed were not merely admirable, but portentous, and almost shocking. On those occasions we marvel at him as clowns on a fair-day marvel at a juggler, and can hardly help thinking that the devil must be in him.

These, however, were freaks in which his ingenuity now and then wantoned, with

1 *Paradise Lost*, book III, ll. 555–60.

1 *Things thought and seen.*

2 *Novum Organum*, lib. I, aph. 35 and elsewhere. (Macaulay's note.)

3 *Wisdom of the Ancients.*

carcely any other object than to astonish nd amuse. But it occasionally happened hat, when he was engaged in grave and pround investigations, his wit obtained the nastery over all his other faculties, and led im into absurdities into which no dull man ould possibly have fallen. We will give the nost striking instance which at present ocurs to us. In the third book of the *De Augmentis* he tells us that there are some principles which are not peculiar to one cience, but are common to several. That art of philosophy which concerns itself vith these principles is, in his nomenclature, lesignated as *philosophia prima*. He then proceeds to mention some of the principles vith which this *philosophia prima* is conersant. One of them is this. An infectious lisease is more likely to be communicated while it is in progress than when it has eached its height. This, says he, is true in nedicine. It is also true in morals; for we ee that the example of very abandoned men njures public morality less than the exmple of men in whom vice has not yet exinguished all good qualities. Again, he tells us that in music a discord ending in a conord is agreeable, and that the same thing nay be noted in the affections. Once more, he tells us, that in physics the energy with which a principle acts is often increased by he antiperistasis of its opposite; and that it s the same in the contests of factions. If the naking of ingenious and sparkling similitudes ike these be indeed the *philosophia prima*, ve are quite sure that the greatest philosophical work of the nineteenth century is Mr. Moore's *Lalla Rookh*. The similitudes which ve have cited are very happy similitudes. But that a man like Bacon should have taken hem for more, that he should have thought he discovery of such resemblances as these n important part of philosophy, has always ppeared to us one of the most singular acts in the history of letters.

The truth is that his mind was wonderfully quick in perceiving analogies of all sorts. But, like several eminent men whom we ould name, both living and dead, he sometimes appeared strangely deficient in the power of distinguishing rational from fanciful analogies, analogies which are arguments rom analogies which are mere illustrations, nalogies like that which Bishop Butler so ably pointed out, between natural and revealed religion, from analogies like that which Addison discovered, between the eries of Grecian gods carved by Phidias and the series of English kings painted by Kneller. This want of discrimination has led to many strange political speculations. Sir William Temple deduced a theory of government from the properties of the pyramid. Mr. Southey's whole system of finance is grounded on the phenomena of evaporation and rain. In theology, this perverted ingenuity has made still wilder work. From the time of Irenæus and Origen down to the present day, there has not been a single generation in which great divines have not been led into the most absurd expositions of Scripture, by mere incapacity to distinguish analogies proper, to use the scholastic phrase, from analogies metaphorical.[1] It is curious that Bacon has himself mentioned this very kind of delusion among the *idola specus*;[2] and has mentioned it in language which, we are inclined to think, shows that he knew himself to be subject to it. It is the vice, he tells us, of subtle minds to attach too much importance to slight distinctions; it is the vice, on the other hand, of high and discursive intellects to attach too much importance to slight resemblances; and he adds that, when this last propensity is indulged to excess, it leads men to catch at shadows instead of substances.[3]

Yet we cannot wish that Bacon's wit had been less luxuriant. For, to say nothing of the pleasure which it affords, it was in the vast majority of cases employed for the purpose of making obscure truth plain, of making repulsive truth attractive, of fixing in the mind for ever truth which might otherwise have left but a transient impression.

The poetical faculty was powerful in Bacon's mind, but not, like his wit, so powerful as occasionally to usurp the place of his reason, and to tyrannize over the whole man. No imagination was ever at once so strong and so thoroughly subjugated. It never stirred but at a signal from good sense. It stopped at the first check from good sense. Yet, though disciplined to such obedience, it gave noble proofs of its vigor. In truth, much of Bacon's life was passed in a visionary world, amidst things as strange as any that are described in the Arabian Tales, or in those romances on which the curate and barber of Don Quixote's village performed so cruel an *auto-da-fé*, amidst buildings more sumptuous than the palace of Aladdin, fountains more wonderful than the golden

1 See some interesting remarks on this subject in Bishop Berkeley's *Minute Philosopher*, dialogue IV. (Macaulay's note.)

2 idols of the cave.

3 *Novum Organum*, lib. I, aph. 55. (Macaulay's note.)

water of Parizade,[1] conveyances more rapid than the hippogryph of Ruggiero, arms more formidable than the lance of Astolfo, remedies more efficacious than the balsam of Fierabras.[2] Yet in his magnificent day-dreams there was nothing wild, nothing but what sober reason sanctioned. He knew that all the secrets feigned by poets to have been written in the books of enchanters are worthless when compared with the mighty secrets which are really written in the book of nature, and which, with time and patience, will be read there. He knew that all the wonders wrought by all the talismans in fable were trifles when compared to the wonders which might reasonably be expected from the philosophy of fruit, and that, if his words sank deep into the minds of men, they would produce effects such as superstition had never ascribed to the incantations of Merlin and Michael Scott. It was here that he loved to let his imagination loose. He loved to picture to himself the world as it would be when his philosophy should, in his own noble phrase, "have enlarged the bounds of human empire."[3] We might refer to many instances. But we will content ourselves with the strongest, the description of the House of Solomon in the *New Atlantis*. By most of Bacon's contemporaries, and by some people of our time, this remarkable passage would, we doubt not, be considered as an ingenious rodomontade, a counterpart to the adventures of Sinbad or Baron Munchausen. The truth is, that there is not to be found in any human composition a passage more eminently distinguished by profound and serene wisdom. The boldness and originality of the fiction is far less wonderful than the nice discernment which carefully excluded from that long list of prodigies everything that can be pronounced impossible, everything that can be proved to lie beyond the mighty magic of induction and time. Already some parts, and not the least startling parts, of this glorious prophecy have been accomplished, even according to the letter; and the whole, construed according to the spirit, is daily accomplishing all around us.

One of the most remarkable circumstances in the history of Bacon's mind is the order in which its powers expanded themselves. With him the fruit came first and remained till the last; the blossoms did not appear till late. In general, the development of the fancy i to the development of the judgment what th growth of a girl is to the growth of a boy The fancy attains at an earlier period to th perfection of its beauty, its power, and it fruitfulness; and, as it is first to ripen, it i also first to fade. It has generally lost some thing of its bloom and freshness before th sterner faculties have reached maturity; an is commonly withered and barren while thos faculties still retain all their energy. I rarely happens that the fancy and the judg ment grow together. It happens still mor rarely that the judgment grows faster tha the fancy. This seems, however, to hav been the case with Bacon. His boyhood an youth appear to have been singularly sedate His gigantic scheme of philosophical reform is said by some writers to have been planne before he was fifteen, and was undoubtedl planned while he was still young. He ob served as vigilantly, meditated as deeply and judged as temperately when he gave hi first work to the world as at the close of hi long career. But in eloquence, in sweetnes and variety of expression, and in richness o illustration, his later writings are far superio to those of his youth. In this respect th history of his mind bears some resemblanc to the history of the mind of Burke. The treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful though written on a subject which the coldes metaphysician could hardly treat withou being occasionally betrayed into florid writ ing, is the most unadorned of all Burke' works. It appeared when he was twenty five or twenty-six. When, at forty, he wrote the *Thoughts on the Causes of the existing Discontents*, his reason and his judgment had reached their full maturity; but his eloquence was still in its splendid dawn. At fifty, his rhetoric was quite as rich as good taste would permit; and when he died, at almost seventy it had become ungracefully gorgeous. In his youth he wrote on the emotions produced by mountains and cascades, by the master pieces of painting and sculpture, by the faces and necks of beautiful women, in the style of a Parliamentary report. In his old age he discussed treaties and tariffs in the most fervid and brilliant language of romance. It is strange that the *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*, and the *Letter to a Noble Lord* should be the productions of one man. But it is far more strange that the *Essay* should have been a production of his youth, and the *Letter* of his old age.

We will give very short specimens of

1 A reference to the "Story of the Sisters who envied their Younger Sister," from the *Arabian Nights*.

2 Ruggiero, Astolfo and Fierabras are all characters in the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto.

3 *New Atlantis*. (Macaulay's note.)

Bacon's two styles. In 1597, he wrote thus: "Crafty men contemn studies; simple men admire them; and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use: that is a wisdom without them, and won by observation. Read not to contradict, nor to believe, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man. And therefore if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, have a present wit; and if he read little, have much cunning to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise, poets witty, the mathematics subtle, natural philosophy deep, morals grave, logic and rhetoric able to contend." It will hardly be disputed that this is a passage to be "chewed and digested." We do not believe that Thucydides himself has anywhere compressed so much thought into so small a space.

In the additions which Bacon afterwards made to the *Essays*, there is nothing superior in truth or weight to what we have quoted. But his style was constantly becoming richer and softer. The following passage, first published in 1625, will show the extent of the change: "Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament; adversity is the blessing of the New, which carrieth the greater benediction and the clearer evidence of God's favor. Yet, even in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harp you shall hear as many mournful airs as carols; and the pencil of the Holy Ghost hath labored more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon. Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes; and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. We see in needle-works and embroideries it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground, than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground. Judge therefore of the pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the eye. Certainly virtue is like precious odors, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue."

It is by the *Essays* that Bacon is best known to the multitude. The *Novum Organum* and the *De Augmentis* are much talked of, but little read. They have produced indeed a vast effect on the opinions of mankind; but they have produced it through the operation of intermediate agents. They have moved the intellects which have moved the world. It is in the *Essays* alone that the mind of Bacon is brought into immediate contact with the minds of ordinary readers. There he opens an exoteric school, and talks to plain men, in language which everybody understands, about things in which everybody is interested. He has thus enabled those who must otherwise have taken his merits on trust to judge for themselves; and the great body of readers have, during several generations, acknowledged that the man who has treated with such consummate ability questions with which they are familiar may well be supposed to deserve all the praise bestowed on him by those who have sat in his inner-school.

Without any disparagement to the admirable treatise *De Augmentis*, we must say that, in our judgment, Bacon's greatest performance is the first book of the *Novum Organum*. All the peculiarities of his extraordinary mind are found there in the highest perfection. Many of the aphorisms, but particularly those in which he gives examples of the influence of the *idola*, show a nicety of observation that has never been surpassed. Every part of the book blazes with wit, but with wit which is employed only to illustrate and decorate truth. No book ever made so great a revolution in the mode of thinking, overthrew so many prejudices, introduced so many new opinions. Yet no book was ever written in a less contentious spirit. It truly conquers with chalk and not with steel. Proposition after proposition enters into the mind, is received not as an invader, but as a welcome friend, and, though previously unknown, becomes at once domesticated. But what we most admire is the vast capacity of that intellect which, without effort, takes in at once all the domains of science, all the past, the present, and the future, all the errors of two thousand years, all the encouraging signs of the passing times, all the bright hopes of the coming age. Cowley, who was among the most ardent, and not among the least discerning followers of the new philosophy, has, in one of his finest poems, compared Bacon to Moses standing on Mount Pisgah. It is to Bacon, we think, as he appears in the first book of the *Novum Organum*, that the comparison applies with peculiar felicity. There we see the great Lawgiver looking round from his lonely elevation on an infinite expanse; behind him a wilderness of dreary sands and bitter waters in which successive generations

have sojourned, always moving, yet never advancing, reaping no harvest, and building no abiding city; before him a goodly land, a land of promise, a land flowing with milk and honey. While the multitude below saw only the flat sterile desert in which they had so long wandered, bounded on every side by a near horizon, or diversified only by some deceitful mirage, he was gazing from a far higher stand on a far lovelier country, following with his eye the long course of fertilizing rivers, through ample pastures, and under the bridges of great capitals, measuring the distances of marts and havens, and portioning out all those wealthy regions from Dan to Beersheba.

It is painful to turn back from contemplating Bacon's philosophy to contemplate his life. Yet without so turning back it is impossible fairly to estimate his powers. He left the University at an earlier age than that at which most people repair thither. While yet a boy he was plunged into the midst of diplomatic business. Thence he passed to the study of a vast technical system of law, and worked his way up through a succession of laborious offices to the highest post in his profession. In the meantime he took an active part in every Parliament; he was an adviser of the Crown: he paid court with the greatest assiduity and address to all whose favor was likely to be of use to him; he lived much in society; he noted the slightest peculiarities of character and the slightest changes of fashion. Scarcely any man has led a more stirring life than that which Bacon led from sixteen to sixty. Scarcely any man has been better entitled to be called a thorough man of the world. The founding of a new philosophy, the imparting of a new direction to the minds of speculators, this was the amusement of his leisure, the work of hours occasionally stolen from the Woolsack and the Council Board. This consideration, while it increases the admiration with which we regard his intellect, increases also our regret that such an intellect should so often have been unworthily employed. He well knew the better course and had, at one time, resolved to pursue it. "I confess," said he in a letter written when he was still young, "that I have as vast contemplative ends as I have moderate civil ends." Had his civil ends continued to be moderate, he would have been, not only the Moses, but the Joshua of philosophy. He would have fulfilled a large part of his own magnificent predictions. He would have led his followers, not only to the verge, but into the heart of the promised land. He would not merely have pointed out, but would have divided the spoil. Above all, he would have left, not only a great, but a spotless name. Mankind would then have been able to esteem their illustrious benefactor. We should not then be compelled to regard his character with mingled contempt and admiration, with mingled aversion and gratitude. We should not then regret that there should be so many proofs of the narrowness and selfishness of a heart, the benevolence of which was large enough to take in all races and all ages. We should not then have to blush for the disingenuousness of the most devoted worshipper of speculative truth, for the servility of the boldest champion of intellectual freedom. We should not then have seen the same man at one time far in the van, and at another time far in the rear of his generation. We should not then be forced to own that he who first treated legislation as a science was among the last Englishmen who used the rack, that he who first summoned philosophers to the great work of interpreting nature was among the last Englishmen who sold justice. And we should conclude our survey of a life placidly and honorably, beneficently passed, "in industrious observations, grounded conclusions and profitable inventions and discoveries," with feelings very different from those with which we now turn away from the checkered spectacle of so much glory and so much shame.

1 From a Letter of Bacon to Lord Burleigh. (Macaulay's note.)

# JOHN HENRY NEWMAN (1801–1890)

John Henry Newman was born in London, February 21, 1801. He entered Trinity College, Oxford, in 1816, and six years later was elected to a fellowship at Oriel College. He was also vicar of Saint Mary's, Oxford, whither his sermons drew the more earnest and ardent undergraduates. In 1832 he made a trip to the Mediterranean, and saw something of the order and discipline of the Roman Catholic Church. While becalmed near Palermo on his return, he wrote the best known of his hymns, *Lead, Kindly Light*. He returned to England resolved to revive in the Church of England something of the splendor and power which had characterized the Church in the Middle Age. This was the object of the Oxford Movement which Newman and his friends launched in 1833, often called the "Tractarian Movement" because its arguments were put forth in the series of *Tracts for the Times*. With his views of the divine and authoritative character of the Church, Newman found it difficult to account for the claims both of the Anglican and the Roman churches, and in 1845 he joined the latter body. He was for four years rector of the Catholic University of Dublin, but the remainder of his long life he spent at the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri at Edgbaston. He was made a Cardinal by Pope Leo XIII in 1879. He died in 1890.

In 1864, the Reverend Charles Kingsley published a statement invoking Newman's authority for a statement that truth is not a virtue of the Roman clergy. Newman replied, and to close the controversy published his *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, an autobiography giving a candid account of his religious life and conversion to the Roman Church. This work did much to gain for Newman the position among his countrymen which he held until his death and to strengthen the position of his Church. While rector of the University at Dublin he delivered the lectures which were later collected in *The Idea of a University*. His *Grammar of Assent* (1880) is an explanation of religious faith as the operation of a special sense for truth, the illative sense, which is above all human reason. He published also many volumes of sermons and lectures, and one of poetry which contains *The Dream of Gerontius*, a description of the hours of death and after death of a Christian with a definiteness and naïveté which remind one of the original pre-Raphaelite painters.

Newman's English prose style is the most classically perfect of the nineteenth century. He writes with precise choice of word and delicate rhythm of sentence, an intimate sense of humor or of tenderness, and at times a sustained and sonorous eloquence. His style is in fact a mirror of his character in its high seriousness and grave beauty, which before his death made him a saint of the English people.

Newman's works are published by Longmans, Green & Co. The *Apologia* and *Essays on University Subjects* are included in Everyman's Library. A volume of selections with an admirable introductory essay by Lewis E. Gates is published by Henry Holt & Co.

## APOLOGIA PRO VITA SUA

### 1864

The following selection is from Chapter V, which gives a general account of Newman's religious views. It is a statement of the intellectual position of a believer in the authority of the Church as opposed to the scientific faith in conclusions drawn from observation and experiment.

Starting then with the being of a God (which, as I have said, is as certain to me as the certainty of my own existence, though when I try to put the grounds of that certainty into logical shape I find a difficulty in doing so in mood and figure to my satisfaction), I look out of myself into the world of men, and there I see a sight which fills me with unspeakable distress. The world seems simply to give the lie to that great truth, of which my whole being is so full; and the effect upon me is, in consequence, as a matter of necessity, as confusing as if it denied that I am in existence myself. If I looked into a mirror, and did not see my face, I should have the sort of feeling which actually comes upon me, when I look into this living busy world, and see no reflexion of its Creator. This is, to me, one of the great difficulties of this absolute primary truth, to which I referred just now. Were it not for this voice, speaking so clearly in my conscience and my heart, I should be an atheist, or a pantheist, or a polytheist when I looked into the world. I am speaking for myself only; and I am far from denying the real force of the arguments in proof of a God, drawn from the general facts of human society, but these do not warm me or enlighten me; they do not take away the winter of my desolation, or make the buds unfold and the leaves grow within me, and my moral being rejoice. The sight of the world is nothing else than the prophet's scroll, full of "lamentations, and mourning and woe."

To consider the world in its length and breadth, its various history, the many races of man, their starts, their fortunes, their

mutual alienation, their conflicts; and then their ways, habits, governments, forms of worship; their enterprises, their aimless courses, their random achievements and acquirements, the impotent conclusion of long-standing facts, the tokens so faint and broken, of a superintending design, the blind evolution of what turn out to be great powers or truth, the progress of things, as if from unreasoning elements, not towards final causes, the greatness and littleness of man, his far-reaching aims, his short duration, the curtain hung over his futurity, the disappointments of life, the defeat of good, the success of evil, physical pain, mental anguish, the prevalence and intensity of sin, the pervading idolatries, the corruptions, the dreary hopeless irreligion, that condition of the whole race, so fearfully yet exactly described in the Apostle's words, "having no hope and without God in the world" — all this is a vision to dizzy and appal; and inflicts upon the mind the sense of a profound mystery, which is absolutely beyond human solution.

What shall be said to this heart-piercing, reason-bewildering fact? I can only answer, that either there is no Creator, or this living society of men is in a true sense discarded from His presence. Did I see a boy of good make and mind, with the tokens on him of a refined nature, cast upon the world without provision, unable to say whence he came, his birth-place or his family connections, I should conclude that there was some mystery connected with his history, and that he was one, of whom, from one cause or other, his parents were ashamed. Thus only should I be able to account for the contrast between the promise and condition of his being. And so I argue about the world; *if* there be a God, *since* there is a God, the human race is implicated in some terrible aboriginal calamity. It is out of joint with the purposes of its Creator. This is a fact, a fact as true as the fact of its existence; and thus the doctrine of what is theologically called original sin becomes to me almost as certain as that the world exists, and as the existence of God.

And now, supposing it were the blessed and loving will of the Creator to interfere in this anarchical condition of things, what are we to suppose would be the methods which might be necessarily or naturally involved in His object of mercy? Since the world is in so abnormal a state, surely it would be no surprise to me, if the interposition were of necessity equally extraordinary — or what is called miraculous. But that subject does not directly come into the scope of my prese remarks. Miracles as evidence, involve a argument; and of course I am thinking some means which does not immediately ru into argument. I am rather asking wha must be the face-to-face antagonist, by whic to withstand and baffle the fierce energy passion, and the all-corroding, all-dissolvi scepticism of the intellect in religious i quiries? I have no intention at all to den that truth is the real object of our reason, an that, if it does not attain to truth, either th premiss or the process is in fault; but I am n speaking of right reason, but of reason as acts in fact and concretely in fallen man. know that even the unaided reason, whe correctly exercised, leads to a belief in Go in the immortality of the soul, and in a futu retribution; but I am considering it actuall and historically; and in this point of view, do not think I am wrong in saying that i tendency is towards a simple unbelief i matters of religion. No truth, howeve sacred, can stand against it, in the long run and hence it is that in the pagan world, whe our Lord came, the last traces of the religiou knowledge of former times were all but dis appearing from those portions of the world i which the intellect had been active and ha had a career.

And in these latter days, in like manne outside the Catholic Church things are tend ing, with far greater rapidity than in tha old time from the circumstance of the age, t atheism in one shape or other. What scene, what a prospect, does the whole c Europe present at this day! and not onl Europe, but every government and ever civilization through the world, which is unde the influence of the European mind! Espe cially, for it most concerns us, how sorrowful in the view of religion, even taken in its mos elementary, most attenuated form, is th spectacle presented to us by the educate intellect of England, France, and Germany Lovers of their country and of their race, re ligious men, external to the Catholic Church have attempted various expedients to arres fierce wilful human nature in its onward course, and to bring it into subjection. Th necessity of some form of religion for th interests of humanity, has been generally acknowledged: but where was the concrete representative of things invisible, which would have the force and the toughness neces sary to be a breakwater against the deluge Three centuries ago the establishment of re ligion, material, legal, and social, was gener

ally adopted as the best expedient for the purpose, in those countries which separated from the Catholic Church; and for a long time it was successful; but now the crevices of those establishments are admitting the enemy. Thirty years ago, education was relied upon: ten years ago there was a hope that wars would cease for ever, under the influence of commercial enterprise and the reign of the useful and fine arts; but will any one venture to say that there is anything anywhere on this earth, which will afford a fulcrum for us, whereby to keep the earth from moving onwards?

The judgment, which experience passes on establishments or education, as a means of maintaining religious truth in this anarchical world, must be extended even to Scripture, though Scripture be divine. Experience proves surely that the Bible does not answer a purpose for which it was never intended. It may be accidentally the means of the conversion of individuals; but a book, after all, cannot make a stand against the wild living intellect of man, and in this day it begins to testify, as regards its own structure and contents, to the power of that universal solvent, which is so successfully acting upon religious establishments.

Supposing then it to be the Will of the Creator to interfere in human affairs, and to make provisions for retaining in the world a knowledge of Himself, so definite and distinct as to be proof against the energy of human scepticism, in such a case — I am far from saying that there was no other way — but there is nothing to surprise the mind, if He should think fit to introduce a power into the world, invested with the prerogative of infallibility in religious matters. Such a provision would be a direct, immediate, active, and prompt means of withstanding the difficulty; it would be an instrument suited to the need; and, when I find that this is the very claim of the Catholic Church, not only do I feel no difficulty in admitting the idea, but there is a fitness in it, which recommends it to my mind. And thus I am brought to speak of the Church's infallibility, as a provision adapted by the mercy of the Creator, to preserve religion in the world, and to restrain that freedom of thought, which of course in itself is one of the greatest of our natural gifts, and to rescue it from its own suicidal excesses. And let it be observed that, neither here nor in what follows, shall I have occasion to speak directly of the revealed body of truths, but only as they bear upon the defence of natural religion. I say, that a power, possessed of infallibility in religious teaching, is happily adapted to be a working instrument, in the course of human affairs, for smiting hard and throwing back the immense energy of the aggressive intellect: — and in saying this, as in the other things that I have to say, it must still be recollected that I am all along bearing in mind my main purpose, which is a defence of myself.

I am defending myself here from a plausible charge brought against Catholics, as will be seen better as I proceed. The charge is this: — that I, as a Catholic, not only make profession to hold doctrines which I cannot possibly believe in my heart, but that I also believe in the existence of a power on earth, which at its own will imposes upon men any new set of *credenda*, when it pleases, by a claim to infallibility; in consequence, that my own thoughts are not my own property; that I cannot tell that to-morrow I may not have to give up what I hold to-day, and that the necessary effect of such a condition of mind must be a degrading bondage, or a bitter inward rebellion relieving itself in secret infidelity, or the necessity of ignoring the whole subject of religion in a sort of disgust, and of mechanically saying everything that the Church says, and leaving to others the defence of it. As then I have above spoken of the relation of my mind towards the Catholic Creed, so now I shall speak of the attitude which it takes up in the view of the Church's infallibility.

And first, the initial doctrine of the infallible teacher must be an emphatic protest against the existing state of mankind. Man had rebelled against his Maker. It was this that caused the divine interposition: and the first act of the divinely accredited messenger must be to proclaim it. The Church must denounce rebellion as of all possible evils the greatest. She must have no terms with it; if she would be true to her Master, she must ban and anathematize it. This is the meaning of a statement which has furnished matter for one of those special accusations to which I am at present replying: I have, however, no fault at all to confess in regard to it; I have nothing to withdraw, and in consequence I here deliberately repeat it. I said, "The Catholic Church holds it better for the sun and moon to drop from heaven, for the earth to fail, and for all the many millions on it to die of starvation in extremest agony, as far as temporal affliction goes, than that one

soul, I will not say, should be lost, but should commit one single venial sin, should tell one wilful untruth, or should steal one poor farthing without excuse." I think the principle here enunciated to be the mere preamble in the formal credentials of the Catholic Church, as an Act of Parliament might begin with a "*Whereas.*" It is because of the intensity of the evil which has possession of mankind, that a suitable antagonist has been provided against it; and the initial act of that divinely-commissioned power is of course to deliver her challenge and to defy the enemy. Such a preamble then gives a meaning to her position in the world, and an interpretation to her whole course of teaching and action.

In like manner she has ever put forth, with most energetic distinctness, those other great elementary truths, which either are an explanation of her mission or give a character to her work. She does not teach that human nature is irreclaimable, else wherefore should she be sent? not that it is to be shattered and reversed, but to be extricated, purified, and restored; not that it is a mere mass of evil, but that it has the promise of great things, and even now has a virtue and a praise proper to itself. But in the next place she knows and she preaches that such a restoration, as she aims at effecting in it, must be brought about, not simply through any outward provision of preaching and teaching, even though it be her own, but from a certain inward spiritual power or grace imparted directly from above, and which is in her keeping. She has it in charge to rescue human nature from its misery, but not simply by raising it upon its own level, but by lifting it up to a higher level than its own. She recognizes in it real moral excellence though degraded, but she cannot set it free from earth except by exalting it towards heaven. It was for this end that a renovating grace was put into her hands, and therefore from the nature of the gift, as well as from the reasonableness of the case, she goes on, as a further point, to insist, that all true conversion must begin with the first springs of thought, and to teach that each individual man must be in his own person one whole and perfect temple of God, while he is also one of the living stones which build up a visible religious community. And thus the distinctions between nature and grace, and between outward and inward religion, become two further articles in what I have called the preamble of her divine commission.

Such truths as these she vigorously reiterates, and pertinaceously inflicts upon mankind; as to such she observes no half-measures, no economical reserve, no delicacy of prudence. "Ye must be born again," is the simple, direct form of words which she uses after her Divine Master; "your whole nature must be re-born, your passions, and your affections, and your aims, and your conscience, and your will, must all be bathed in a new element, and reconsecrated to your Maker, and, the last not the least, your intellect." It was for repeating these points of her teaching in my own way, that certain passages of one of my volumes have been brought into the general accusation which has been made against my religious opinions. The writer has said that I was demented if I believed, and unprincipled if I did not believe in my statement that a lazy, ragged, filthy, story-telling beggar-woman, if chaste, sober, cheerful, and religious, had a prospect of heaven, which was absolutely closed to an accomplished statesman, or lawyer, or noble, be he ever so just, upright, generous, honorable, and conscientious, unless he had also some portion of the divine Christian grace; yet I should have thought myself defended from criticism by the words which our Lord used to the chief priests, "The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." And I was subjected again to the same alternative of imputations, for having ventured to say that consent to an unchaste wish was indefinitely more heinous than any lie viewed apart from its causes, its motives, and its consequences; though a lie, viewed under the limitation of these conditions, is a random utterance, an almost outward act, not directly from the heart, however disgraceful it may be, whereas we have the express words of our Lord to the doctrine that "whoso looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." On the strength of these texts I have surely as much right to believe in these doctrines as to believe in the doctrine of original sin, or that there is a supernatural revelation, or that a Divine Person suffered, or that punishment is eternal.

Passing now from what I have called the preamble of that grant of power, with which the Church is invested, to that power itself, Infallibility, I make two brief remarks: on the one hand, I am not here determining anything about the essential seat of that power, because that is a question doctrinal, not historical and practical; nor, on the other hand, am I extending the direct subject-

matter, over which that power has jurisdiction, beyond religious opinion: — and now as to the power itself.

This power, viewed in its fullness, is as tremendous as the giant evil which has called for it. It claims, when brought into exercise in the legitimate manner, for otherwise of course it is but dormant, to have for itself a sure guidance into the very meaning of every portion of the divine message in detail, which was committed by our Lord to His apostles. It claims to know its own limits, and to decide what it can determine absolutely and what it cannot. It claims, moreover, to have a hold upon statements not directly religious, so far as this, to determine whether they indirectly relate to religion, and, according to its own definitive judgment, to pronounce whether or not, in a particular case, they are consistent with revealed truth. It claims to decide magisterially, whether infallibly or not, that such and such statements are or are not prejudicial to the apostolic *depositum* of faith, in their spirit or in their consequences, and to allow them, or condemn and forbid them, accordingly. It claims to impose silence at will on any matters, or controversies, of doctrine, which on its own *ipse dixit* it pronounces to be dangerous, or inexpedient, or inopportune. It claims that whatever may be the judgment of Catholics upon such acts, these acts should be received by them with those outward marks of reverence, submission, and loyalty, which Englishmen, for instance, pay to the presence of their sovereign, without public criticism on them, as being in their matter inexpedient, or in their manner violent or harsh. And lastly, it claims to have the right of inflicting spiritual punishment, of cutting off from the ordinary channels of the divine life, and of simply excommunicating, those who refuse to submit themselves to its formal declarations. Such is the infallibility lodged in the Catholic Church, viewed in the concrete, as clothed and surrounded by the appendages of its high sovereignty: it is, to repeat what I said above, a supereminent prodigious power sent upon earth to encounter and master a giant evil.

And now, having thus described it, I profess my own absolute submission to its claim. I believe the whole revealed dogma as taught by the apostles, as committed by the apostles to the Church, and as declared by the Church to me. I receive it, as it is infallibly interpreted by the authority to whom it is thus committed, and (implicitly) as it shall be, in like manner, further interpreted by that same authority till the end of time. I submit, moreover, to the universally received traditions of the Church, in which lies the matter of those new dogmatic definitions which are from time to time made, and which in all times are the clothing and the illustration of the Catholic dogma as already defined. And I submit myself to those other decisions of the Holy See, theological or not, through the organs which it has itself appointed, which, waiving the question of their infallibility, on the lowest ground come to me with a claim to be accepted and obeyed. Also, I consider that, gradually and in the course of ages, Catholic inquiry has taken certain definite shapes, and has thrown itself into the form of a science, with a method and a phraseology of its own, under the intellectual handling of great minds, such as St. Athanasius, St. Augustine, and St. Thomas;[1] and I feel no temptation at all to break in pieces the great legacy of thought thus committed to us for these latter days.

All this being considered to be a profession *ex animo*, as on my own part, so also on the part of the Catholic body, as far as I know it, it will at first sight be said that the restless intellect of our common humanity is utterly weighed down to the repression of all independent effort and action whatever, so that, if this is to be the mode of bringing it into order, it is brought into order only to be destroyed. But this is far from the result, far from what I conceive to be the intention of that high Providence who has provided a great remedy for a great evil — far from borne out by the history of the conflict between infallibility and reason in the past, and the prospect of it in the future. The energy of the human intellect "does from opposition grow;" it thrives and is joyous, with a tough elastic strength, under the terrible blows of the divinely-fashioned weapon, and is never so much itself as when it has lately been overthrown. It is the custom with Protestant writers to consider that, whereas there are two great principles in action in the history of religion, authority and private judgment, they have all the private judgment to themselves, and we have the full inheritance and the superincumbent oppression of authority. But this is not so; it is the vast Catholic body itself, and it only, which affords an arena for both combatants in that awful, never-dying duel. It is necessary for the very life of re-

1 St. Thomas Aquinas (1227–1274).

ligion, viewed in its large operations and its history, that the warfare should be incessantly carried on. Every exercise of infallibility is brought out into act by an intense and varied operation of the reason, from within and without, and provokes again a reaction of reason against it; and, as in a civil polity the state exists and endures by means of the rivalry and collision, the encroachments and defeats of its constituent parts, so in like manner Catholic Christendom is no simple exhibition of religious absolutism, but it presents a continuous picture of authority and private judgment alternately advancing and retreating as the ebb and flow of the tide; — it is a vast assemblage of human beings with wilful intellects and wild passions, brought together into one by the beauty and the majesty of a superhuman power — into what may be called a large reformatory or training-school, not to be sent to bed, not to be buried alive, but for the melting, refining, and moulding, as in some moral factory, by an incessant noisy process (if I may proceed to another metaphor), of the raw material of human nature, so excellent, so dangerous, so capable of divine purposes.

St. Paul says in one place that this apostolical power is given him to edification, and not to destruction. There can be no better account of the infallibility of the Church. It is a supply for a need, and it does not go beyond that need. Its object is, and its effect also, not to enfeeble the freedom or vigor of human thought in religious speculation, but to resist and control its extravagance. What have been its great works? All of them in the distinct province of theology: — to put down Arianism, Eutychianism, Pelagianism, Manichæism, Lutheranism, Jansenism. Such is the broad result of its action in the past; — and now as to the securities which are given us that so it ever will act in time to come.

First, infallibility cannot act outside of a definite circle of thought, and it must in all its decisions, or *definitions*, as they are called, profess to be keeping within it. The great truths of the moral law, of natural religion, and of apostolical faith, are both its boundary and its foundation. It must not go beyond them, and it must ever appeal to them. Both its subject-matter, and its articles in that subject-matter, are fixed. Thus, in illustration, it does not extend to statements, however sound and evident, which are mere logical conclusions from the articles of the apostolic *depositum;* again, it can pronoun nothing about the persons of heretics, who works fall within its legitimate province. must ever profess to be guided by Scriptu and by tradition. It must refer to the pa ticular apostolic truth which it is enforcin or (what is called) *defining*. Nothing, the can be presented to me, in time to come, part of the faith, but what I ought already have received, and have not actually r ceived, (if not) merely because it has not bee told me. Nothing can be imposed upon m different in kind from what I hold already much less contrary to it. The new trut which is promulgated, if it is to be called nev must be at least homogeneous, cognate, in plicit, viewed relatively to the old truth. must be what I may even have guessed, wished, to be included in the apostolic revela tion; and at least it will be of such a charac ter, that my thoughts readily concur in it c coalesce with it, as soon as I hear it. Per haps I and others actually have always be lieved it, and the only question which is no decided in my behalf, is that I am hencefort to believe that I have only been holding wha the apostles held before me. . . .

## THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY

### (1852)

In 1852 Newman delivered a series of lectures as rector of the Catholic University at Dublin on *The Scope and Nature of University Education* which, with other lectures on university subjects later constituted the volume called *The Idea o a University*. The following lecture was th fourth of the original series, later numbered five It is an excellent example of Newman's easy and persuasive style combined with logical ex actness of thought. His view of the value o knowledge, and the justification of philosophy may be compared with Macaulay's in his *Essay on Bacon.*

### Discourse V

#### LIBERAL KNOWLEDGE ITS OWN END

A University may be considered with ref erence either to its Students or to its Stud ies; and the principle, that all Knowledge is a whole and the separate Sciences parts of one which I have hitherto been using in behalf o its studies, is equally important when we direct our attention to its students. Now then I turn to the students, and shall consider the education which, by virtue of this principle, a University will give them; and thus I shall be introduced, Gentlemen, to the

second question, which I proposed to discuss, viz., whether and in what sense its teaching, viewed relatively to the taught, carries the attribute of Utility along with it.

I

I have said that all branches of knowledge are connected together, because the subject-matter of knowledge is intimately united in itself, as being the acts and the work of the Creator. Hence it is that the Sciences, into which our knowledge may be said to be cast, have multiplied bearings one on another, and an internal sympathy, and admit, or rather demand, comparison and adjustment. They complete, correct, balance, each other. This consideration, if well-founded, must be taken into account, not only as regards the attainment of truth, which is their common end, but as regards the influence which they exercise upon those whose education consists in the study of them. I have said already, that to give undue prominence to one is to be unjust to another; to neglect or supersede these is to divert those from their proper object. It is to unsettle the boundary lines between science and science, to disturb their action, to destroy the harmony which binds them together. Such a proceeding will have a corresponding effect when introduced into a place of education. There is no science but tells a different tale, when viewed as a portion of a whole, from what it is likely to suggest when taken by itself, without the safeguard, as I may call it, of others.

Let me make use of an illustration. In the combination of colors, very different effects are produced by a difference in their selection and juxtaposition; red, green, and white change their shades, according to the contrast to which they are submitted. And, in like manner, the drift and meaning of a branch of knowledge varies with the company in which it is introduced to the student. If his reading is confined simply to one subject, however such division of labor may favor the advancement of a particular pursuit, a point into which I do not here enter, certainly it has a tendency to contract his mind. If it is incorporated with others, it depends on those others as to the kind of influence which it exerts upon him. Thus the Classics, which in England are the means of refining the taste, have in France subserved the spread of revolutionary and deistical doctrines. In Metaphysics, again, Butler's *Analogy of Religion* which has had so much to do with the conversion of members of the University of Oxford, appeared to Pitt and others, who had received a different training, to operate only in the direction of infidelity. And so again, Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, as I think he tells us in the narrative of his life, felt the science of Mathematics to indispose the mind to religious belief, while others see in its investigations the best defence of the Christian Mysteries. In like manner, I suppose, Arcesilas would not have handled logic as Aristotle, nor Aristotle have criticized poets as Plato; yet reasoning and poetry are subject to scientific rules.

It is a great point then to enlarge the range of studies which a University professes, even for the sake of the students; and, though they cannot pursue every subject which is open to them, they will be the gainers by living among those and under those who represent the whole circle. This I conceive to be the advantage of a seat of universal learning, considered as a place of education. An assemblage of learned men, zealous for their own sciences, and rivals of each other, are brought, by familiar intercourse and for the sake of intellectual peace, to adjust together the claims and relations of their respective subjects of investigation. They learn to respect, to consult, to aid each other. Thus is created a pure and clear atmosphere of thought, which the student also breathes, though in his own case he only pursues a few sciences out of the multitude. He profits by an intellectual tradition, which is independent of particular teachers, which guides him in his choice of subjects, and duly interprets for him those which he chooses. He apprehends the great outlines of knowledge, the principles on which it rests, the scale of its parts, its lights and its shades, its great points and its little, as he otherwise cannot apprehend them. Hence it is that his education is called "Liberal." A habit of mind is formed which lasts through life, of which the attributes are, freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation, and wisdom; or what in a former Discourse I have ventured to call a philosophical habit. This then I would assign as the special fruit of the education furnished at a University, as contrasted with other places of teaching or modes of teaching. This is the main purpose of a University in its treatment of its students.

And now the question is asked me, What is the *use* of it? And my answer will constitute the main subject of the Discourses which are to follow.

2

Cautious and practical thinkers, I say, will ask of me, what, after all, is the gain of this Philosophy, of which I make such account, and from which I promise so much. Even supposing it to enable us to give the degree of confidence exactly due to every science respectively, and to estimate precisely the value of every truth which is anywhere to be found, how are we better for this master view of things, which I have been extolling? Does it not reverse the principle of the division of labor? will practical objects be obtained better or worse by its cultivation? to what then does it lead? where does it end? what does it do? how does it profit? what does it promise? Particular sciences are respectively the basis of definite arts, which carry on to results tangible and beneficial the truths which are the subjects of the knowledge attained; what is the Art of this science of sciences? what is the fruit of such a Philosophy? what are we proposing to effect, what inducements do we hold out to the Catholic community, when we set about the enterprise of founding a University?

I am asked what is the end of University Education, and of the Liberal or Philosphical Knowledge which I conceive it to impart: I answer, that what I have already said has been sufficient to show that it has a very tangible, real, and sufficient end, though the end cannot be divided from that knowledge itself. Knowlege is capable of being its own end. Such is the constitution of the human mind, that any kind of knowledge, if it be really such, is its own reward. And if this is true of all knowledge, it is true also of that special Philosophy, which I have made to consist in a comprehensive view of truth in all its branches, of the relations of science to science, of their mutual bearings, and their respective values. What the worth of such an acquirement is, compared with other objects which we seek — wealth or power or honor or the conveniences and comforts of life, I do not profess here to discuss; but I would maintain, and mean to show, that it is an object, in its own nature so really and undeniably good, as to be the compensation of a great deal of thought in the compassing, and a great deal of trouble in the attaining.

Now, when I say that Knowledge is, not merely a means to something beyond it, or the preliminary of certain arts into which it naturally resolves, but an end sufficient to rest in and to pursue for its own sake, surely I am uttering no paradox, for I am stati what is both intelligible in itself, and h ever been the common judgment of phil ophers and the ordinary feeling of mankin I am saying what at least the public opini of this day ought to be slow to deny, consi ering how much we have heard of late yea in opposition to Religion, of entertainin curious, and various knowledge. I am butsa ing what whole volumes have been writt to illustrate, by a "selection from the recor of Philosophy, Literature, and Art, in all ag and countries, of a body of examples, to sho how the most unpropitious circumstanc have been unable to conquer an ardent d sire for the acquisition of knowledge.' That further advantages accrue to us and r dound to others by its possession, over ar above what it is in itself, I am very f indeed from denying; but, independent these, we are satisfying a direct need of o nature in its very acquisition; and, where our nature, unlike that of the inferior cre tion, does not at once reach its perfectio but depends, in order to it, on a number external aids and appliances, Knowledge, one of the principal gifts or accessories t which it is completed, is valuable for what i very presence in us does for us after the ma ner of a habit, even though it be turned to n further account, nor subserve any direct en

3

Hence it is that Cicero, in enumerating th various heads of mental excellence, lays dow the pursuit of Knowledge for its own sak as the first of them. "This pertains most all to human nature," he says, "for we a all of us drawn to the pursuit of Knowledg in which to excel we consider excellen whereas to mistake, to err, to be ignorant, t be deceived, is both an evil and a disgrace." And he considers Knowledge the very fir object to which we are attracted, after th supply of our physical wants. After th calls and duties of our animal existence, a they may be termed, as regards ourselve our family, and our neighbors, follows, h tells us, "the search after truth. Accor ingly, as soon as we escape from the pressu of necessary cares, forthwith we desire to se to hear, to learn; and consider the knowledg of what is hidden or is wonderful a conditio of our happiness."

This passage, though it is but one of man

1 *Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties.* Intro (Newman's note.)

2 Cicero. *Offic. init.* (Newman's note.)

similar passages in a multitude of authors, I take for the very reason that it is so familiarly known to us; and I wish you to observe, Gentlemen, how distinctly it separates the pursuit of Knowledge from those ulterior objects to which certainly it can be made to conduce, and which are, I suppose, solely contemplated by the persons who would ask of me the use of a University or Liberal Education. So far from dreaming of the cultivation of Knowledge directly and mainly in order to our physical comfort and enjoyment, for the sake of life and person, of health, of the conjugal and family union, of the social tie and civil security, the great Orator implies, that it is only after our physical and political needs are supplied, and when we are "free from necessary duties and cares," that we are in a condition for "desiring to see, to hear, and to learn." Nor does he contemplate in the least degree the reflex or subsequent action of Knowledge, when acquired, upon those material goods which we set out by securing before we seek it; on the contrary, he expressly denies its bearing upon social life altogether, strange as such a procedure is to those who live after the rise of the Baconian philosophy, and he cautions us against such a cultivation of it as will interfere with our duties to our fellow-creatures. "All these methods," he says, "are engaged in the investigation of truth; by the pursuit of which to be carried off from public occupations is a transgression of duty. For the praise of virtue lies altogether in action; yet intermissions often occur, and then we recur to such pursuits; not to say that the incessant activity of the mind is vigorous enough to carry us on in the pursuit of knowledge, even without any exertion of our own." The idea of benefiting society by means of "the pursuit of science and knowledge" did not enter at all into the motives which he would assign for their cultivation.

This was the ground of the opposition which the elder Cato made to the introduction of Greek Philosophy among his countrymen, when Carneades[1] and his companions, on occasion of their embassy, were charming the Roman youth with their eloquent expositions of it. The fit representative of a practical people, Cato estimated everything by what it produced; whereas the Pursuit of Knowledge promised nothing beyond Knowledge itself. He despised that refinement or enlargement of mind of which he had no experience.

[1] Carneades, Critolaus and Diogenes, Athenian philosophers, visited Rome in 156 B.C. on a political embassy, and while there lectured on philosophy.

4

/ Things, which can bear to be cut off from everything else and yet persist in living, must have life in themselves; pursuits, which issue in nothing, and still maintain their ground for ages, which are regarded as admirable, though they have not as yet proved themselves to be useful, must have their sufficient end in themselves, whatever it turn out to be. And we are brought to the same conclusion by considering the force of the epithet, by which the knowledge under consideration is popularly designated. It is common to speak of "*liberal* knowledge," of the "*liberal* arts and studies," and of a "*liberal* education," as the especial characteristic or property of a University and of a gentleman; what is really meant by the word? Now, first, in its grammatical sense it is opposed to *servile;* and by "servile work" is understood, as our catechisms inform us, bodily labor, mechanical employment, and the like, in which the mind has little or no part. Parallel to such works are those arts, if they deserve the name, of which the poet speaks, which owe their origin and their method to hazard, not to skill; as, for instance, the practice and operations of an empiric. As far as this contrast may be considered as a guide into the meaning of the word, liberal knowledge and liberal pursuits are exercises of mind, of reason, of reflection.

But we want something more for its explanation, for there are bodily exercises which are liberal, and mental exercises which are not so. For instance, in ancient times the practitioners in medicine were commonly slaves; yet it was an art as intellectual in its nature, in spite of the pretence, fraud, and quackery with which it might then, as now, be debased, as it was heavenly in its aim. And so in like manner, we contrast a liberal education with a commercial education or a professional; yet no one can deny that commerce and the professions afford scope for the highest and most diversified powers of mind. There is then a great variety of intellectual exercises, which are not technically called "liberal"; on the other hand, I say, there are exercises of the body which do receive that appellation. Such, for instance, was the palæstra, in ancient times; such the Olympic games, in which strength and dexterity of body as well as of mind gained the prize. In Xenophon we read of the young

Persian nobility being taught to ride on horseback and to speak the truth; both being among the accomplishments of a gentleman. War, too, however rough a profession, has ever been accounted liberal, unless in cases when it becomes heroic, which would introduce us to another subject.

Now comparing these instances together, we shall have no difficulty in determining the principle of this apparent variation in the application of the term which I am examining. Manly games, or games of skill, or military prowess, though bodily, are, it seems, accounted liberal; on the other hand, what is merely professional, though highly intellectual, nay, though liberal in comparison of trade and manual labor, is not simply called liberal, and mercantile occupations are not liberal at all. Why this distinction? because that alone is liberal knowledge, which stands on its own pretensions, which is independent of sequel, expects no complement, refuses to be *informed* (as it is called) by any end, or absorbed into any art, in order duly to present itself to our contemplation. The most ordinary pursuits have this specific character, if they are self-sufficient and complete; the highest lose it, when they minister to something beyond them. It is absurd to balance, in point of worth and importance, a treatise on reducing fractures with a game of cricket or a fox-chase; yet of the two the bodily exercise has that quality which we call "liberal," and the intellectual has it not. And so of the learned professions altogether, considered merely as professions; although one of them be the most popularly beneficial, and another the most politically important, and the third the most intimately divine of all human pursuits, yet the very greatness of their end, the health of the body, or of the commonwealth, or of the soul, diminishes, not increases, their claim to the appellation "liberal," and that still more, if they are cut down to the strict exigencies of that end. If, for instance, Theology, instead of being cultivated as a contemplation, be limited to the purposes of the pulpit or be represented by the catechism, it loses — not its usefulness, not its divine character, not its meritoriousness (rather it increases these qualities by such charitable condescension) — but it does lose the particular attribute which I am illustrating; just as a face worn by tears and fasting loses its beauty, or a laborer's hand loses its delicateness; — for Theology thus exercised is not simple knowledge, but rather is an art or a business making use of Theology. And thus it appears that even what supernatural need not be liberal, nor need hero be a gentleman, for the plain reason tha one idea is not another idea. And in lik manner the Baconian Philosophy, by usin its physical sciences in the service of ma does thereby transfer them from the order o Liberal Pursuits to, I do not say the inferio but the distinct class of the Useful. And, t take a different instance, hence again, as evident, whenever personal gain is the mo tive, still more distinctive an effect has upon the character of a given pursuit; thu racing, which was a liberal exercise in Greece forfeits its rank in times like these, so far as is made the occasion of gambling.

All that I have been now saying is summe up in a few characteristic words of the grea Philosopher. "Of possessions," he says "those rather are useful, which bear fruit those *liberal, which tend to enjoyment.* B fruitful, I mean, which yield revenue; b enjoyable, where *nothing accrues of conse quence beyond the use.*" [1]

5

Do not suppose, Gentlemen, that in thu appealing to the ancients, I am throwin back the world two thousand years, and fet tering Philosophy with the reasonings o paganism. While the world lasts, will Aris totle's doctrine on these matters last, for h is the oracle of nature and of truth. Whil we are men, we cannot help, to a great extent being Aristotelians, for the great Master doe but analyze the thoughts, feelings, views, an opinions of human kind. He has told us th meaning of our own words and ideas, befor we were born. In many subject-matters, t think correctly, is to think like Aristotle; an we are his disciples whether we will or no though we may not know it. Now, as to th particular instance before us, the wor "liberal" as applied to Knowledge and Edu cation, expresses a specific idea, which eve has been, and ever will be, while the nature o man is the same, just as the idea of th Beautiful is specific, or of the Sublime, or o the Ridiculous, or of the Sordid. It is i the world now, it was in the world then; and as in the case of the dogmas of faith, it i illustrated by a continuous historical tradi tion, and never was out of the world, from the time it came into it. There have indeed been differences of opinion from time t time, as to what pursuits and what arts came under that idea, but such differences are but

1 Aristot. *Rhet.* 1, 5. (Newman's note.)

an additional evidence of its reality. That idea must have a substance in it, which has maintained its ground amid these conflicts and changes, which has ever served as a standard to measure things withal, which has passed from mind to mind unchanged, when there was so much to color, so much to influence any notion or thought whatever, which was not founded in our very nature. Were it a mere generalization, it would have varied with the subjects from which it was generalized; but though its subjects vary with the age, it varies not itself. The palæstra may seem a liberal exercise to Lycurgus, and illiberal to Seneca; coach-driving and prize-fighting may be recognized in Elis, and be condemned in England; music may be despicable in the eyes of certain moderns, and be in the highest place with Aristotle and Plato — (and the case is the same in the particular application of the idea of Beauty, or of Goodness, or of Moral Virtue, there is a difference of tastes, a difference of judgments) — still these variations imply, instead of discrediting, the archetypal idea, which is but a previous hypothesis or condition, by means of which issue is joined between contending opinions, and without which there would be nothing to dispute about.

I consider, then, that I am chargeable with no paradox, when I speak of a Knowledge which is its own end, when I call it liberal knowledge, or a gentleman's knowledge, when I educate for it, and make it the scope of a University. And still less am I incurring such a charge, when I make this acquisition consist, not in Knowledge in a vague and ordinary sense, but in that Knowledge which I have especially called Philosophy or, in an extended sense of the word, Science; for whatever claims Knowledge has to be considered as a good, these it has in a higher degree when it is viewed not vaguely, not popularly, but precisely and transcendently as Philosophy. Knowledge, I say, is then especially liberal, or sufficient for itself, apart from every external and ulterior object, when and so far as it is philosophical, and this I proceed to show.

6

Now bear with me, Gentlemen, if what I am about to say, has at first sight a fanciful appearance. Philosophy, then, or Science, is related to Knowledge in this way: — Knowledge is called by the name of Science or Philosophy, when it is acted upon, informed, or if I may use a strong figure, impregnated by Reason. Reason is the principle of that intrinsic fecundity of Knowledge, which, to those who possess it, is its especial value, and which dispenses with the necessity of their looking abroad for any end to rest upon external to itself. Knowledge, indeed, when thus exalted into a scientific form, is also power; not only is it excellent in itself, but whatever such excellence may be, it is something more, it has a result beyond itself. Doubtless; but that is a further consideration, with which I am not concerned. I only say that, prior to its being a power, it is a good; that it is, not only an instrument, but an end. I know well it may resolve itself into an art, and terminate in a mechanical process, and in tangible fruit; but it also may fall back upon that Reason, which informs it, and resolve itself into Philosophy. In one case it is called Useful Knowledge, in the other Liberal. The same person may cultivate it in both ways at once; but this again is a matter foreign to my subject; here I do but say that there are two ways of using Knowledge, and in matter of fact those who use it in one way are not likely to use it in the other, or at least in a very limited measure. You see, then, here are two methods of Education; the end of the one is, to be philosophical, of the other to be mechanical; the one rises towards general ideas, the other is exhausted upon what is particular and external. Let me not be thought to deny the necessity, or to decry the benefit, of such attention to what is particular and practical, as belongs to the useful or mechanical arts; life could not go on without them; we owe our daily welfare to them; their exercise is the duty of the many, and we owe to the many a debt of gratitude for fulfilling that duty. I only say that Knowledge, in proportion as it tends more and more to be particular, ceases to be Knowledge. It is a question whether Knowledge can in any proper sense be predicated of the brute creation; without pretending to metaphysical exactness of phraseology, which would be unsuitable to an occasion like this, I say, it seems to me improper to call that passive sensation, or perception of things, which brutes seem to possess, by the name of Knowledge. When I speak of Knowledge, I mean something intellectual, something which grasps what it perceives through the senses; something which takes a view of things; which sees more than the senses convey; which reasons upon what it sees, and while it sees; which invests it with an idea. It expresses itself, not in a mere enunciation,

but by an enthymeme: it is of the nature of science from the first, and in this consists its dignity. The principle of real dignity in Knowledge, its worth, its desirableness, considered irrespectively of its results, is this germ within it of a scientific or a philosophical process. This is how it comes to be an end in itself; this is why it admits of being called Liberal. Not to know the relative disposition of things is the state of slaves or children; to have mapped out the Universe is the boast, or at least the ambition, of Philosophy.

Moreover, such knowledge is not a mere extrinsic or accidental advantage, which is ours to-day and another's to-morrow, which may be got up from a book, and easily forgotten again, which we can command or communicate at our pleasure, which we can borrow for the occasion, carry about in our hand, and take into the market; it is an acquired illumination, it is a habit, a personal possession, and an inward endowment. And this is the reason, why it is more correct, as well as more usual, to speak of a University as a place of education, than of instruction, though, when knowledge is concerned, instruction would at first sight have seemed the more appropriate word. We are instructed, for instance, in manual exercises, in the fine and useful arts, in trades, and in ways of business; for these are methods, which have little or no effect upon the mind itself, are contained in rules committed to memory, to tradition, or to use, and bear upon an end external to themselves. But education is a higher word; it implies an action upon our mental nature, and the formation of a character; it is something individual and permanent, and is commonly spoken of in connection with religion and virtue. When, then, we speak of the communication of Knowledge as being Education, we thereby really imply that that Knowledge is a state or condition of mind; and since cultivation of mind is surely worth seeking for its own sake, we are thus brought once more to the conclusion, which the word "Liberal" and the word "Philosophy" have already suggested, that there is a Knowledge, which is desirable, though nothing come of it, as being of itself a treasure, and a sufficient remuneration of years of labor.

7

This, then, is the answer which I am prepared to give to the question with which I opened this Discourse. Before going on to speak of the object of the Church in taking up Philosophy, and the uses to which she puts it, I am prepared to maintain that Philosophy is its own end, and, as I conceive I have now begun proving it. I am prepared to maintain that there is a knowledge worth possessing for what it is, and not merely for what it does; and what minutes remain to me to-day I shall devote to the removal of some portion of the indistinctness and confusion with which the subject may in some minds be surrounded.

It may be objected then, that, when we profess to seek Knowledge for some end or other beyond itself, whatever it be, we speak intelligibly; but that, whatever men may have said, however obstinately the idea may have kept its ground from age to age, still it is simply unmeaning to say that we seek Knowledge for its own sake, and for nothing else; for that it ever leads to something beyond itself, which therefore is its end, and the cause why it is desirable; — moreover, that this end is twofold, either of this world or of the next; that all knowledge is cultivated either for secular objects or for eternal: that if it is directed to secular objects, it is called Useful Knowledge, if to eternal, Religious or Christian Knowledge; — in consequence, that if, as I have allowed, this Liberal Knowledge does not benefit the body or estate, it ought to benefit the soul; but if the fact be really so, that it is neither a physical or a secular good on the one hand, nor a moral good on the other, it cannot be a good at all, and is not worth the trouble which is necessary for its acquisition.

And then I may be reminded that the professors of this Liberal or Philosophical Knowledge have themselves, in every age, recognized this exposition of the matter, and have submitted to the issue in which it terminates; for they have ever been attempting to make men virtuous; or, if not, at least have assumed that refinement of mind was virtue, and that they themselves were the virtuous portion of mankind. This they have professed on the one hand; and on the other, they have utterly failed in their professions, so as ever to make themselves a proverb among men, and a laughing-stock both to the grave and the dissipated portion of mankind, in consequence of them. Thus they have furnished against themselves both the ground and the means of their own exposure, without any trouble at all to any one else. In a word, from the time that Athens was the University of the world, what has Philosophy taught men, but to

promise without practising, and to aspire without attaining? What has the deep and lofty thought of its disciples ended in but eloquent words? Nay, what has its teaching ever meditated, when it was boldest in its remedies for human ill, beyond charming us to sleep by its lessons, that we might feel nothing at all? like some melodious air, or rather like those strong and transporting perfumes, which at first spread their sweetness over everything they touch, but in a little while do but offend in proportion as they once pleased us. Did Philosophy support Cicero under the disfavor of the fickle populace, or nerve Seneca to oppose an imperial tyrant? It abandoned Brutus, as he sorrowfully confessed, in his greatest need, and it forced Cato, as his panegyrist strangely boasts, into the false position of defying heaven. How few can be counted among its professors, who, like Polemo, were thereby converted from a profligate course, or like Anaxagoras, thought the world well lost in exchange for its possession? The philosopher in *Rasselas* taught a superhuman doctrine, and then succumbed without an effort to a trial of human affection.

"He discoursed," we are told, "with great energy on the government of the passions. His look was venerable, his action graceful, his pronunciation clear, and his diction elegant. He showed, with great strength of sentiment and variety of illustration, that human nature is degraded and debased, when the lower faculties predominate over the higher. He communicated the various precepts given, from time to time, for the conquest of passion, and displayed the happiness of those who had obtained the important victory, after which man is no longer the slave of fear, nor the fool of hope. . . . He enumerated many examples of heroes immovable by pain or pleasure, who looked with indifference on those modes or accidents to which the vulgar give the names of good and evil."

Rasselas in a few days found the philosopher in a room half darkened, with his eyes misty, and his face pale. "Sir," said he, "you have come at a time when all human friendship is useless; what I suffer cannot be remedied, what I have lost cannot be supplied. My daughter, my only daughter, from whose tenderness I expected all the comforts of my age, died last night of a fever." "Sir," said the prince, "mortality is an event by which a wise man can never be surprised; we know that death is always near, and it should therefore always be expected." "Young man," answered the philosopher, "you speak like one who has never felt the pangs of separation." "Have you, then, forgot the precept," said Rasselas, "which you so powerfully enforced? . . . consider that external things are naturally variable, but truth and reason are always the same." "What comfort," said the mourner, "can truth and reason afford me? Of what effect are they now, but to tell me that my daughter will not be restored?"

8

Better, far better, to make no professions, you will say, than to cheat others with what we are not, and to scandalize them with what we are. The sensualist, or the man of the world, at any rate is not the victim of fine words, but pursues a reality and gains it. The Philosophy of Utility, you will say, Gentlemen, has at least done its work; and I grant it, — it aimed low, but it has fulfilled its aim. If that man of great intellect who has been its Prophet in the conduct of life played false to his own professions, he was not bound by his philosophy to be true to his friend or faithful in his trust. Moral virtue was not the line in which he undertook to instruct men; and though, as the poet calls him, he were the "meanest" of mankind, he was so in what may be called his private capacity, and without any prejudice to the theory of induction. He had a right to be so, if he chose, for anything that the Idols of the den or the theatre had to say to the contrary. His mission was the increase of physical enjoyment and social comfort;[1] and most wonderfully, most awfully has he fulfilled his conception and his design. Almost day by day have we fresh and fresh shoots, and buds, and blossoms, which are to ripen into fruit, on that magical tree of Knowledge which he planted, and to which none of us perhaps, except the very poor, but owes, if not his present life, at least his daily food, his health, and general well-being. He was the divinely provided minister of temporal benefits to all of us so great, that, whatever I am forced to think of him as a man, I have not the heart, from mere gratitude, to speak of him severely. And, in spite of the tendencies of his philosophy, which are, as we see at this day, to depreciate, or to trample on Theology, he has himself, in his writings, gone out of his way, as if with a prophetic misgiving of those tend-

1 It will be seen that on the whole I agree with Lord Macaulay in his Essay on Bacon's Philosophy. I do not know whether he would agree with me. (Newman's note.)

encies, to insist on it as the instrument of that beneficent Father,[1] who, when He came on earth in visible form, took on Him first and most prominently the office of assuaging the bodily wounds of human nature. And truly, like the old mediciner in the tale, "he sat diligently at his work, and hummed, with cheerful countenance, a pious song;" and then in turn "went out singing into the meadows so gaily, that those who had seen him from afar might well have thought it was a youth gathering flowers for his beloved, instead of an old physician gathering healing herbs in the morning dew."[2]

Alas, that men, in the action of life or in their heart of hearts, are not what they seem to be in their moments of excitement, or in their trances or intoxications of genius — so good, so noble, so serene! Alas, that Bacon too in his own way should after all be but the fellow of those heathen philosophers who in their disadvantages had some excuse for their inconsistency, and who surprise us rather in what they did say than in what they did not do! Alas, that he too, like Socrates or Seneca, must be stripped of his holy-day coat, which looks so fair, and should be but a mockery amid his most majestic gravity of phrase; and, for all his vast abilities, should, in the littleness of his own moral being, but typify the intellectual narrowness of his school! However, granting all this, heroism after all was not his philosophy: I cannot deny he has abundantly achieved what he proposed. His is simply a Method whereby bodily discomforts and temporal wants are to be most effectually removed from the greatest number; and already, before it has shown any signs of exhaustion, the gifts of nature, in their most artificial shapes and luxurious profusion and diversity, from all quarters of the earth, are, it is undeniable, by its means brought even to our doors, and we rejoice in them.

## 9

Useful Knowledge then, I grant, has done its work; and Liberal Knowledge as certainly has not done its work — supposing, that is, as the objectors assume, its direct end, like Religious Knowledge, is to make men better; but this I will not for an instant allow, and unless I allow it, those objectors have said nothing to the purpose. I admit, rather I maintain, what they have been urging, for I consider Knowledge to have its end in itse For all its friends, or its enemies, may say insist upon it, that it is as real a mistake burden it with virtue or religion as with t mechanical arts. Its direct business is n to steel the soul against temptation, or console it in affliction, any more than to s the loom in motion, or to direct the stea carriage; be it ever so much the means or t condition of both material and moral a vancement, still, taken by and in itself, it little mends our hearts as it improves o temporal circumstances. And if its eulogis claim for it such a power, they commit tl very same kind of encroachment on a pro ince not their own as the political economi who should maintain that his science ed cated him for casuistry or diplomac Knowledge is one thing, virtue is anothe good sense is not conscience, refinement not humility, nor is largeness and justness view faith. Philosophy, however enligh ened, however profound, gives no comman over the passions, no influential motives, n vivifying principles. Liberal Educatio makes not the Christian, not the Catholi but the gentleman. It is well to be a gentl man, it is well to have a cultivated intellec a delicate taste, a candid, equitable, dis passionate mind, a noble and courteous bear ing in the conduct of life; — these are th connatural qualities of a large knowledge they are the objects of a University; I ar advocating, I shall illustrate and insist upo them; but still, I repeat, they are no guar antee for sanctity or even for conscientious ness, they may attach to the man of th world, to the profligate, to the heartless — pleasant, alas, and attractive as he show when decked out in them. Taken by them selves, they do but seem to be what they ar not; they look like virtue at a distance, bu they are detected by close observers, and o the long run; and hence it is that they ar popularly accused of pretence and hypocrisy not, I repeat, from their own fault, but be cause their professors and their admirer persist in taking them for what they are not and are officious in arrogating for them praise to which they have no claim. Quarry the granite rock with razors, or moor the vessel with a thread of silk; then may you hope with such keen and delicate instruments as human knowledge and humar reason to contend against these giants, the passion and the pride of man.

Surely we are not driven to theories of this kind in order to vindicate the value and

1 *De Augment.* IV, 2. See Macaulay's Essay. (Newman's note.)

2 Fouqué's *Unknown Patient.* (Newman's note.)

dignity of Liberal Knowledge. Surely the real grounds on which its pretensions rest are not so very subtle or abstruse, so very strange or improbable. Surely it is very intelligible to say, and that is what I say here, that Liberal Education, viewed in itself, is simply the cultivation of the intellect as such, and its object is nothing more or less than intellectual excellence. Every thing has its own perfection, be it higher or lower in the scale of things; and the perfection of one is not the perfection of another. Things animate, inanimate, visible, invisible, all are good in their kind, and have a *best* of themselves, which is an object of pursuit. Why do you take such pains with your garden or your park? You see to your walks and turf and shrubberies; to your trees and drives; not as if you meant to make an orchard of the one, or corn or pasture land of the other, but because there is a special beauty in all that is goodly in wood, water, plain, and slope, brought all together by art into one shape, and grouped into one whole. Your cities are beautiful, your palaces, your public buildings, your territorial mansions, your churches; and their beauty leads to nothing beyond itself. There is a physical beauty and a moral: there is a beauty of person, there is a beauty of our moral being, which is natural virtue; and in like manner there is a beauty, there is a perfection, of the intellect. There is an ideal perfection in these various subject-matters, towards which individual instances are seen to rise, and which are the standards for all instances whatever. The Greek divinities and demigods, as the statuary has molded them, with their symmetry of figure, and their high forehead and their regular features, are the perfection of physical beauty. The heroes, of whom history tells, Alexander, or Cæsar, or Scipio, or Saladin, are the representatives of that magnanimity or self-mastery which is the greatness of human nature. Christianity too has its heroes, and in the supernatural order, and we call them Saints. The artist puts before him beauty of feature and form; the poet, beauty of mind; the preacher, the beauty of grace: then intellect too, I repeat, has its beauty, and it has those who aim at it. To open the mind, to correct it, to refine it, to enable it to know, and to digest, master, rule, and use its knowledge, to give it power over its own faculties, application, flexibility, method, critical exactness, sagacity, resource, address, eloquent expression, is an object as intelligible (for here we are inquiring, not what the object of a Liberal Education is worth, nor what use the Church makes of it, but what it is in itself), I say, an object as intelligible as the cultivation of virtue, while, at the same time, it is absolutely distinct from it.

10

This indeed is but a temporal object, and a transitory possession: but so are other things in themselves which we make much of and pursue. The moralist will tell us that man, in all his functions, is but a flower which blossoms and fades, except so far as a higher principle breathes upon him, and makes him and what he is immortal. Body and mind are carried on into an eternal state of being by the gifts of Divine Munificence; but at first they do but fail in a failing world; and if the powers of intellect decay, the powers of the body have decayed before them, and, as an Hospital or an Almshouse, though its end be ephemeral, may be sanctified to the service of religion, so surely may a University, even were it nothing more than I have as yet described it. We attain to heaven by using this world well, though it is to pass away; we perfect our nature, not by undoing it, but by adding to it what is more than nature, and directing it towards aims higher than its own.

## ALFRED TENNYSON (1809–1892)

Alfred Tennyson was born August 6, 1809, in Somersby, in Lincolnshire, where his father was rector. He attended the village school at Louth, which he disliked, leaving to continue his studies under his father at home, and writing much verse, largely under the influence of Byron. In 1826 he and his brother Charles, with a few contributions from Frederick, published *Poems by Two Brothers;* and two years later together they entered Trinity College, Cambridge. Here Tennyson became a member of a group nicknamed, because of their moral earnestness, "The Apostles," among whom were his closest friend Arthur Hallam, son of the historian, Spedding, the Bacon scholar, and Milnes, later Lord Houghton, the biographer of Keats. Thackeray and Edward Fitzgerald, both in Cambridge at the time, were not members. In 1829 Tennyson won

the Chancellor's Medal with a poem on Timbuctoo; in 1830 he published *Poems, Chiefly Lyric* and the next year, because of his father's illness, he left the university without a degree. In 18 he produced a volume of *Poems*, which was attacked by most of the reviewers, especially Lockha in the *Quarterly*. In the following year Tennyson was further depressed by the sudden dea of Hallam, who was engaged to his sister. For ten years he published nothing. Whatever t causes, these were years of doubt, introspection, pain. In 1837 he moved the family — now his charge after his two elder brothers left home — from Somersby to Epping, near Londc In spite of the companionship of most of the prominent writers in town, Tennyson remain restless and sensitive. Gradually the call of the sea and the moors of Lincolnshire, the yearni for adventure and dangerous freedom, were stilled, and the desire for comfort, physical and mor for peace and faith and certainty, became dominant in him.

The publication in 1842 of *Poems* brought Tennyson genuine recognition, and, four years lat a small pension. In 1847 appeared *The Princess;* and in 1850 occurred three events which det mined largely the course of his future life: his marriage to Emily Sellwood, to whom he had be engaged for over a dozen years; the publication of *In Memoriam;* and his appointment as Po Laureate to succeed Wordsworth. From now until his death, Tennyson is the spokesman ar singer of Victorian England, voicing its ideals and feelings.

In 1853 he acquired a house at Farringford on the Isle of Wight, where he was a distant neighbc and warm admirer, of Her Majesty the Queen at Osborne. In 1852 appeared the splendid *O on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, in 1854 *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, in 1855 *Maud*, 1859 the first *Idylls of the King*, in 1864 *Enoch Arden*. In 1869 he built Aldworth, a Gothic stru ture, in Surrey, near the border of Sussex. This and Farringford were his two homes until h death. In 1875 he began a series of poetic plays, most striking of which were *Queen Mary*, 187 *Harold*, 1876; and *Becket*, 1884 — the "trilogy of England." In the latter year Tennyson w made a baron. Although much hurt by the death, in 1886, of Lionel, his younger son, and t the passing, to use his own words, "of the old reverence and chivalrous feeling in the world," h continued working to the end. He died October 6, 1892, and was given a public funeral in Wes minster Abbey.

Tennyson surpassed in popularity all other Victorian poets. To-day the inevitable reactic has set in, and he is called, by Chesterton, "the exquisitely ornamental extinguisher on the flan of the first revolutionary poets." In many of his poems he is cautious and complacently didacti expressing commonplace formulæ sentimentally in verses that nearly always, however, exhib skill and polish. As a lyric poet Tennyson is greatest, and as such, at his best, is second to r writer in English. His supreme lyrics, as those in *Maud*, *In Memoriam*, and *The Princess*, are perfect blending of emotional impulse and exquisite form.

Tennyson's tragedy is that in the complex and bitter fight between theory and fact, the old an the new, which is at the bottom of Victorianism, he too often turned to compromise. He remair a monument of a great period, an era regarded by many as "the golden age of missed oppo tunities." But it cannot be forgotten that "to perplexed and anxious minds he brought complet intellectual and moral relief" (Nicolson), and still does.

The best one-volume editions are Macmillan's, and the Cambridge (Houghton Mifflin Company The most recent study of Tennyson is Harold Nicolson's stimulating analysis and summar (Houghton Mifflin Company). There are good commentaries by Waugh, S. Brooke, and other The official biography has been written by his son Hallam (Macmillan).

## THE POET

This poem, written while Tennyson was still an undergraduate, shows how early he was conscious of his mission as a poet.

The poet in a golden clime was born,
With golden stars above;
Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death, thro' good and ill,
He saw thro' his own soul.
The marvel of the everlasting will,
An open scroll,
Before him lay; with echoing feet he threade
The secretest walks of fame:
The viewless arrows of his thoughts wer
headed
And winged with flame,

Like Indian reeds blown from his silve
tongue,
And of so fierce a flight,
From Calpe[1] unto Caucasus they sung,
Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which bor
Them earthward till they lit;
Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field flower
The fruitful wit

[1] Gibraltar.

Cleaving took root, and springing forth anew
Where'er they fell, behold,
Like to the mother plant in semblance, grew
A flower all gold,

And bravely furnished all abroad to fling
The winged shafts of truth,
To throng with stately blooms the breathing spring
Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs with beams,
Tho' one did fling the fire;
Heaven flowed upon the soul in many dreams
Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the world
Like one great garden showed,
And thro' the wreaths of floating dark upcurled,
Rare sunrise flowed.

And Freedom reared in that august sunrise
Her beautiful bold brow,
When rites and forms before his burning eyes
Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden robes
Sunned by those orient skies;
But round about the circles of the globes
Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment's hem was traced in flame
WISDOM, a name to shake
All evil dreams of power — a sacred name.
And when she spake,

Her words did gather thunder as they ran,
And as the lightning to the thunder
Which follows it, riving the spirit of man,
Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words. No sword
Of wrath her right arm whirled,
But one poor poet's scroll, and with *his* word
She shook the world.

Pub. 1830.

## THE LADY OF SHALOTT

Tennyson here tells the story of Launcelot and Elaine very simply, but against a mystical background. The Lady of Shalott emerges from her world of shadows into the world of reality through her interest in Launcelot. The form Shalott, for the English Astolat, is probably from the Italian Scalotta (French, Escalot).

### PART 1

On either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;
And thro' the field the road runs by
To many-towered Camelot;[1]
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veiled,
Slide the heavy barges trailed
By slow horses; and unhailed
The shallop flitteth silken-sailed
Skimming down to Camelot:
But who hath seen her wave her hand?
Or at the casement seen her stand?
Or is she known in all the land,
The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
Down to towered Camelot;
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers "'Tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott."

### PART 2

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colors gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott.

1 King Arthur's city.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot;
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-haired page in crimson clad,
Goes by to towered Camelot;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two:
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
And music, went to Camelot;
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed:
"I am half-sick of shadows," said
The Lady of Shalott.

PART 3

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A redcross knight for ever kneeled
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glittered free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot;
And from his blazoned baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armor rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewelled shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burned like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot;
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glowed;
On burnished hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flowed
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flashed into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She looked down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide;
The mirror cracked from side to side;
"The curse is come upon me," cried
The Lady of Shalott.

PART 4

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining
Heavily the low sky raining
Over towered Camelot;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
*The Lady of Shalott.*

And down the river's dim expanse —
Like some bold seër in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance —
With a glassy countenance
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right —
The leaves upon her falling light —
Thro' the noises of the night
She floated down to Camelot;
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,

And her eyes were darkened wholly,
Turned to towered Camelot;
For ere she reached upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
A corse between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
*The Lady of Shalott.*

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they crossed themselves for fear,
All the knights at Camelot:
But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, "She has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace,
The Lady of Shalott."

Pub. 1832.

## ŒNONE

The theme of the poem is the tragic sorrow of Œnone after she was deserted by Paris, the son of King Priam of Troy.

There lies a vale in Ida,[1] lovelier
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
The swimming vapor slopes athwart the glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand
The lawns and meadow-ledges midway down
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars
The long brook falling thro' the cloven ravine
In cataract after cataract to the sea.
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus[2]
Stands up and takes the morning; but in front
The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
Troas[3] and Ilion's[4] columned citadel,
The crown of Troas.
Hither came at noon
Mournful Œnone, wandering forlorn
Of Paris, once her playmate[5] on the hills.

1 A mountain range near Troy.
2 One of the peaks of Ida
3 The territory in Asia Minor where Troy is located.
4 Troy's.
5 When Paris was a shepherd, after he had been abandoned by his mother, who feared that he would cause the downfall of Troy.

Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her neck
Floated her hair or seemed to float in rest.
She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,
Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-shade
Sloped downward to her seat from the upper cliff.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill;
The grasshopper is silent in the grass;
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the winds are dead.
The purple flowers droop, the golden bee
Is lily-cradled; I alone awake.
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,
And I am all aweary of my life.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Hear me, O Earth, hear me, O Hills, O Caves
That house the cold crowned snake! O mountain brooks,
I am the daughter of a River-God,
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls
Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,[1]
A cloud that gathered shape: for it may be
That, while I speak of it, a little while
My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
I waited underneath the dawning hills,
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,
And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine.
Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,
Leading a jet-black goat white-horned, white-hooved,
Came up from reedy Simois[2] all alone.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Far-off the torrent called me from the cleft;
Far up the solitary morning smote
The streaks of virgin snow. With down-dropt eyes
I sat alone; white-breasted like a star
Fronting the dawn he moved; a leopard skin
Drooped from his shoulder, but his sunny hair
Clustered about his temples like a God's;

1 The walls of Troy, according to one legend, rose to Apollo's music.
2 A brook on Mt. Ida.

And his cheek brightened as the foam-bow brightens
When the wind blows the foam, and all my heart
Went forth to embrace him coming ere he came.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He smiled, and opening out his milk-white palm
Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,
That smelt ambrosially, and while I looked
And listened, the full-flowing river of speech
Came down upon my heart.
"'My own Œnone,
Beautiful-browed Œnone, my own soul,
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind ingraven
"For the most fair," would seem to award it thine,
As lovelier than whatever Oread [1] haunt
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
Of movement, and the charm of married brows.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,
And added 'This was cast upon the board,
When all the full-faced presence of the Gods
Ranged [2] in the halls of Peleus [3]; whereupon
Rose feud, with question unto whom 'twere due;
But light-foot Iris [4] brought it yester-eve,
Delivering, that to me, by common voice
Elected umpire, Herè [5] comes to-day,
Pallas [6] and Aphrodite,[7] claiming each
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the cave
Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
It was the deep midnoon; one silvery cloud
Had lost his way between the piney sides
Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,
And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,
Lotos and lilies; and a wind arose,
And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,
This way and that, in many a wild festoon
Ran riot, garland in the gnarled boughs
With bunch and berry and flower thro' and thro'.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
On the tree-tops, a crested peacock lit,
And o'er him flowed a golden cloud, and leaned
Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew.
Then first I heard the voice of her [1] to whom
Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that grows
Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods
Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made
Proffer of royal power, ample rule
Unquestioned, overflowing revenue
Wherewith to embellish state, 'from many vale
And river-sundered champaign clothed with corn,
Or labored mines undrainable of ore.
Honor,' she said, 'and homage, tax and toll
From many an inland town and haven large,
Mast-thronged beneath her shadowing citadel
In glassy bays among her tallest towers.'

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Still she spake on and still she spake of power,
'Which in all action is the end of all;
Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred
And throned of wisdom — from all neighbor crowns
Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand
Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon from me,
From me, heaven's queen, Paris, to thee king-born,
A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,
Should come most welcome, seeing men, in power
Only, are likest gods, who have attained
Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
Above the thunder, with undying bliss
In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit
Out at arm's-length, so much the thought of power
Flattered his spirit; but Pallas where she stood
Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs
O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear
Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
The while, above, her full and earnest eye

1 mountain-nymph.
2 At the wedding feast of Peleus and Thetis.
3 The father of Achilles.
4 The Rainbow, messenger of the Gods.
5 Juno. 6 Minerva. 7 Venus.

1 Juno.

Over her snow-cold breast and angry cheek
Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply.

"'Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.[1]
Yet not for power, (power of herself
Would come uncalled for), but to live by law,
Acting the law we live by without fear;
And, because right is right, to follow right
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Again she said: 'I woo thee not with gifts.
Sequel of guerdon could not alter me
To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,
So shalt thou find me fairest.
Yet, indeed,
If gazing on divinity disrobed
Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,
Unbiassed by self-profit, oh! rest thee sure
That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,
So that my vigor, wedded to thy blood,
Shall strike within thy pulses, like a God's,
To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,
Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
Sinewed with action, and the full-grown will,
Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,
Commeasure perfect freedom.'
"Here she ceased,
And Paris pondered, and I cried, 'O Paris,
Give it to Pallas!' but he heard me not,
Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me!

"O mother Ida, many-fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Idalian[2] Aphrodite beautiful,
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian[2] wells,
With rosy slender fingers backward drew
From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair
Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
And shoulder; from the violets her light foot
Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form
Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,
The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh
Half-whispered in his ear, 'I promise thee
The fairest and most loving wife in Greece.'[3]
She spoke and laughed; I shut my sight for fear:
But when I looked, Paris had raised his arm,
And I beheld great Herè's angry eyes,
As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
And I was left alone within the bower;
And from that time to this I am alone,
And I shall be alone until I die.

"Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Fairest — why fairest wife? am I not fair?
My love hath told me so a thousand times.
Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,
When I past by a wild and wanton pard,[1]
Eyed like the evening star, with playful tail
Crouched fawning in the weed. Most loving is she?
Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my arms
Were wound about thee, and my hot lips prest
Close, close to thine in that quick-falling dew
Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
They came, they cut away my tallest pines,
My dark tall pines, that plumed the craggy ledge
High over the blue gorge, and all between
The snowy peak and snow-white cataract
Fostered the callow eaglet — from beneath
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the dark morn
The panther's roar came muffled, while I sat
Low in the valley. Never, never more
Shall lone Œnone see the morning mist
Sweep thro' them; never see them overlaid
With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,
Between the loud stream and the trembling stars.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I wish that somewhere in the ruined folds,
Among the fragments tumbled from the glens,
Of the dry thickets, I could meet with her,
The Abominable,[2] that uninvited came
Into the fair Peleïan banquet-hall,
And cast the golden fruit upon the board,
And bred this change; that I might speak my mind
And tell her to her face how much I hate
Her presence, hated both of Gods and men.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand times,

1 Much of Tennyson's philosophy is incorporated in this speech of Pallas's.
2 Idalium and Paphos were towns in Cyprus famous for their worship of Venus.
3 Helen.

1 leopard. 2 Eris, the goddess of strife.

In this green valley, under this green hill,
Ev'n on this hand, and sitting on this stone?
Sealed it with kisses? watered it with tears?
O happy tears, and how unlike to these!
O happy heaven, how canst thou see my face?
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my weight?
O death, death, death, thou ever-floating cloud,
There are enough unhappy on this earth,
Pass by the happy souls, that love to live;
I pray thee, pass before my light of life,
And shadow all my soul, that I may die.
Thou weighest heavy on the heart within,
Weigh heavy on my eyelids; let me die.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
Do shape themselves within me, more and more,
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
Dead sounds at night come from the inmost hills,
Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother
Conjectures of the features of her child
Ere it is born. Her child! — a shudder comes
Across me: never child be born of me,
Unblest, to vex me with his father's eyes!

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to me
Walking the cold and starless road of death
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love
With the Greek woman. I will rise and go
Down into Troy, and ere the stars come forth
Talk with the wild Cassandra,[1] for she says
A fire dances before her, and a sound
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.[2]
What this may be I know not, but I know
That, wheresoe'er I am by night and day,
All earth and air seem only burning fire."

Pub. 1832.

## THE PALACE OF ART

In this poem, Tennyson presents symbolically, but with emotion, the torment of an artist as he meditates upon the question of art and life. The poem concludes with the hope of a nobler art devoted to the service of humanity.

I built my soul a lordly pleasure-house,
Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.
I said, "O Soul, make merry and carouse,
Dear soul, for all is well."

A huge crag-platform, smooth as burnished brass,
I chose. The ranged ramparts bright
From level meadow-bases of deep grass
Suddenly scaled the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or shelf
The rock rose clear, or winding stair.
My soul would live alone unto herself
In her high palace there.

And "while the world runs round and round," I said,
"Reign thou apart, a quiet king,
Still as, while Saturn whirls, his steadfast shade
Sleeps on his luminous ring."

To which my soul made answer readily:
"Trust me, in bliss I shall abide
In this great mansion, that is built for me,
So royal-rich and wide."
. . . . . .
Four courts I made, East, West and South and North,
In each a squared lawn, wherefrom
The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth
A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there ran row
Of cloisters, branched like mighty woods,
Echoing all night to that sonorous flow
Of spouted fountain-floods;

And round the roofs a gilded gallery
That lent broad verge [1] to distant lands,
Far as the wild swan wings, to where the sky
Dipt down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in one swell
Across the mountain streamed below
In misty folds, that floating as they fell
Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue seemed
To hang on tiptoe, tossing up
A cloud of incense of all odor steamed
From out a golden cup.

So that she thought, "And who shall gaze upon
My palace with unblinded eyes,

1 The daughter of Priam, who could foretell events but who never was believed.

2 Cassandra predicted the Trojan war and the fall of Troy.

1 horizon.

While this great bow will waver in the sun,
And that sweet incense rise?"

For that sweet incense rose and never failed,
And, while day sank or mounted higher,
The light aërial gallery, golden-railed,
Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stained and traced,
Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires
From shadowed grots of arches interlaced,
And tipt with frost-like spires.
. . . . . .

Full of long-sounding corridors it was,
That over-vaulted grateful gloom,
Thro' which the livelong day my soul did pass,
Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the palace stood,
All various, each a perfect whole
From living Nature, fit for every mood
And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green and blue,
Showing a gaudy summer-morn,
Where with puffed cheek the belted hunter blew
His wreathed bugle-horn.

One seemed all dark and red — a tract of sand,
And some one pacing there alone,
Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,
Lit with a low large moon.

One showed an iron coast and angry waves.
You seemed to hear them climb and fall
And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing caves,
Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow
By herds upon an endless plain,
The ragged rims of thunder brooding low,
With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil.
In front they bound the sheaves. Behind
Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,[1]
And hoary[2] to the wind.

And one, a foreground black with stones and slags;
Beyond, a line of heights; and higher
All barred with long white cloud the scornful crags;
And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home — gray twilight poured
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep — all things in order stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape fair.
As fit for every mood of mind,
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was there,
Not less than truth designed.
. . . . . .

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,
In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,
Beneath branch-work of costly sardonyx
Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-walled city on the sea,
Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair
Wound with white roses, slept St. Cecily;[1]
An angel looked at her.

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise,
A group of Houris[2] bowed to see
The dying Islamite, with hands and eyes
That said, We wait for thee.

Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son[3]
In some fair space of sloping greens
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,
And watched by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,
To list a foot-fall, ere he saw
The wood-nymph,[4] stayed the Ausonian king[5] to hear
Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrailed,[6]
And many a tract of palm and rice,
The throne of Indian Cama[7] slowly sailed
A summer fanned with spice.

Or sweet Europa's[8] mantle blew unclasped,
From off her shoulder backward borne;

1 olives.
2 Because of the whitish underside of the leaves.

1 The patron saint of music.
2 Mohammed's beautiful attendants.
3 King Arthur. 4 Egeria.
5 Numa Pompilius, second king of Rome, taught by Egeria.
6 indented.
7 The Cupid of Hindu mythology.
8 Zeus, in the shape of a bull, carried Europa away on his back.

From one hand drooped a crocus; one hand grasped
The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flushed Ganymede,[1] his rosy thigh
Half-buried in the Eagle's down,
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky
Above the pillared town.

Nor these alone: but every legend fair
Which the supreme Caucasian mind
Carved out of Nature for itself, was there,
Not less than life, designed.
. . . . . .

Then in the towers I placed great bells that swung,
Moved of themselves, with silver sound;
And with choice paintings of wise men I hung
The royal daïs round.

For there was Milton like a seraph strong,
Beside him Shakespeare bland and mild;
And there the world-worn Dante grasped his song,
And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father[2] of the rest;
A million wrinkles carved his skin;
A hundred winters snowed upon his breast,
From cheek and throat and chin.

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set
Many an arch high up did lift,
And angels rising and descending met
With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely planned
With cycles of the human tale
Of this wide world, the times of every land
So wrought, they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,
Toiled onward, pricked with goads and stings;
Here played, a tiger, rolling to and fro
The heads and crowns of kings;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break or bind
All force in bonds that might endure,
And here once more like some sick man declined,
And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod; and those great bells
Began to chime. She took her throne;

1 The cupbearer of the Gods, brought to Zeus by an eagle.
2 Homer.

She sat betwixt the shining oriels,
To sing her songs alone.

And thro' the topmost oriels' colored flame
Two godlike faces gazed below;
Plato the wise, and large-browed Verulam,
The first of those who know.

And all those names that in their motic were
Full-welling fountain-heads of change,
Betwixt the slender shafts were blazone fair
In diverse raiment strange;

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber, emeral blue,
Flushed in her temples and her eyes,
And from her lips, as morn from Memnon drew
Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong
Her low preamble all alone,
More than my soul to hear her echoed son
Throb thro' the ribbed stone;

Singing and murmuring in her feastf mirth,
Joying to feel herself alive,
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible eart
Lord of the senses five;

Communing with herself: "All these a mine,
And let the world have peace or wars,
'Tis one to me." She — when young nigh divine
Crowned dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious toils — l
Lit light in wreaths and anadems,[3]
And pure quintessences of precious oils
In hollowed moons of gems,

To mimic heaven; and clapt her hands a cried,
"I marvel if my still delight
In this great house so royal-rich and wide
Be flattered to the height.

"O all things fair to sate my various eyes!
O shapes and hues that please me well!
O silent faces of the Great and Wise,
My Gods, with whom I dwell!

1 Bacon.
2 The statue near Thebes from which, it was said, mu issued at dawn.
3 garlands.

"O God-like isolation which art mine,
I can but count thee perfect gain,
What time I watch the darkening droves of swine
That range on yonder plain.

"In filthy sloughs they roll a prurient skin,
They graze and wallow, breed and sleep;
And oft some brainless devil enters in,
And drives them to the deep."[1]

Then of the moral instinct would she prate,
And of the rising from the dead,
As hers by right of full-accomplished Fate;
And at the last she said:

"I take possession of man's mind and deed.
I care not what the sects may brawl.
I sit as God holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all."

. . . . . .

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth
Flashed thro' her as she sat alone,
Yet not the less held she her solemn mirth,
And intellectual throne.

And so she throve and prospered; so three years
She prospered; on the fourth she fell,
Like Herod, when the shout was in his ears,
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.[2]

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,
God, before whom ever lie bare
The abysmal deeps of personality,
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she turned her sight
The airy hand confusion wrought,
Wrote "Mene, mene,"[3] and divided quite
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude
Fell on her, from which mood was born
Scorn of herself; again, from out that mood
Laughter at her self-scorn.

"What! is not this my place of strength," she said,
"My spacious mansion built for me,
Whereof the strong foundation-stones were laid
Since my first memory?"

But in dark corners of her palace stood
Uncertain shapes; and unawares
On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears of blood,
And horrible nightmares,

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of flame,
And, with dim fretted[1] foreheads all,
On corpses three-months-old at noon she came,
That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without light
Or power of movement, seemed my soul,
'Mid onward-sloping motions infinite
Making for one sure goal;

A still salt pool, locked in with bars of sand,
Left on the shore, that hears all night
The plunging seas draw backward from the land
Their moon-led waters white;

A star that with the choral starry dance
Joined not, but stood, and standing saw
The hollow orb of moving Circumstance
Rolled round by one fixed law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had curled.
"No voice," she shrieked in that lone hall,
"No voice breaks thro' the stillness of this world;
One deep, deep silence all!"

She, mouldering with the dull earth's mouldering sod,
Inwrapt tenfold in slothful shame,
Lay there exiled from eternal God,
Lost to her place and name;

And death and life she hated equally,
And nothing saw, for her despair,
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,
No comfort anywhere;

Remaining utterly confused with fears,
And ever worse with growing time,
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,
And all alone in crime.

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt round
With blackness as a solid wall,
Far off she seemed to hear the dully sound
Of human footsteps fall:

As in strange lands a traveller walking slow,
In doubt and great perplexity,
A little before moon-rise hears the low
Moan of an unknown sea;

1 Mark v, 13. 2 Acts xii, 21–23.
3 At Belshazzar's feast; see Daniel v, 25.

1 worm-eaten.

And knows not if it be thunder, or a sound
Of rocks thrown down, or one deep cry
Of great wild beasts; then thinketh, "I have found
A new land, but I die."

She howled aloud, "I am on fire within.
There comes no murmur of reply.
What is it that will take away my sin,
And save me lest I die?"

So when four years were wholly finished,
She threw her royal robes away.
"Make me a cottage in the vale," she said,
"Where I may mourn and pray.

"Yet pull not down my palace towers, that are
So lightly, beautifully built;
Perchance I may return with others there
When I have purged my guilt."

Pub. 1832.

## THE LOTOS-EATERS

This poem has been widely praised for the manner in which the sound of the lines echoes the sense. Compare the opening stanzas with *The Faerie Queene* and with *The Castle of Indolence*.

The story of the poem is from the *Odyssey*.

"Courage!" he[1] said, and pointed toward the land,
"This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon."
In the afternoon they came unto a land,
In which it seemed always afternoon.
All round the coast the languid air did swoon,
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.
Full-faced above the valley stood the moon;
And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

A land of streams! some, like a downward smoke,
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go;
And some thro' wavering lights and shadows broke,
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
They saw the gleaming river seaward flow
From the inner land; far off, three mountain-tops,
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,

1 Ulysses.

Stood sunset-flushed; and, dewed with showery drops,
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse.

The charmed sunset lingered low adown
In the red West; thro' mountain clefts the dale
Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
Bordered with palm, and many a winding vale
And meadow, set with slender galingale;[1]
A land where all things always seemed the same!
And round about the keel with faces pale,
Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave
To each, but whoso did receive of them
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
Far far away did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave;
And deep-asleep he seemed, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
Between the sun and moon upon the shore;
And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
Of child, and wife, and slave; but evermore
Most weary seemed the sea, weary the oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.
Then some one said, "We will return no more;"
And all at once they sang, "Our island home
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam."

### CHORIC SONG

I

There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.
Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,

1 aromatic sedge.

And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

2

Why are we weighed upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest: why should we toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown;
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
"There is no joy but calm!" —
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?

3

Lo! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is wooed from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
Sun-steeped at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo! sweetened with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

4

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life; ah, why
Should life all labor be?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last?
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
In silence — ripen, fall and cease:
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful ease.

5

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream!
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height;
To hear each other's whispered speech;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy;
To muse and brood and live again in memory,
With those old faces of our infancy
Heaped over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass!

6

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives
And their warm tears; but all hath suffered change;
For surely now our household hearths are cold,
Our sons inherit us, our looks are strange,
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings
Before them of the ten-years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.
Is there confusion in the little isle?
Let what is broken so remain.
The Gods are hard to reconcile;
'Tis hard to settle order once again.
There *is* confusion worse than death,
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
Long labour unto aged breath,
Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

7

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
With half-dropt eyelids still,
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
To watch the long bright river drawing slowly
His waters from the purple hill —
To hear the dewy echoes calling

From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined vine —
To watch the emerald-colored water falling
Thro' many a woven acanthus-wreath divine!
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretched out beneath the pine.

8

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak,
The Lotos blows by every winding creek;
All day the wind breathes low with mellower tone;
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos-dust is blown.
We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
Rolled to starboard, rolled to larboard, when the surge was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-fountains in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurled
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly curled
Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming world;
Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps and fiery sands,
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and praying hands.
But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful song
Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong;
Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil;
Till they perish and they suffer — some, 'tis whispered — down in hell
Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar;
O, rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

Pub. 1832.

## THE EPIC

This poem is the introduction to the *Morte d'Arthur* which follows.

At Francis Allen's on the Christmas eve, —
The game of forfeits done — the girls all kissed
Beneath the sacred bush and past away —
The parson Holmes, the poet Everard Hall,
The host, and I sat round the wassail-bowl,
Then half-way ebbed; and there we held a talk,
How all the old honor from Christmas gone,
Or gone or dwindled down to some odd games
In some odd nooks like this; till I, tired out
With cutting eights that day upon the pond,
Where, three times slipping from the outer edge,
I bumped the ice into three several stars,
Fell in a doze; and half-awake I heard
The parson taking wide and wider sweeps,
Now harping on the church-commissioners,
Now hawking at geology and schism;
Until I woke, and found him settled down
Upon the general decay of faith
Right thro' the world: "at home was little left,
And none abroad; there was no anchor, none,
To hold by." Francis, laughing, clapt his hand
On Everard's shoulder, with "I hold by him."
"And I," quoth Everard, "by the wassail-bowl."
"Why yes," I said, "we knew your gift that way
At college; but another which you had —
I mean of verse (for so we held it then),
What came of that?" "You know," said Frank, "he burnt
His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve books" —
And then to me demanding why: "O, sir,
He thought that nothing new was said, or else
Something so said 'twas nothing — that a truth

Looks freshest in the fashion of the day;
God knows; he has a mint of reasons; ask.
It pleased *me* well enough." "Nay, nay," said Hall,
"Why take the style of those heroic times?
For nature brings not back the mastodon,
Nor we those times; and why should any man
Remodel models? these twelve books of mine
Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-worth,
Mere chaff and draff, much better burnt."
"But I,"
Said Francis, "picked the eleventh from this hearth,
And have it; keep a thing, its use will come.
I hoard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes."
He laughed, and I, though sleepy, like a horse
That hears the corn-bin open, pricked my ears;
For I remembered Everard's college fame
When we were Freshmen. Then at my request
He brought it; and the poet, little urged,
But with some prelude of disparagement,
Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and aes,
Deep-chested music, and to this result.

Pub. 1842.

## MORTE D'ARTHUR

This account of Arthur's death, incorporated twenty-five years later, with the omission of one line, into "The Passing of Arthur" (lines 170–440) of the *Idylls of the King*, is based on Malory xxi, 5; but Tennyson, as usual when he treats a classical or medieval subject, tinges the poem with modern, Christian thought and emotion. For the chapter of Malory, see page 146.

So all day long the noise of battle rolled
Among the mountains by the winter sea,
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fallen in Lyonness about their lord,
King Arthur; then, because his wound was deep,
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.
On one side lay the Ocean and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.
Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep — the men I loved. I think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made, —
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more — but let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride; for thou rememberest how
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite,[1] mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword — and how I rowed across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king;
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known.
But now delay not; take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere;
Watch what thou seest, and lightly[2] bring me word."
To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
"It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.
A little thing may harm a wounded man.
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word."
So saying, from the ruined shrine he stept
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.
There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt;
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw; but at the last it seemed
Better to leave Excalibur concealed
There in the many-knotted waterflags,

1 a heavy silk. 2 quickly.

That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded king.
Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
"Hast thou performed my mission which I gave?
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag."
To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:
"Thou hast betrayed thy nature and thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as beseemed
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight;
For surer sign had followed, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
As thou art lief[1] and dear, and do the thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."
Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fixed in thought;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud:
"And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost forever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done?
What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumors of a doubt? but were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the lake;
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'
So might some old man speak in the after time
To all the people, winning reverence;
But now much honor and much fame were lost."
So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,[1]
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.
Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:
"What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."
To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:
"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widowed of the power in his eye
That bowed the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence;
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."
Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutched the sword,
And strongly wheeled and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirled in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles[2] of winter shock
By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flashed and fell the brand Excalibur;
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandished him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the King.

1 beloved.

1 imagining. 2 i.e., icebergs.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:
'Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out; what is it thou hast heard, or seen?"
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him;
But when I looked again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandished him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere."
And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard:
"My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."
So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words,
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.
But, as he walked, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sighed the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, "Quick, quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die."
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walked,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.
Dry clashed his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clanged round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels —
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.
Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream — by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold — and from them rose
A cry that shivered to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.
Then murmured Arthur, "Place me in the barge,"
And to the barge they came. There those three queens
Put forth their hands, and took the king, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shattered casque, and chafed his hands,
And called him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood; for all his face was white
And colorless, and like the withered moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dashed with drops
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls —
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne — were parched with dust;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mixed with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shattered column lay the king;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged

Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.
Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble chance,
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have been not since the light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty world;
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds."
And slowly answered Arthur from the barge:
"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
I have lived my life, and that which I have done
May He within himself make pure! but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seest — if indeed I go —
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island-valley of Avilion;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard lawns
And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."
So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Looked one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

Here ended Hall, and our last light, that long
Had winked and threatened darkness, flared and fell;
At which the parson, sent to sleep with sound,
And waked with silence, grunted "Good!" but we
Sat rapt: it was the tone with which he read —
Perhaps some modern touches here and there
Redeemed it from the charge of nothingness —
Or else we loved the man, and prized his work;
I know not; but we sitting, as I said,
The cock crew loud, as at that time of year
The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn.
Then Francis, muttering, like a man ill-used,
"There now — that's nothing!" drew a little back,
And drove his heel into the smoldered log,
That sent a blast of sparkles up the flue.
And so to bed, where yet in sleep I seemed
To sail with Arthur under looming shores,
Point after point; till on to dawn, when dreams
Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,
To me, methought, who waited with a crowd,
There came a bark that, blowing forward, bore
King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
Of stateliest port; and all the people cried,
"Arthur is come again: he cannot die."
Then those that stood upon the hills behind
Repeated — "Come again, and thrice as fair;"
And, further inland, voices echoed — "Come
With all good things, and war shall be no more."
At this a hundred bells began to peal,

That with the sound I woke, and heard indeed
The clear church-bells ring in the Christmas morn.

Pub. 1842.

## ULYSSES

This excellent poem, obviously a counterpiece to *The Lotos-Eaters*, is Ulysses' soliloquy after returning from his wanderings to his home and wife Penelope. According to the poet's statement, it represents Tennyson's own feelings after the death of Hallam, and his decision to keep on going forward.

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Matched with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel; I will drink
Life to the lees. All times I have enjoyed
Greatly, have suffered greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades [1]
Vext the dim sea. I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known, — cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honored of them all, —
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravelled world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life! Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains; but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge, like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

1 the constellation.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle, —
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labor, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.
There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail;
There gloom the dark, broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toiled, and wrought, and thought with me, —
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads, — you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honor and his toil.
Death closes all; but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks;
The long day wanes; the slow moon climbs; the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down;
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are, —
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

Pub. 1842.

## LOCKSLEY HALL

*Locksley Hall* is a dramatic monologue. It was meant, said Tennyson, to represent youth, — its good side, its deficiencies, and its yearnings. The hero, who is high-minded and impulsive, is disillusioned in love and in the ideals of

the Victorian era. He looks forward to a new age which will bring back to him the eagerness of his youth.

Comrades, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn;
Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle-horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,
Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,
And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,
Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the west.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,
Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wandered, nourishing a youth sublime
With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of time;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed;
When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed; [1]

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see,
Saw the vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be. ——

In the spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;
In the spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;

In the spring a livelier iris changes on the burnished dove;
In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young,
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

1 inclosed.

And I said, "My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a color and a light,
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turned — her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs —
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes —

Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong;"
Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin?" weeping, "I have loved thee long."

Love took up the glass of Time, and turned it in his glowing hands;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, passed in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,
And her whisper thronged my pulses with the fullness of the spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,
And our spirits rushed together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted! O my Amy, mine no more!
O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the barren, barren shore!

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue!

Is it well to wish thee happy? — having known me — to decline [1]
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine!

Yet it shall be; thou shalt lower to his level day by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize with clay.

1 lower thyself.

As the husband is, the wife is; thou art mated with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.

What is this? his eyes are heavy; think not they are glazed with wine.
Go to him, it is thy duty; kiss him, take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought;
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand —
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,
Rolled in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth!
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth!

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule!
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straitened forehead of the fool!

Well — 'tis well that I should bluster! —
Hadst thou less unworthy proved —
Would to God — for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit?
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years should come
As the many-wintered crow that leads the clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort? in division of the records of the mind?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind?

I remember one that perished; sweetly did she speak and move;
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore?
No — she never loved me truly; love is love for evermore.

Comfort? comfort scorned of devils! this is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,
To thy widowed marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whispered by the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain.
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow; get thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for a tender voice will cry.
'Tis a purer life than thine, a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down; my latest rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.
Half is thine and half is his; it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides the feelings
— she herself was not exempt — 95
Truly, she herself had suffered" — Perish in
thy self-contempt!

Overlive it — lower yet — be happy! where-
fore should I care?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither
by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting
upon days like these?
Every door is barred with gold, and opens
but to golden keys. 100

Every gate is thronged with suitors, all the
markets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy; what is that
which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the
foeman's ground,
When the ranks are rolled in vapor, and the
winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt
that Honor feels, 105
And the nations do but murmur, snarling
at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that
earlier page.
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou won-
drous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt
before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the
tumult of my life; 110

Yearning for the large excitement that the
coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves
his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near
and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring
like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone
before him then, 115
Underneath the light he looks at, in among
the throngs of men;

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever
reaping something new;
That which they have done but earnest of
the things that they shall do.

For I dipt into the future, far as human e
could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all t
wonder that would be; 1

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosi
of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping dow
with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, an
there rained a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling i
the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of th
south-wind rushing warm, 1
With the standards of the peoples plungin
thro' the thunder storm;

Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, an
the battle flags were furled
In the Parliament of man, the Federation c
the world.

There the common sense of most shall hol
a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt i
universal law. 13

So I triumphed, ere my passion sweeping thro
me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left m
with the jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all thing
here are out of joint.
Science moves, but slowly, slowly, creeping
on from point to point;

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion
creeping nigher, 13
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a
slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing
purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with
the process of the suns.[1]

What is that to him that reaps not harvest
of his youthful joys,
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever
like a boy's? 140

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I
linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is
more and more.

1 with the passing of time.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn,
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn.

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moldered string?
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness! woman's pleasure, woman's pain —
Nature made them blinder motions[1] bounded in a shallower brain.

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, matched with mine,
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine —

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some retreat
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat,

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-starred; — I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit — there to wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag;

Droops the heavy-blossomed bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree —
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramped no longer shall have scope and breathing-space;
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinewed, they shall dive, and they shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the sun;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books —

Fool, again the dream, the fancy! but I *know* my words are wild,
But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains!

Mated with a squalid savage — what to me were sun or clime?
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time —

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon![1]

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range,
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day;
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.[2]

Mother-Age, — for mine I knew not, — help me as when life begun;
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall!
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

1 impulses.

1 Joshua, x, 12. 2 China.

Comes a vapor from the margin, blackening
over heath and holt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast
a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail,
or fire or snow;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward,
and I go.

Pub. 1842.

## BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

"It was made in a Lincolnshire lane at five o'clock in the morning between blossoming hedges." (Tennyson.)

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

Pub. 1842.

## SONGS FROM *THE PRINCESS*

These songs, added in later editions of *The Princess*, stand out among the great lyrics in the English language. *The Princess* is Tennyson's long narrative poem dealing with the position of woman in society and, especially, with the holiness of the marriage relation.

### 1

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one,
sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon;
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one,
sleep.

### 2

The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story;
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying,
dying.

O, hark, O, hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O, sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying,
dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying,
dying.

### 3

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they
mean,[1]
Tears from the depth of some divine de-
spair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail
That brings our friends up from the under-
world,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer
dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering
square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no
more.

1 Note the absence of rhyme in this song.

Dear as remembered kisses after death,
nd sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned
n lips that are for others; deep as love,
eep as first love, and wild with all regret;
Death in Life, the days that are no more.

4

lome they brought her warrior dead;
She nor swooned, nor uttered cry.
ll her maidens, watching, said,
"She must weep or she will die."

hen they praised him, soft and low,
Called him worthy to be loved,
ruest friend and noblest foe;
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

tole a maiden from her place,
Lightly to the warrior stept,
ook the face-cloth from the face;
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

ose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knee —
ike summer tempest came her tears —
"Sweet my child, I live for thee."

5

sk me no more: the moon may draw the sea;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;
ut O too fond, when have I answered thee?
Ask me no more.

sk me no more: what answer should I give?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!
sk me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more.

sk me no more: thy fate and mine are sealed;
I strove against the stream and all in vain;
Let the great river take me to the main.
o more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;
Ask me no more.

6

Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the white; [1]
or waves the cypress in the palace walk;
or winks the gold fin in the porphyry font.
he fire-fly wakens; waken thou with me.

Now droops the milkwhite peacock like a ghost,
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Now lies the Earth all Danaë [1] to the stars,
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake.
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me.

7

Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height: [2]
What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang)
In height and cold, the splendor of the hills?
But cease to move so near the heavens, and cease
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted pine,
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire;
And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
For Love is of the valley, come thou down
And find him; by the happy threshold, he,
Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,
Or red with spirited purple of the vats,
Or foxlike in the vine; nor cares to walk
With Death and Morning on the Silver Horns,
Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,
Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls
To roll the torrent out of dusky doors.
But follow; let the torrent dance thee down
To find him in the valley; let the wild
Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave
The monstrous ledges there to slope, and spill
Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke,
That like a broken purpose waste in air.
So waste not thou, but come; for all the vales
Await thee; azure pillars of the hearth
Arise to thee; the children call, and I
Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound,
Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet;
Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,
The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees.

Pub. 1847–50

1 This and the next lyric are truly great, — inimitable orks of art. Again, the absence of rhyme is remarkable.

1 Zeus visited Danaë in a shower of Gold when Danaë (mother of Perseus by Zeus) was imprisoned in a tower by her father.

2 The scenery in this poem is Swiss; the spirit of the piece, it has been pointed out, is Greek.

## IN MEMORIAM A. H. H.

This poem is Tennyson's great elegy on the death of Arthur Henry Hallam, the poet's close friend at Cambridge. Hallam, who was the son of the well-known historian, was engaged to Tennyson's sister Emily at the time of his death in Vienna in 1833. Between that time and 1850, the year in which *In Memoriam* was published, Tennyson wrote verses expressing the phases of his great grief as this grief was recalled to him. These verses, written in sections, were woven together for publication.

I [1]

I held it truth, with him [2] who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years
And find in loss a gain to match?
Or reach a hand thro' time to catch
The far-off interest of tears?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drowned,
Let darkness keep her raven gloss.
Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss,
To dance with Death, to beat the ground,

Than that the victor Hours should scorn
The long result of love, and boast,
"Behold the man that loved and lost,
But all he was is overworn."

2

Old yew, which graspest at the stones
That name the underlying dead,
Thy fibres net the dreamless head,
Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.

The seasons bring the flower again,
And bring the firstling to the flock;
And in the dusk of thee, the clock
Beats out the little lives of men.

O, not for thee the glow, the bloom,
Who changest not in any gale,
Nor branding summer suns avail
To touch thy thousand years of gloom;

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,
I seem to fail from out my blood
And grow incorporate into thee.

3

O Sorrow, cruel fellowship,
O Priestess in the vaults of Death,
O sweet and bitter in a breath,
What whispers from thy lying lip?

"The stars," she whispers, "blindly run;
A web is woven across the sky;
From out waste places comes a cry,
And murmurs from the dying sun;

"And all the phantom, Nature, stands —
With all her music in her tone,
A hollow echo of my own, —
A hollow form with empty hands."

And shall I take a thing so blind,
Embrace her as my natural good;
Or crush her, like a vice of blood,
Upon the threshold of the mind?

4

To Sleep I give my powers away;
My will is bondsman to the dark;
I sit within a helmless bark,
And with my heart I muse and say:

O heart, how fares it with thee now,
That thou shouldst fail from thy desire
Who scarcely darest to inquire,
"What is it makes me beat so low?"

Something it is which thou hast lost,
Some pleasure from thine early years.
Break, thou deep vase of chilling tears,
That grief hath shaken into frost!

Such clouds of nameless trouble cross
All night below the darkened eyes;
With morning wakes the will, and cries,
"Thou shalt not be the fool of loss."

5

I sometimes hold it half a sin
To put in words the grief I feel;
For words, like Nature, half reveal
And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,
A use in measured language lies;
The sad mechanic exercise,
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er,
Like coarsest clothes against the cold;
But that large grief which these enfold
Is given in outline and no more.

1 These stanzas follow the general introduction.
2 This reference was not clear even to the poet.

6

One writes, that "other friends remain,"
That "loss is common to the race" —
And common is the commonplace,
And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

That loss is common would not make
My own less bitter, rather more.
Too common! Never morning wore
To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be,
That pledgest now thy gallant son,
A shot, ere half thy draught be done,
Hath stilled the life that beat from thee.

O mother, praying God will save
Thy sailor, — while thy head is bowed,
His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud
Drops in his vast and wandering grave.

Ye know no more than I who wrought
At that last hour to please him well;
Who mused on all I had to tell,
And something written, something thought;

Expecting still his advent home;
And ever met him on his way
With wishes, thinking, "here to-day,"
Or, "here to-morrow will he come."

O, somewhere, meek unconscious dove,
That sittest ranging golden hair;
And glad to find thyself so fair,
Poor child, that waitest for thy love!

For now her father's chimney glows
In expectation of a guest;
And thinking "this will please him best,"
She takes a riband or a rose;

For he will see them on to-night;
And with the thought her color burns;
And, having left the glass, she turns
Once more to set a ringlet right;

And, even when she turned, the curse
Had fallen, and her future lord
Was drowned in passing thro' the ford,
Or killed in falling from his horse.

O, what to her shall be the end?
And what to me remains of good?
To her, perpetual maidenhood,
And unto me, no second friend.

7

Dark house,[1] by which once more I stand
Here in the long unlovely street,
Doors, where my heart was used to beat
So quickly, waiting for a hand,

A hand that can be clasped no more —
Behold me, for I cannot sleep,
And like a guilty thing I creep
At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here; but far away
The noise of life begins again,
And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain
On the bald street breaks the blank day.

. . . . . .

27

I envy not in any moods
The captive void of noble rage,
The linnet born within the cage,
That never knew the summer woods;

I envy not the beast that takes
His license in the field of time,
Unfettered by the sense of crime,
To whom a conscience never wakes;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,
The heart that never plighted troth
But stagnates in the weeds of sloth;
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall;
I feel it, when I sorrow most;
'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

28

The time draws near the birth of Christ.[2]
The moon is hid, the night is still;
The Christmas bells from hill to hill
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets[3] round,
From far and near, on mead and moor,
Swell out and fail, as if a door
Were shut between me and the sound;

Each voice four changes on the wind,
That now dilate, and now decrease,
Peace and goodwill, goodwill and peace,
Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

1 Hallam's home in London, 67 Wimpole Street.
2 This is the first Christmas after Hallam's death.
3 Near Somersby.

This year I slept and woke with pain,
I almost wished no more to wake,
And that my hold on life would break
Before I heard those bells again;

But they my troubled spirit rule,
For they controlled me when a boy;
They bring me sorrow touched with joy,
The merry, merry bells of Yule.

29

With such compelling cause to grieve
As daily vexes household peace,
And chains regret to his decease,
How dare we keep our Christmas-eve,

Which brings no more a welcome guest
To enrich the threshold of the night
With showered largess of delight
In dance and song and game and jest?

Yet go, and while the holly boughs
Entwine the cold baptismal font,
Make one wreath more for Use and Wont,
That guard the portals of the house;

Old sisters of a day gone by,
Gray nurses, loving nothing new —
Why should they miss their yearly due
Before their time? They too will die.

30

With trembling fingers did we weave
The holly round the Christmas hearth;
A rainy cloud possessed the earth,
And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall
We gamboled, making vain pretence
Of gladness, with an awful sense
Of one mute Shadow watching all.

We paused: the winds were in the beech;
We heard them sweep the winter land;
And in a circle hand-in-hand
Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang;
We sung, tho' every eye was dim,
A merry song we sang with him
Last year; impetuously we sang.

We ceased; a gentler feeling crept
Upon us: surely rest is meet.
"They rest," we said, "their sleep is sweet,"
And silence followed, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range;
Once more we sang: "They do not di
Nor lose their mortal sympathy,
Nor change to us, although they change;

"Rapt from the fickle and the frail
With gathered power, yet the same,
Pierces the keen seraphic flame
From orb to orb, from veil to veil."

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
Draw forth the cheerful day from nigh
O Father, touch the east, and light
The light that shone when Hope was born.

. . . . . .

50

Be near me when my light is low,
When the blood creeps, and the nerve
prick
And tingle; and the heart is sick,
And all the wheels of being slow.

Be near me when the sensuous frame
Is racked with pangs that conquer trus
And Time, a maniac scattering dust,
And Life, a Fury slinging flame.

Be near me when my faith is dry,
And men the flies of latter spring,
That lay their eggs, and sting and sin
And weave their petty cells and die.

Be near me when I fade away,
To point the term of human strife,
And on the low dark verge of life
The twilight of eternal day.

51

Do we indeed desire the dead
Should still be near us at our side?
Is there no baseness we would hide?
No inner vileness that we dread?

Shall he for whose applause I strove,
I had such reverence for his blame,
See with clear eye some hidden shame
And I be lessened in his love?

I wrong the grave with fears untrue.
Shall love be blamed for want of faith
There must be wisdom with great Deat
The dead shall look me thro' and thro'.

Be near us when we climb or fall;
Ye watch, like God, the rolling hours
With larger other eyes than ours,
To make allowance for us all.

52

cannot love thee as I ought,
For love reflects the thing beloved;
My words are only words, and moved
pon the topmost froth of thought.

Yet blame not thou thy plaintive song,"
The Spirit of true love replied;
"Thou canst not move me from thy side,
or human frailty do me wrong.

What keeps a spirit wholly true
To that ideal which he bears?
What record? not the sinless years [1]
hat breathed beneath the Syrian blue;

So fret not, like an idle girl,
That life is dashed with flecks of sin.
Abide; thy wealth is gathered in,
hen Time hath sundered shell from pearl."

53

low many a father have I seen,
A sober man, among his boys,
Whose youth was full of foolish noise,
ho wears his manhood hale and green;

nd dare we to this fancy give,
That had the wild oat not been sown,
The soil, left barren, scarce had grown
he grain by which a man may live?

h, if we held the doctrine sound
For life outliving heats of youth,
Yet who would preach it as a truth
o those that eddy round and round?

old thou the good, define it well;
For fear divine Philosophy
Should push beyond her mark, and be
rocuress to the Lords of Hell.

54

, yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
efects of doubt, and taints of blood;

hat nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
hen God hath made the pile complete;

hat not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shriveled in a fruitless fire,
r but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last — far off — at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream; but what am I?
An infant crying in the night;
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry.

55

The wish, that of the living whole
No life may fail beyond the grave,
Derives it not from what we have
The likest God within the soul?

Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life,

That I, considering everywhere
Her secret meaning in her deeds,
And finding that of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

. . . . .

77

What hope is here for modern rhyme
To him who turns a musing eye
On songs, and deeds, and lives, that lie
Foreshortened in the tract of time?

These mortal lullabies of pain
May bind a book, may line a box,
May serve to curl a maiden's locks;
Or when a thousand moons shall wane

A man upon a stall may find,
And, passing, turn the page that tells
A grief, then changed to something else,
Sung by a long-forgotten mind.

But what of that? My darkened ways
Shall ring with music all the same;
To breathe my loss is more than fame,
To utter love more sweet than praise.

[1] Christ's.

78

Again at Christmas [1] did we weave
The holly round the Christmas hearth;
The silent snow possessed the earth,
And calmly [2] fell our Christmas-eve.

The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,
No wing of wind the region swept,
But over all things brooding slept
The quiet sense of something lost.

As in the winters left behind,
Again our ancient games had place,
The mimic picture's breathing grace,
And dance and song and hoodman-blind.

Who showed a token of distress?
No single tear, no type of pain —
O sorrow, then can sorrow wane?
O grief, can grief be changed to less?

O last regret, regret can die!
No — mixt with all this mystic frame,
Her deep relations are the same,
But with long use her tears are dry.

. . . . . .

96

You [3] say, but with no touch of scorn,
Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue eyes
Are tender over drowning flies,
You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not: one indeed I knew
In many a subtle question versed,
Who touched a jarring lyre at first,
But ever strove to make it true;

Perplext in faith, but pure in deeds,
At last he beat his music out.
There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gathered strength,
He would not make his judgement blind,
He faced the spectres of the mind
And laid them; thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own,
And Power was with him in the night,
Which makes the darkness and the light,
And dwells not in the light alone,

1 The second Christmas after Hallam's death.
2 The first Christmas fell "sadly."
3 This may be Emily Sellwood, to whom Tennyson was engaged. They were married in 1850.

But in the darkness and the cloud,
As over Sinaï's peaks of old,
While Israel made their gods of gold,
Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

. . . . . .

104

The time draws near the birth of Christ; [1]
The moon is hid, the night is still;
A single [2] church below the hill
Is pealing, folded in the mist.

A single peal of bells below,
That wakens at this hour of rest
A single murmur in the breast,
That these are not the bells I know.

Like strangers' voices here they sound,
In lands where not a memory strays,
Nor landmark breathes of other days,
But all is new unhallowed ground.

105

To-night ungathered let us leave
This laurel, let this holly stand:
We live within the stranger's land,
And strangely falls our Christmas-eve.

Our father's dust [3] is left alone
And silent under other snows:
There in due time the woodbine blows
The violet comes, but we are gone.

No more shall wayward grief abuse
The genial hour with mask and mime
For change of place, like growth of time
Has broke the bond of dying use.

Let cares that petty shadows cast,
By which our lives are chiefly proved,
A little spare the night I loved,
And hold it solemn to the past.

But let no footstep beat the floor,
Nor bowl of wassail mantle warm;
For who would keep an ancient form
Through which the spirit breathes no more

Be neither song, nor game, nor feast;
Nor harp be touched, nor flute be blown
No dance, no motion, save alone
What lightens in the lucid East

Of rising worlds by yonder wood.
Long sleeps the summer in the seed;
Run out your measured arcs, and lead
The closing cycle rich in good.

1 The third Christmas after Hallam's death.
2 I.e., they are no longer at Somersby.
3 Tennyson's father died in March, 1833, at Somersb

106

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

. . . . . .

116

Is it, then, regret for buried time
That keenlier in sweet April wakes,
And meets the year, and gives and takes
The colors of the crescent prime? [1]

Not all: the songs, the stirring air,
The life re-orient out of dust,
Cry thro' the sense to hearten trust
In that which made the world so fair.

Not all regret: the face will shine
Upon me, while I muse alone,
And that dear voice, I once have known,
Still speak to me of me and mine.

1 springtime.

Yet less of sorrow lives in me
For days of happy commune dead,
Less yearning for the friendship fled
Than some strong bond which is to be.

117

O days and hours, your work is this,
To hold me from my proper place,
A little while from his embrace,
For fuller gain of after bliss;

That out of distance might ensue
Desire of nearness doubly sweet,
And unto meeting, when we meet,
Delight a hundredfold accrue,

For every grain of sand that runs,
And every span of shade that steals,
And every kiss of toothed wheels,[1]
And all the courses of the suns.

118 [2]

Contemplate all this work of Time,
The giant laboring in his youth;
Nor dream of human love and truth,
As dying Nature's earth and lime;

But trust that those we call the dead
Are breathers of an ampler day
For ever nobler ends. They say,
The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,
And grew to seeming-random forms,
The seeming prey of cyclic storms,
Till at the last arose the man;

Who throve and branched from clime to clime,
The herald of a higher race,
And of himself in higher place,
If so he type [3] this work of time

Within himself, from more to more;
Or, crowned with attributes of woe
Like glories, move his course, and show
That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning fears,
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
And battered with the shocks of doom

1 The reference in these three lines is to the hour-glass, sun-dial, and clock.

2 In this section Tennyson gives his view of cosmic evolution.

3 typify.

To shape and use. Arise and fly
The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;
Move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die.

. . . . . .

126

Love is and was my lord and king,
And in his presence I attend
To hear the tidings of my friend,
Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my king and lord,
And will be, tho' as yet I keep
Within his court on earth, and sleep
Encompassed by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel
That moves about from place to place,
And whispers to the worlds of space,
In the deep night, that all is well.

127

And all is well, tho' faith and form
Be sundered in the night of fear;
Well roars the storm to those that hear
A deeper voice across the storm,

Proclaiming social truth shall spread,
And justice, even tho' thrice again
The red fool-fury of the Seine
Should pile her barricades with dead.

But ill for him that wears a crown,
And him, the lazar, in his rags!
They tremble, the sustaining crags;
The spires of ice are toppled down,

And molten up, and roar in flood;
The fortress crashes from on high,
The brute earth lightens to the sky,
And the great Æon [1] sinks in blood,

And compassed by the fires of hell;
While thou, dear spirit, happy star,
O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,
And smilest, knowing all is well.

. . . . . .

1833–50.

## ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

This poem, in an earlier form, was first published as a pamphlet in September, 1852, on the day that Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington, the hero of Waterloo, was buried.

1

Bury the Great Duke
With an empire's lamentation;
Let us bury the Great Duke
To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation;
Mourning when their leaders fall,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

2

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?
Here, in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

3

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,
Let the long, long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow
And let the mournful martial music blow;
The last great Englishman is low.

4

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
Remembering all his greatness in the past.
No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute!
Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,
Whole in himself, a common good.
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
Our greatest yet with least pretence,
Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.
O good gray head which all men knew,
O voice from which their omens all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fallen at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew!
Such was he whom we deplore.
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's [2] victor will be seen no more.

5

All is over and done.
Render thanks to the Giver,

1 age.

1 St. Paul's Cathedral. 2 Napoleon.

England, for thy son.
Let the bell be tolled.
Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold [1]
That shines over city and river,
There he shall rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be tolled,
And a reverent people behold
The towering car, the sable steeds.
Bright let it be with its blazoned deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.
Let the bell be tolled,
And a deeper knell in the heart be knolled;
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem rolled
Thro' the dome of the golden cross;
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss;
He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a clime
His captain's-ear has heard them boom
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom.
When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame,
With those deep voices our dead captain taught
The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-attempered frame.
O civic muse, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-echoing avenues of song!

6

"Who is he that cometh, like an honored guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier and with priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest?" —
Mighty Seaman,[2] this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,
The greatest sailor since our world began.
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes;
For this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
His foes were thine; he kept us free;
O give him welcome, this is he
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee;
For this is England's greatest son,
He that gained a hundred fights,
Nor ever lost an English gun;
This is he that far away
Against the myriads of Assaye [1]
Clashed with his fiery few and won;
And underneath another sun,
Warring on a later day,
Round affrighted Lisbon [2] drew
The treble works, the vast designs
Of his labored rampart-lines,
Where he greatly stood at bay,
Whence he issued forth anew,
And ever great and greater grew,
Beating from the wasted vines
Back to France her banded swarms,
Back to France with countless blows,
Till o'er the hills her eagles [3] flew
Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
Followed up in valley and glen
With blare of bugle, clamor of men,
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
And England pouring on her foes.
Such a war had such a close.
Again their ravening eagle [4] rose
In anger, wheeled on Europe-shadowing wings,
And barking for the thrones of kings;
Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown [5]
On that loud sabbath [6] shook the spoiler down;
A day of onsets of despair!
Dashed on every rocky square,
Their surging charges foamed themselves away;
Last, the Prussian [7] trumpet blew;
Thro' the long-tormented air
Heaven flashed a sudden jubilant ray,
And down we swept and charged and overthrew.
So great a soldier taught us there
What long-enduring hearts could do
In that world-earthquake, Waterloo!
Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
O savior of the silver-coasted isle,
O shaker of the Baltic [8] and the Nile,[9]
If aught of things that here befall
Touch a spirit among things divine,

1 Surmounting the dome of St. Paul's.
2 Lord Nelson, near whom Wellington was buried.

1 In India. 2 In the Peninsular campaign.
3 The French standards.
4 Napoleon, after his escape from Elba.
5 Wellington was known as the "Iron Duke."
6 Waterloo was fought on Sunday.
7 The arrival of the Prussians under Blücher decided the outcome of the battle.
8 Where Nelson defeated the Danes in 1801.
9 At the battle of the Nile in 1798 Nelson defeated the French.

If love of country move thee there at all,
Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine!
And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
In full acclaim,
A people's voice,
The proof and echo of all human fame,
A people's voice, when they rejoice
At civic revel and pomp and game,
Attest their great commander's claim
With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
Eternal honor to his name.

7

A people's voice! we are a people yet.
Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers,[1]
Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set
His Briton in blown seas and storming showers,
We have a voice with which to pay the debt
Of boundless love and reverence and regret
To those great men who fought, and kept it ours.
And keep it ours, O God, from brute control!
O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul
Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
And save the one true seed of freedom sown
Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
That sober freedom out of which there springs
Our loyal passion for our temperate kings!
For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
And drill the raw world for the march of mind,
Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.
But wink [2] no more in slothful overtrust.
Remember him who led your hosts;
He bade you guard the sacred coasts.
Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall;
His voice is silent in your council-hall
For ever; and whatever tempests lour
For ever silent; even if they broke
In thunder, silent; yet remember all
He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke;
Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
Nor paltered with Eternal God for power;
Who let the turbid streams of rumor flow
Thro' either babbling world of high and low;
Whose life was work, whose language rife
With rugged maxims hewn from life;
Who never spoke against a foe;
Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuk
All great self-seekers trampling on the right
Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named
Truth-lover was our English Duke;
Whatever record leap to light
He never shall be shamed.

8

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
Followed by the brave of other lands,
He, on whom from both her open hands
Lavish Honor showered all her stars,
And affluent Fortune[1] emptied all her horn.
Yea, let all good things await
Him who cares not to be great
But as he saves or serves the state.
Not once or twice in our rough island-story
The path of duty was the way to glory.
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes,
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
Into glossy purples, which outredden
All voluptuous garden-roses.
Not once or twice in our fair island-story
The path of duty was the way to glory.
He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
His path upward, and prevailed,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
Such was he: his work is done.
But while the races of mankind endure,
Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure;
Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory.
And let the land whose hearths he saved from shame
For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long-illumined cities flame,
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
Eternal honor to his name.

9

Peace, his triumph will be sung
By some yet unmoulded tongue

1 The European revolutions of 1848 had taken place only four years before.
2 doze.

1 In England a victorious commander is honored not only with orders and titles, but with large grants of money.

far on in summers that we shall not see.
Peace, it is a day of pain
For one about whose patriarchal knee
Late the little children clung.
O peace, it is a day of pain
For one upon whose hand and heart and brain
Once the weight and fate of Europe hung.
Ours the pain, be his the gain!
More than is of man's degree
Must be with us, watching here
At this, our great solemnity.
Whom we see not we revere;
We revere, and we refrain
From talk of battles loud and vain,
And brawling memories all too free
For such a wise humility
As befits a solemn fane:
We revere, and while we hear
The tides of Music's golden sea
Setting toward eternity,
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
Until we doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo,
And Victor he must ever be.
For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will,
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
Round us, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul?
On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears;
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears;
The black earth yawns; the mortal disappears;
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
He is gone who seemed so great. —
Gone, but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in State,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.
Speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,
And in the vast cathedral leave him,
God accept him, Christ receive him!

1852.

## THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

Written to commemorate the famous cavalry charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava in the Crimea in 1854.

1

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
"Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!" he said.
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

2

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"
Was there a man dismayed?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blundered.
Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
Their's but to do and die,
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

3

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of hell
Rode the six hundred.

4

Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed as they turned in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wondered.
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reeled from the sabre-stroke
Shattered and sundered.
Then they rode back, but not,
Not the six hundred.

5

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death
Back from the mouth of hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

6

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wondered.
Honor the charge they made!
Honor the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred!

December, 1854.

## LYRICS FROM *MAUD*

Tennyson called *Maud* a monodrama. It is a lyrical narrative in which the hero of the story tells the tale in a roundabout, emotional manner. The hero is a selfish, morbid man who is weighed down by dark thoughts concerning existence until he goes completely mad. He overcomes his hyper-sensitiveness and is restored to sanity through love. The poem is unequal in execution; but it contains some of the ablest lyrics that Tennyson wrote.

1

Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the rose is blown.

2

For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of Love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die.

3

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon;
All night has the casement jessamine stirred
To the dancers dancing in tune;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

4

I said to the lily, "There is but one,
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone?
She is weary of dance and play."
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day;
Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

5

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes
In babble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
For one that will never be thine?
But mine, but mine," so I sware to the r
"For ever and ever, mine."

6

And the soul of the rose went into my blo
As the music clashed in the hall;
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to
wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all;

7

From the meadow your walks have left
sweet
That whenever a March-wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

8

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
But the rose was awake all night for yo
sake,
Knowing your promise to me;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sighed for the dawn and thee.

9

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one;
Shine out, little head, sunning over wi
curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

10

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear;
She is coming, my life, my fate.
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near;
And the white rose weeps, "She is late;"
The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;"
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

11

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed;

Ay dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead,
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

---

The following lyric is the germ of the poem. he rest of *Maud* was written later to explain ese lines.

I

that 'twere possible
fter long grief and pain
o find the arms of my true love
ound me once again!

2

When I was wont to meet her
n the silent woody places
y the home that gave me birth,
We stood tranced in long embraces
Mixt with kisses sweeter, sweeter
han any thing on earth.

3

shadow flits before me,
Not thou, but like to thee.
h, Christ, that it were possible
or one short hour to see
he souls we loved, that they might tell us
What and where they be!

4

t leads me forth at evening,
t lightly winds and steals
n a cold white robe before me,
When all my spirit reels
At the shouts, the leagues of lights,
And the roaring of the wheels.

5

Half the night I waste in sighs,
Half in dreams I sorrow after
The delight of early skies;
In a wakeful doze I sorrow
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,
For the meeting of the morrow,
The delight of happy laughter,
The delight of low replies.

6

'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
And a dewy splendor falls
On the little flower that clings
To the turrets and the walls;
'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
And the light and shadow fleet.
She is walking in the meadow,
And the woodland echo rings;
In a moment we shall meet.
She is singing in the meadow,
And the rivulet at her feet
Ripples on in light and shadow
To the ballad that she sings.

7

Do I hear her sing as of old,
My bird with the shining head,
My own dove with the tender eye?
But there rings on a sudden a passionate cry,
There is some one dying or dead,
And a sullen thunder is rolled;
For a tumult shakes the city,
And I wake, my dream is fled.
In the shuddering dawn, behold,
Without knowledge, without pity,
By the curtains of my bed
That abiding phantom cold!

8

Get thee hence, nor come again,
Mix not memory with doubt,
Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,
Pass and cease to move about!
'Tis the blot upon the brain
That *will* show itself without.

9

Then I rise, the eavedrops fall,
And the yellow vapors choke
The great city sounding wide;
The day comes, a dull red ball
Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke
On the misty river-tide.

10

Thro' the hubbub of the market
I steal, a wasted frame;
It crosses here, it crosses there,
Thro' all that crowd confused and loud,
The shadow still the same;
And on my heavy eyelids
My anguish hangs like shame.

11

Alas for her that met me,
That heard me softly call,
Came glimmering thro' the laurels
At the quiet evenfall,
In the garden by the turrets
Of the old manorial hall!

12

Would the happy spirit descend
From the realms of light and song,
In the chamber or the street,
As she looks among the blest,

Should I fear to greet my friend
Or to say "Forgive the wrong,"
Or to ask her, "Take me, sweet,
To the regions of thy rest"?

13

But the broad light glares and beats,
And the shadow flits and fleets
And will not let me be;
And I loathe the squares and streets,
And the faces that one meets,
Hearts with no love for me.
Always I long to creep
Into some still cavern deep,
There to weep, and weep, and weep
My whole soul out to thee.

Pub. 1855.

## MILTON

(ALCAICS)

Here Tennyson attempts to reproduce the effect of classical quantitative verse. The poem is composed of four Alcaic strophes. This strophe or stanza was developed by the Greek poet Alcæus (sixth century B.C.). Many later poets, especially Horace, used it.

O mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies,
O skilled to sing of Time or Eternity,
God-gifted organ-voice of England,
Milton, a name to resound for ages;
Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,
Starred from Jehovah's gorgeous armories,
Tower, as the deep-domed empyrean
Rings to the roar of an angel onset!
Me rather all that bowery loneliness,
The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,
And bloom profuse and cedar arches
Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,
Where some refulgent sunset of India
Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,
And crimson-hued the stately palm-woods
Whisper in odorous heights of even.

Pub. 1863.

## NORTHERN FARMER, OLD STYLE

1

Wheer 'asta beän saw long and meä liggin' [1] 'ere aloän?
Noorse? [2] thoort nowt o' a noorse; whoy, Doctor's abeän an' agoän;
Says that I moänt 'a naw moor aäle, but beänt a fool;
Git ma my aäle, fur I beänt a-gawin' to breä my rule.

1 lying. 2 nurse.

2

Doctors, they knaws nowt, fur a [1] says what nawways true;
Naw soort o' koind o' use to saäy the thing that a do.
I've 'ed my point o' aäle ivry noight sin' beän 'ere.
An' I've 'ed my quart ivry market-noight fo foorty year.

1 he.

3

Parson's a beän loikewoise, an' a sittin' e o' my bed.
"The Amoighty's a taäkin o' you to 'issén my friend," a said,
An' a towd ma my sins, an' 's toithe [3] we due, an' I gied it in hond;
I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done bo the lond.

3 tithe.

4

Larn'd a ma' beä. I reckons I 'annot s mooch to larn.
But a cast oop,[4] thot a did, 'bout Bess Marris's barne.[5]
Thaw a knaws I hallus voäted wi' Squoir an' choorch an' staäte,
An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur niver agi the raäte.[6]

4 he cast up against me. 5 child.
6 poor-tax.

5

An' I hallus coom'd to 's choorch afoor mo Sally wur deäd,
An' 'eärd 'um a bummin' awaäy loike buzzard-clock [7] ower my 'eäd,
An' I niver knaw'd whot a meän'd but thowt a 'ad summut to saäy,
An' I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said, an I coom'd awaäy.

7 June-bug.

6

Bessy Marris's barne! tha [8] knaws she laäi it to meä.
Mowt a beän, mayhap, for she wur a bad un sheä.
'Siver, I kep 'um,[9] I kep 'um, my lass, tha mun understond;
I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done boy the lond.

8 thou. 9 him.

7

But Parson a cooms an' a goäs, an' a says it eäsy an' freeä:
'The Amoighty's a taäkin o' you to 'issén, my friend," says 'eä.
I weänt saäy men be loiars, thaw summun said it in 'aäste;
But 'e reäds wonn sarmin a weeäk, an' I 'a stubb'd [1] Thurnaby waäste.

8

D' ya moind [2] the waäste, my lass? naw, naw, tha was not born then;
Theer wur a boggle [3] in it, I often 'eärd 'um, mysén;
Moäst loike a butter-bump,[4] fur I 'eärd 'um about an' about,
But I stubb'd 'um oop wi' the lot, an' raäved [5] an' rembled [6] 'um out.

9

Keäper's [7] it wur; fo' they fun 'um theer a-laäid of 'is faäce
Down i' the woild 'enemies [8] afoor I coom'd to the plaäce.
Noäks or Thimbleby — toäner [9] 'ed shot 'um as deäd as a naäil.
Noäks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize [10] — but git ma my aäle.

10

Dubbut [11] looök at the waäste; theer warn't not feeäd for a cow;
Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an' looök at it now —
Warn't worth nowt a haäcre, an' now theer's lots o' feeäd,
Fourscoor yows [12] upon it, an' some on it down i' seeäd.[13]

11

Nobbut a bit on it's left, an' I meän'd to 'a stubb'd it at fall,
Done it ta-year [14] I meän'd, an' runn'd plow thruff it an' all,
If Godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let ma aloän, —
Meä, wi' haäte [15] hoonderd haäcre o' Squoire's, an' lond o' my oän.

12

Do Godamoighty knaw what a 's doing a-taäkin' o' meä?
I beänt wonn as saws 'ere a beän an' yonder a peä;
An' Squoire 'ull be sa mad an' all — a' dear, a' dear!
And I 'a managed for Squoire coom Michaelmas thutty year.

13

A mowt 'a taäen owd Joänes, as 'ant not a 'aäpoth o' sense,
Or a mowt 'a taäen young Robins — a niver mended a fence;
But Godamoighty a moost taäke meä an' taäke ma now,
Wi' aäf the cows to cauve [1] an' Thurnaby hoälms [2] to plow!

14

Looök 'ow quoloty [3] smoiles when they seeäs ma a passin' boy,
Says to thessén,[4] naw doubt, "What a man a beä sewer-loy!" [5]
Fur they knaws what I beän to Squoire sin' fust a coom'd to the 'All;
I done moy duty by Squoire an' I done moy duty boy hall.

15

Squoire's i' Lunnon, an' summun I reckons 'ull 'a to wroite,
For whoä's to howd [6] the lond ater meä thot muddles ma quoit;
Sartin-sewer I beä thot a weänt niver give it to Joänes,
Naw, nor a moänt to Robins — a niver rembles the stoäns.

16

But summun 'ull come ater meä mayhap wi' 'is kittle o' steäm
Huzzin' [7] an' maäzin [8] the blessed feälds wi' the divil's oän teäm.
Sin' I mun doy I mun doy, thaw loife they says is sweet,
But sin' I mun doy I mun doy, for I couldn abeär to see it.

17

What atta stannin' theer fur, an' doesn bring ma the aäle?
Doctor's a 'toättler,[9] lass, an a's hallus i' the owd taäle; [10]
I weänt breäk rules fur Doctor, a knaws naw moor nor a floy;
Git ma my aäle, I tell tha, an' if I mun doy I mun doy.

Pub. 1864.

1 broken up for planting. 2 remember. 3 spirit. 4 bittern. 5 tore up. 6 threw. 7 the game-keeper's. 8 anemones. 9 one or the other. 10 the assizes. 11 do but. 12 ewes. 13 clover. 14 this year. 15 eight.

1 calve. 2 holms. 3 the gentry. 4 themselves. 5 surely. 6 hold. 7 hissing. 8 amazing. 9 teetotaler. 10 always telling the same story.

## THE HIGHER PANTHEISM

The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains, —
Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns?

Is not the Vision He, though He be not that which He seems?
Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in dreams?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,
Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him?

Dark is the world to thee; thyself art the reason why,
For is He not all but thou, that hast power to feel "I am I"?

Glory about thee, without thee; and thou fulfillest thy doom,
Making Him broken gleams and a stifled splendor and gloom.

Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet —
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise; O Soul, and let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet His voice.

Law is God, say some; no God at all, says the fool,
For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent in a pool;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man cannot see;
But if we could see and hear, this Vision — were it not He?

Pub. 1869.

## THE REVENGE

### A BALLAD OF THE FLEET

Tennyson took the story from Sir Walter Raleigh's contemporaneous account.

1

At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,
And a pinnace, like a fluttered bird, came flying from far away:
"Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted fifty-three!"
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard: "'Fore God I am no coward;
But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of gear,
And the half my men are sick. I must fly but follow quick.
We are six ships of the line; can we fight with fifty-three?"

2

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: "I know you are no coward;
You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.
But I've ninety men and more that are lying sick ashore.
I should count myself the coward if I left them, my Lord Howard,
To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain."

3

So Lord Howard passed away with five ships of war that day,
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer heaven;
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from the land
Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,
And we laid them on the ballast down below;
For we brought them all aboard,
And they blessed him in their pain, that they were not left to Spain,
To the thumb-screw and the stake, for the glory of the Lord.

4

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to fight,
And he sailed away from Flores till the Spaniard came in sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather[1] bow.
"Shall we fight or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
For to fight is but to die!
There'll be little of us left by the time this sun be set."
And Sir Richard said again: "We be all good English men.
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the devil,
For I never turned my back upon Don or devil yet."

1 windward.

5

Sir Richard spoke and he laughed, and we roared a hurrah, and so
The little *Revenge* ran on sheer into the heart of the foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick below;
For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left were seen,
And the little *Revenge* ran on through the long sea-lane between.

6

Thousands of their soldiers looked down from their decks and laughed,
Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad little craft
Running on and on, till delayed
By their mountain-like *San Philip* that, of fifteen hundred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with her yawning tiers of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we stayed.

7

And while now the great *San Philip* hung above us like a cloud
Whence the thunderbolt will fall
Long and loud,
Four galleons drew away
From the Spanish fleet that day,
And two upon the larboard and two upon the starboard lay,
And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

8

But anon the great *San Philip*, she bethought herself and went,
Having that within her womb that had left her ill content;
And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought us hand to hand,
For a dozen times they came with their pikes and musketeers,
And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that shakes his ears
When he leaps from the water to the land.

9

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over the summer sea,
But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the fifty-three.
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built galleons came,
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-thunder and flame;
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her dead and her shame.
For some were sunk and many were shattered, and so could fight us no more —
God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the world before?

10

For he said, "Fight on! fight on!"
Though his vessel was all but a wreck;
And it chanced that, when half of the short summer night was gone,
With a grisly wound to be dressed he had left the deck,
But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly dead,
And himself he was wounded again in the side and the head,
And he said, "Fight on! fight on!"

11

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far over the summer sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round us all in a ring;
But they dared not touch us again, for they feared that we still could sting,
So they watched what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,
And half of the rest of us maimed for life
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate strife;
And the sick men down in the hold were most of them stark and cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder was all of it spent;
And the masts and the rigging were lying over the side;
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride:
"We have fought such a fight for a day and a night
As may never be fought again!
We have won great glory, my men!
And a day less or more
At sea or ashore,
We die — does it matter when?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner — sink her, split her in twain!
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!"

12

And the gunner said, "Ay, ay," but the seamen made reply:
"We have children, we have wives,

And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we yield, to let us go;
We shall live to fight again and to strike another blow."
And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded to the foe.

13

And the stately Spanish men to their flag-ship bore him then,
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with their courtly foreign grace;
But he rose upon their decks, and he cried:
"I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man and true;
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do.
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die!"
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

14

And they stared at the dead that had been so valiant and true,
And had holden the power and glory of Spain so cheap
That he dared her with one little ship and his English few;
Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught they knew,
But they sank his body with honor down into the deep,
And they manned the *Revenge* with a swarthier alien crew,
And away she sailed with her loss and longed for her own;
When a wind from the lands they had ruined awoke from sleep,
And the water began to heave and the weather to moan,
And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earthquake grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their masts and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-shattered navy of Spain,
And the little *Revenge* herself went down by the island crags
To be lost evermore in the main.

Pub. 1878.

## RIZPAH

This is a dramatic monologue, based upo story that Tennyson found in a penny ma zine. For the Biblical story of Rizpah, wh son was hanged, see 2 Samuel, xxi, 1–14.

17—

1

Wailing, wailing, wailing, the wind over la and sea —
And Willy's voice in the wind, "O mothe come out to me!"
Why should he call me to-night, when l knows that I cannot go?
For the downs are as bright as day, and t full moon stares at the snow.

2

We should be seen, my dear; they would sp us out of the town.
The loud black nights for us, and the stor rushing over the down,
When I cannot see my own hand, but am le by the creak of the chain,
And grovel and grope for my son till I fin myself drenched with the rain.

3

Anything fallen again? nay — what wa there left to fall?
I have taken them home, I have numbere the bones, I have hidden them all.
What am I saying? and what are *you?* d you come as a spy?
Falls? what falls? who knows? As the tre falls so must it lie.

4

Who let her in? how long has she been? yo — what have you heard?
Why did you sit so quiet? you never hav spoken a word.
O — to pray with me — yes — a lady — none of their spies —
But the night has crept into my heart, an begun to darken my eyes.

5

Ah — you, that have lived so soft, wha should *you* know of the night,
The blast and the burning shame and th bitter frost and the fright?
I have done it, while you were asleep — yo were only made for the day.
I have gathered my baby together — an now you may go your way.

6

Nay — for it's kind of you, madam, to sit
by an old dying wife.
But say nothing hard of my boy, I have only
an hour of life.
I kissed my boy in the prison, before he went
out to die.
"They dared me to do it," he said, and he
never has told me a lie.
I whipped him for robbing an orchard once
when he was but a child —
"The farmer dared me to do it," he said; he
was always so wild —
And idle — and couldn't be idle — my Willy
— he never could rest.
The King should have made him a sol-
dier, he would have been one of his
best.

7

But he lived with a lot of wild mates,
and they never would let him be
good;
They swore that he dare not rob the mail,
and he swore that he would;
And he took no life, but he took one purse,
and when all was done
He flung it among his fellows — "I'll none
of it," said my son.

8

I came into court to the judge and the
lawyers. I told them my tale,
God's own truth — but they killed him, they
killed him for robbing the mail.
They hanged him in chains for a show — we
had always borne a good name —
To be hanged for a thief — and then put
away — isn't that enough shame?
Dust to dust — low down — let us hide! but
they set him so high
That all the ships of the world could stare
at him, passing by.
God 'ill pardon the hell-black raven and
horrible fowls of the air,
But not the black heart of the lawyer who
killed him and hanged him there.

9

And the jailer forced me away. I had bid
him my last good-bye;
They had fastened the door of his cell. "O
mother!" I heard him cry.
I couldn't get back though I tried, he had
something further to say,
And now I never shall know it. The jailer
forced me away.

10

Then since I couldn't but hear that cry of
my boy that was dead,
They seized me and shut me up: they
fastened me down on my bed.
"Mother, O mother!" — he called in the
dark to me year after year —
They beat me for that, they beat me — you
know that I couldn't but hear;
And then at the last they found I had grown
so stupid and still
They let me abroad again — but the crea-
tures had worked their will.

11

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of my
bone was left —
I stole them all from the lawyers — and you,
will you call it a theft? —
My baby, the bones that had sucked me, the
bones that had laughed and had
cried —
Theirs? O, no! they are mine — not theirs
— they had moved in my side.

12

Do you think I was scared by the bones?
I kissed 'em, I buried 'em all —
I can't dig deep, I am old — in the night by
the churchyard wall.
My Willy 'ill rise up whole when the trumpet
of judgment 'ill sound,
But I charge you never to say that I laid
him in holy ground.

13

They would scratch him up — they would
hang him again on the cursed tree.
Sin? O, yes, we are sinners, I know — let all
that be,
And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's
goodwill toward men —
"Full of compassion and mercy, the Lord"
— let me hear it again;
"Full of compassion and mercy — long-
suffering." Yes, O, yes!
For the lawyer is born but to murder — the
Savior lives but to bless.
*He*'ll never put on the black cap[1] except for
the worst of the worst,
And the first may be last — I have heard it
in church — and the last may be first.
Suffering — O, long-suffering — yes, as the
Lord must know,
Year after year in the mist and the wind and
the shower and the snow.

1 Worn by an English judge when pronouncing a death-sentence.

14

Heard, have you? what? they have told you
he never repented his sin.
How do they know it? are *they* his mother?
are *you* of his kin?
Heard! have you ever heard, when the storm
on the downs began,
The wind that 'ill wail like a child and the
sea that 'ill moan like a man?

15

Election, Election, and Reprobation[1] — it's
all very well.
But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall not
find him in hell.
For I cared so much for my boy that the
Lord has looked into my care,
And He means me I'm sure to be happy with
Willy, I know not where.

16

And if *he* be lost — but to save *my* soul, that
is all your desire —
Do you think I care for *my* soul if my boy be
gone to the fire?
I have been with God in the dark — go, go,
you may leave me alone —
You have never borne a child — you are
just as hard as a stone.

17

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think that
you mean to be kind,
But I cannot hear what you say for my
Willy's voice in the wind —
The snow and the sky so bright — he us
but to call in the dark,
And he calls to me now from the church a
not from the gibbet — for hark!
Nay — you can hear it yourself — it is co
ing — shaking the walls —
Willy — the moon's in a cloud — Goo
night. I am going. He calls.

Pub. 1880.

1 In Calvinistic theology, election was foreordained salvation, and reprobation, foreordained damnation, of certain souls.

## CROSSING THE BAR

This lyric, written towards the end of Te
nyson's life, is always placed, at the poet's r
quest, at the end of every edition of his poem

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boun
less deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For though from out our bourne of Time an
Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

Pub. 1889.

# ROBERT BROWNING (1812–1889)

Robert Browning, essentially a city poet, was born in Camberwell, then a suburb, now a par
of London, May 7, 1812. His education was informal, but thorough, largely through tutors, con
cluding with two years at the University of London. Besides Latin, Greek, French, and othe
studies, he had instruction in riding, dancing, boxing, music, and sculpture. He early decided to b
a poet, largely under the influence of his first gods, Keats and especially Shelley. In 1832, a
twenty, he began his career with *Pauline*, followed in 1835 by *Paracelsus*. These poems brough
him friendship with the prominent literary men in London, especially Leigh Hunt, Talfourd, Lan
dor, and Macready. For the latter he wrote a play, *Strafford*, produced in May, 1837. Ther
followed a year abroad, mainly in Italy, Browning's second country. During this period he
completed *Sordello*, published in 1840. From 1841 to 1846 he published his eight series of *Bell
and Pomegranates*, so called, as he explained, "to indicate an endeavor towards something like an
alternation, or mixture, of music with discoursing, sound with sense, poetry with thought." O
these, No. I contained *Pippa Passes*, III and VII, many of his dramatic lyrics, and V, *A Blot in the
'Scutcheon*, which was produced by Macready the same year that it was published. In 1846 he
married Elizabeth Barrett, the poetess, and took up his residence with her in Florence, Italy. There
they lived in great happiness until her death fifteen years later, whereupon Browning returned to

England. While in Italy, his chief production was *Men and Women*, in two volumes, 1855, in which appeared many of his well-known poems. Of the many volumes that he published thereafter the most important are *Dramatis Personæ*, 1864; *The Ring and the Book*, 1868, his greatest achievement; and *Asolando*, 1890, his last book of poems. Browning died at his son's home, in Venice, December 12, 1889. He was buried in the Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey.

In his day Browning had to yield in popularity to his contemporary, Tennyson. Since then his vogue has grown greatly, and he has ceased to be regarded as a "difficult" poet. Most of the difficulties in Browning are due to the fact that he does not pretend to be logical in his poems; he follows the association of ideas as one suggests another. In his dramatic lyrics, it must be remembered, too, the hero is speaking, not the poet, whose purpose is merely to reproduce an intricate, psychological process, not to analyze it. Often, too, Browning attempts through the connotation of sounds to be suggestive as in music, rather than exactly informative. When he packs his poems with strange allusions and obscure references, then Browning presupposes too much in the reader and may justly be criticized.

In his philosophy the foremost idea is the value of developing one's personality or soul. In this, the will to effort, supplemented by courage and faith, is the most powerful force. The great sins to Browning are "sluggishness, indifference, sloth of living."

An excellent one-volume edition of Browning's poems is the Cambridge Edition, Houghton Mifflin Company. For his life, see G. K. Chesterton's in English Men of Letters series, and Mrs. Sutherland Orr's, Houghton Mifflin Company. For guides to the poems, see the latter's handbook, as well as those by E. Berdoe and G. W. Cooke.

## PIPPA'S SONG

The song of the heroine in *Pippa Passes*.

The year's at the spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn:
God's in his heaven —
All's right with the world!

Pub. 1841.

## CAVALIER TUNES

These three lyrics express superbly the gallant devotion of the Cavaliers to Charles I and the disdain in which they held the Puritans. The songs first appeared in the third number of *Bells and Pomegranates*.

Note the drum-beat throughout *Marching Along*.

### 1. MARCHING ALONG

Kentish Sir Byng [1] stood for his King,
Bidding the crop-headed Parliament [2] swing:
And, pressing [3] a troop unable to stoop
And see the rogues flourish and honest folk droop,
Marched them along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song.

God for King Charles! Pym [4] and such carles [5]
To the Devil that prompts 'em their treasonous parles! [1]
Cavaliers, up! Lips from the cup,
Hands from the pasty, nor bite take nor sup
Till you're —
*Chorus.* — Marching along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song.

Hampden to hell, and his obsequies' knell.
Serve Hazelrig, Fiennes, and young Harry [2] as well!
England, good cheer! Rupert [3] is near!
Kentish and loyalists, keep we not here,
*Cho.* — Marching along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song?

Then, God for King Charles! Pym and his snarls
To the Devil that pricks on such pestilent carles!
Hold by the right, you double your might;
So, onward to Nottingham,[4] fresh for the fight,
*Cho.* — March we along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song!

1 One of the Byngs, a prominent Kentish family.
2 The so-called Long Parliament, 1640–60, dominated by the Puritan roundheads.
3 impressing, enlisting.
4 Pym, Hampden, and Cromwell were the leaders among the Puritans.
5 churls.

### 2. GIVE A ROUSE

King Charles, and who'll do him right now?
King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?
Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite now,
King Charles!

1 discussions. 2 All Puritans.
3 The King's nephew.
4 Here in 1642 the King gathered the loyalists, raised his standard, and proclaimed civil war.

Who gave me[1] the goods that went since?
Who raised me the house that sank once?
Who helped me to gold I spent since?
Who found[2] me in wine you drank once?
*Cho.* — King Charles, and who'll do him right now?
King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?
Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite now,
King Charles!

To whom used my boy George quaff else,
By the old fool's side that begot him?
For whom did he cheer and laugh else,
While Noll's[3] damned troopers shot him?
*Cho.* — King Charles, and who'll do him right now?
King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?
Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite now
King Charles!

### 3. BOOT AND SADDLE

Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!
Rescue my castle before the hot day
Brightens to blue from its silvery gray.
*Cho.* — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!

Ride past the suburbs, asleep as you'd say;
Many's the friend there, will listen and pray
"God's luck to gallants that strike up the lay —
*Cho.* — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Forty miles off, like a roebuck at bay,
Flouts Castle Brancepeth the Roundheads' array:
Who laughs, "Good fellows ere this, by my fay,
*Cho.* — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Who? My wife Gertrude; that, honest and gay,
Laughs when you talk of surrendering, "Nay!
I've better counsellors; what counsel they?
*Cho.* — Boot, saddle, to horse, and away!"

Pub. 1842.

1 The speaker here, as in the next poem, is an imaginary Cavalier.
2 kept, supplied with. 3 Oliver Cromwell's.

## MY LAST DUCHESS

FERRARA

The Duke shows the portrait of his late wife to the envoy from his fiancée's father.

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
Looking as if she were alive. I call
That piece a wonder, now: Frà Pandolf's[1] hand
Worked busily a day, and there she stands.
Will't please you sit and look at her? I said
"Frà Pandolf" by design, for never read
Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
But to myself they turned (since none puts by
The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
How such a glance came there; so, not the first
Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 'twas not
Her husband's presence only, called that spot
Of joy into the Duchess' cheek: perhaps
Frà Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps
Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
Must never hope to reproduce the faint
Half-flush that dies along her throat:" such stuff
Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough
For calling up that spot of joy. She had
A heart — how shall I say? — too soon made glad,
Too easily impressed: she liked whate'er
She looked on, and her looks went everywhere.
Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast,
The dropping of the daylight in the West,
The bough of cherries some officious fool
Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
She rode with round the terrace — all and each
Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
Or blush, at least. She thanked men, — good! but thanked
Somehow — I know not how — as if she ranked
My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old name
With anybody's gift. Who'd stoop to blame
This sort of trifling? Even had you skill
In speech — (which I have not) — to make your will
Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this

1 An imaginary painter-monk.

Or that in you disgusts me; here you miss,
Or there exceed the mark" — and if she let
Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
— E'en then would be some stooping; and I choose
Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,
Whene'er I passed her; but who passed without
Much the same smile? This grew; I gave commands;
Then all smiles stopped together.[1] There she stands
As if alive. Will't please you rise? We'll meet
The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence
Is ample warrant that no just pretence
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck[2] cast in bronze for me!

Pub. 1842.

## SOLILOQUY OF THE SPANISH CLOISTER

Gr-r-r — there go, my heart's abhorrence!
Water your damned flower-pots, do!
If hate killed men, Brother Lawrence,
God's blood, would not mine kill you!
What? your myrtle-bush wants trimming?
Oh, that rose has prior claims —
Needs its leaden vase filled brimming?
Hell dry you up with its flames!

At the meal we sit together:
*Salve tibi!*[3] I must hear
Wise talk of the kind of weather,
Sort of season, time of year:
*Not a plenteous cork-crop: scarcely*
*Dare we hope oak-galls, I doubt:*
*What's the Latin name for "parsley"?*
What's the Greek name for Swine's Snout?

Whew! We'll have our platter burnished,
Laid with care on our own shelf!
With a fire-new spoon we're furnished,
And a goblet for ourself,
Rinsed like something sacrificial
Ere 'tis fit to touch our chaps —
Marked with L for our initial!
(He-he! There his lily snaps!)

*Saint*, forsooth! While brown Dolores
Squats outside the Convent bank
With Sanchicha, telling stories,
Steeping tresses in the tank,
Blue-black, lustrous, thick like horsehairs,
— Can't I see his dead eye glow,
Bright as 'twere a Barbary corsair's?
(That is, if he'd let it show!)

When he finishes refection,[1]
Knife and fork he never lays
Cross-wise, to my recollection,
As do I, in Jesu's praise.
I the Trinity illustrate,
Drinking watered orange-pulp —
In three sips the Arian[2] frustrate;
While he drains his at one gulp.

Oh, those melons! If he's able
We're to have a feast! so nice!
One goes to the Abbot's table,
All of us get each a slice.
How go on your flowers? None double?
Not one fruit-sort can you spy?
Strange! — And I, too, at such trouble
Keep them close-nipped on the sly!

There's a great text in Galatians,
Once you trip on it, entails
Twenty-nine distinct damnations,
One sure, if another fails:
If I trip him just a-dying,
Sure of heaven as sure can be,
Spin him round and send him flying
Off to hell, a Manichee?[3]

Or, my scrofulous French novel
On gray paper with blunt type!
Simply glance at it, you grovel
Hand and foot in Belial's[4] gripe:
If I double down[5] its pages
At the woeful sixteenth print,
When he gathers his greengages,[6]
Ope a sieve and slip it in't?

Or, there's Satan! — one might venture
Pledge one's soul to him, yet leave
Such a flaw in the indenture[7]
As he'd miss till, past retrieve,

1 He had the Duchess put to death.
2 Innsbruck in the Tyrol is famous for the well-known bronze statues of King Arthur, Theodoric, and others. Claus, however, is an imaginary sculptor.
3 How are you?

1 the meal.
2 A believer in the creed of Arius regarding the Trinity.
3 Member of an early Christian sect that embraced some Eastern beliefs.
4 the devil's. 5 bend over 6 greenish plums
7 contract, bond.

Blasted lay that rose-acacia
We're so proud of! *Hy, Zy, Hine* . . .
'St, there's Vespers! *Plena gratiâ,*
*Ave, Virgo!* [1] Gr-r-r — you swine!

Pub. 1843.

## THE LOST LEADER

The best explanation of the poem is contained in the following letter of Browning, written in reply to the question whether, in composing the piece, he had in mind Wordsworth after his defection from liberalism:

19 Warwick-Crescent, W., *Feb.* 24, '75

DEAR MR. GROSART, — I have been asked the question you now address me with, and as duly answered it, I can't remember how many times; there is no sort of objection to one more assurance or rather confession, on my part, that I *did* in my hasty youth presume to use the great and venerated personality of Wordsworth as a sort of painter's model; one from which this or the other particular feature may be selected and turned to account; had I intended more, above all, such a boldness as portraying the entire man, I should not have talked about "handfuls of silver and bits of ribbon." These never influenced the change of politics in the great poet, whose defection, nevertheless, accompanied as it was by a regular face-about of his special party, was to my juvenile apprehension, and even mature consideration, an event to deplore. But just as in the tapestry on my wall I can recognize figures which have *struck out* a fancy, on occasion, that though truly enough thus derived, yet would be preposterous as a copy, so, though I dare not deny the original of my little poem, I altogether refuse to have it considered as the "very effigies" of such a moral and intellectual superiority.

Faithfully yours,
ROBERT BROWNING

Just for the handful of silver he left us,
Just for a riband to stick in his coat —
Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
Lost all the others she lets us devote;
They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver,
So much was theirs who so little allowed:
How all our copper had gone for his service!
Rags — were they purple, his heart had been proud!
We that had loved him so, followed him, honored him,
Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,
Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,
Made him our pattern to live and to die!
Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,

1 Hail, Mary, full of grace.

Burns, Shelley, were with us, — they watch from their graves!
He alone breaks from the van and the free men, —
He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves!
We shall march prospering, — not through his presence;
Songs may inspirit us, — not from his lyre
Deeds will be done, — while he boasts his quiescence,
Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire:
Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,
One task more declined, one more footpath untrod,
One more devils'-triumph and sorrow for angels,
One wrong more to man, one more insult to God!
Life's night begins: let him never come back to us!
There would be doubt, hesitation and pain
Forced praise on our part — the glimmer of twilight,
Never glad confident morning again!
Best [1] fight on well, for we taught him — strike gallantly,
Menace our heart ere we master his own; [2]
Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait us,
Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne!

Pub. 1845.

## MEETING AT NIGHT

This and the next poem are companion pieces, originally published under the title *Night and Morning.* The speaker in both poems is a man.

The gray sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each!

Pub. 1845.

1 i.e., for him.
2 i.e., almost defeat us before we conquer him.

## PARTING AT MORNING

Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,
And the sun looked over the mountain's rim:
And straight was a path of gold for him,[1]
And the need of a world of men for me.

Pub. 1845.

## HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

Oh, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brush-wood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole[2] are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England — now!

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows!
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops — at the bent spray's edge —
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower
— Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

Pub. 1845.

## THE BISHOP ORDERS HIS TOMB AT SAINT PRAXED'S CHURCH

Rome, 15—

Students of the Renaissance have praised this dramatic lyric highly for the manner in which it re-creates the temper of the age. Ruskin's estimate is often cited:

"I know no other piece of modern English, prose or poetry, in which there is so much told, as in these lines, of the Renaissance spirit, — its worldliness, inconsistency, pride, hypocrisy, ignorance of itself, love of art, of luxury, and of good Latin. It is nearly all that I said of the central Renaissance in thirty pages of the *Stones of Venice*, put into as many lines, Browning's being also the antecedent work. The worst of it is that this kind of concentrated writing needs so much solution before the reader can fairly get the good of it, that people's patience fails them, and they give the thing up as insoluble; though, truly, it ought to be to the current of common thought like Saladin's talisman, dipped in clear water, not soluble altogether, but making the element medicinal."

Vanity, saith the preacher, vanity!
Draw round my bed: is Anselm keeping back?
Nephews — sons mine . . . ah God, I know not! Well —
She, men would have to be your mother once,
Old Gandolf envied me, so fair she was!
What's done is done, and she is dead beside,
Dead long ago, and I am Bishop since,
And as she died so must we die ourselves,
And thence ye may perceive the world's a dream.
Life, how and what is it? As here I lie
In this state-chamber, dying by degrees,
Hours and long hours in the dead night, I ask
"Do I live, am I dead?" Peace, peace seems all.
Saint Praxed's ever was the church for peace;
And so, about this tomb of mine. I fought
With tooth and nail to save my niche, ye know:
— Old Gandolf cozened[1] me, despite my care;
Shrewd was that snatch from out the corner South
He graced his carrion with, God curse the same!
Yet still my niche is not so cramped but thence
One sees the pulpit o' the epistle-side,[2]
And somewhat of the choir, those silent seats,
And up into the aery dome where live
The angels, and a sunbeam's sure to lurk:
And I shall fill my slab of basalt there,
And 'neath my tabernacle take my rest,
With those nine columns round me, two and two,
The odd one at my feet where Anselm stands:
Peach-blossom marble all, the rare, the ripe
As fresh-poured red wine of a mighty pulse.[3]
— Old Gandolf with his paltry onion-stone,[3]
Put me where I may look at him! True peach,
Rosy and flawless: how I earned the prize!
Draw close: that conflagration of my church

1 the sun. 2 trunk.

1 cheated, fooled.
2 The side of the altar from which the Epistles of the New Testament are read. In the liturgy, this reading occurs between the collect and the Gospel.
3 A poorer marble.

— What then? So much was saved if aught were missed!
My sons, ye would not be my death? Go dig
The white-grape vineyard where the oil-press stood,
Drop water gently till the surface sink,
And if ye find . . . Ah God, I know not, I! . . .
Bedded in store of rotten fig-leaves soft,
And corded up in a tight olive-frail,[1]
Some lump, ah God, of *lapis lazuli*,
Big as a Jew's head cut off at the nape,
Blue as a vein o'er the Madonna's breast . . .
Sons, all have I bequeathed you, villas, all,
That brave Frascati villa with its bath,
So, let the blue lump poise between my knees,
Like God the Father's globe on both his hands
Ye worship in the Jesu Church so gay,
For Gandolf shall not choose but see and burst!
Swift as a weaver's shuttle fleet our years:
Man goeth to the grave, and where is he?
Did I say basalt for my slab, sons? Black —
'Twas ever antique-black I meant! How else
Shall ye contrast my frieze to come beneath?
The bas-relief in bronze ye promised me,
Those Pans and Nymphs ye wot of, and perchance
Some tripod, thyrsus, with a vase or so,
The Savior at his sermon on the mount,
Saint Praxed in a glory, and one Pan
Ready to twitch the Nymph's last garment off,
And Moses with the tables . . . but I know
Ye mark me not! What do they whisper thee,
Child of my bowels, Anselm? Ah, ye hope
To revel down my villas while I gasp
Bricked o'er with beggar's moldy travertine[2]
Which Gandolf from his tomb-top chuckles at!
Nay, boys, ye love me — all of jasper, then!
'Tis jasper ye stand pledged to, lest I grieve
My bath must needs be left behind, alas!
One block, pure green as a pistachio-nut,
There's plenty jasper somewhere in the world —
And have I not Saint Praxed's ear to pray
Horses for ye, and brown[3] Greek manuscripts.
And mistresses with great smooth marbly limbs?
— That's if ye carve my epitaph aright,
Choice Latin, picked phrase, Tully's[1] every word,
No gaudy ware like Gandolf's second line —
Tully, my masters? Ulpian[2] serves his need
And then how I shall lie through centuries,
And hear the blessed mutter of the mass,
And see God made and eaten all day long,
And feel the steady candle-flame, and taste
Good strong thick stupefying incense-smoke
For as I lie here, hours of the dead night,
Dying in state and by such slow degrees
I fold my arms as if they clasped a crook,
And stretch my feet forth straight as stone can point,
And let the bedclothes, for a mortcloth, drop
Into great laps and folds of sculptor's-work:
And as yon tapers dwindle, and strange thoughts
Grow, with a certain humming in my ears,
About the life before I lived this life,
And this life too, popes, cardinals and priests,
Saint Praxed at his sermon on the mount,
Your tall pale mother with her talking eyes
And new-found agate urns as fresh as day
And marble's language, Latin pure, discreet,
— Aha, ELUCESCEBAT quoth our friend?
No Tully, said I, Ulpian at the best!
Evil and brief hath been my pilgrimage.
All *lapis*, all, sons! Else I give the Pope
My villas! Will ye ever eat my heart?
Ever your eyes were as a lizard's quick,
They glitter like your mother's for my soul,
Or ye would heighten my impoverished frieze
Piece out its starved design, and fill my vase
With grapes, and add a visor and a Term,[3]
And to the tripod ye would tie a lynx
That in his struggle throws the thyrsus down,
To comfort me on my entablature
Whereon I am to lie till I must ask
"Do I live, am I dead?" There, leave me there!
For ye have stabbed me with ingratitude
To death — ye wish it — God, ye wish it! Stone —
Gritstone,[4] a-crumble! Clammy squares which sweat
As if the corpse they keep were oozing through —
And no more *lapis* to delight the world!
Well, go! I bless ye. Fewer tapers there,
But in a row: and, going, turn your backs
— Ay, like departing altar-ministrants,
And leave me in my church, the church for peace,

1 A rush basket for holding olives.
2 Ordinary marble from Tivoli.
3 The color of old vellum.

1 Cicero's. 2 A minor Latin stylist.
3 Bust or statue terminating or topping a stone shaft or pedestal.
4 A soft stone.

That I may watch at leisure if he leers —
Old Gandolf — at me, from his onion-stone,
As still he envied me, so fair she was!

Pub. 1845.

## LOVE AMONG THE RUINS

The setting of the poem is the Roman Campagna.

Where the quiet-colored end of evening smiles
Miles and miles
On the solitary pastures where our sheep
Half-asleep
Tinkle homeward through the twilight, stray or stop
As they crop —
Was the site once of a city great and gay,
(So they say)
Of our country's very capital, its prince
Ages since
Held his court in, gathered councils, wielding far
Peace or war.

Now, — the country does not even boast a tree,
As you see,
To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills
From the hills
Intersect and give a name to, (else they run
Into one,)
Where the domed and daring palace shot its spires
Up like fires
O'er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall
Bounding all,
Made of marble, men might march on nor be pressed,
Twelve abreast.

And such plenty and perfection, see, of grass
Never was!
Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o'er-spreads
And embeds
Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,
Stock or stone —
Where a multitude of men breathed joy and woe
Long ago;
Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread of shame
Struck them tame;

And that glory and that shame alike, the gold
Bought and sold.

Now, — the single little turret that remains
On the plains,
By the caper [1] overrooted, by the gourd
Overscored,
While the patching houseleek's head of blossom winks
Through the chinks —
Marks the basement whence a tower in ancient time
Sprang sublime,
And a burning ring, all round, the chariots traced
As they raced,
And the monarch and his minions and his dames
Viewed the games.

And I know, while thus the quiet-colored eve
Smiles to leave
To their folding, all our many-tinkling fleece
In such peace,
And the slopes and rills in undistinguished gray
Melt away —
That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair
Waits me there
In the turret whence the charioteers caught soul
For the goal,
When the king looked, where she looks now, breathless, dumb
Till I come.

But he looked upon the city, every side,
Far and wide,
All the mountains topped with temples, all the glades'
Colonnades,
All the causeys,[2] bridges, aqueducts, — and then,
All the men!
When I do come, she will speak not, she will stand,
Either hand
On my shoulder, give her eyes the first embrace
Of my face,
Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and speech
Each on each.

In one year they sent a million fighters forth
South and North,
And they built their gods a brazen pillar high
As the sky,

1 A plant, the buds of which are used for seasoning in cooking.
2 highways.

Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full force —
Gold, of course.
Oh heart! oh blood that freezes, blood that burns!
Earth's returns
For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin!
Shut them in,
With their triumphs and their glories and the rest!
Love is best.

Pub. 1855.

## UP AT A VILLA — DOWN IN THE CITY

(AS DISTINGUISHED BY AN ITALIAN PERSON OF QUALITY)

Had I but plenty of money, money enough and to spare,
The house for me, no doubt, were a house in the city-square;
Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads at the window there!

Something to see, by Bacchus, something to hear, at least!
There, the whole day long, one's life is a perfect feast;
While up at a villa one lives, I maintain it, no more than a beast.

Well now, look at our villa! stuck like the horn of a bull
Just on a mountain-edge as bare as the creature's skull,
Save a mere shag of a bush with hardly a leaf to pull!
— I scratch my own, sometimes, to see if the hair's turned wool.

But the city, oh the city — the square with the houses! Why?
They are stone-faced, white as a curd, there's something to take the eye!
Houses in four straight lines, not a single front awry;
You watch who crosses and gossips, who saunters, who hurries by;
Green blinds, as a matter of course, to draw when the sun gets high;
And the shops with fanciful signs which are painted properly.

What of a villa? Though winter be over in March by rights,
'Tis May perhaps ere the snow shall have withered well off the heights:
You've the brown ploughed land before, where the oxen steam and wheeze,
And the hills over-smoked behind by the faint gray olive-trees.

Is it better in May, I ask you? You've summer all at once;
In a day he leaps complete with a few strong April suns.
'Mid the sharp short emerald wheat, scarce risen three fingers well,
The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows out its great red bell
Like a thin clear bubble of blood, for the children to pick and sell.

Is it ever hot in the square? There's a fountain to spout and splash!
In the shade it sings and springs; in the shine such foambows flash
On the horses with curling fish-tails, that prance and paddle and pash
Round the lady atop in her conch — fifty gazers do not abash,
Though all that she wears is some weeds round her waist in a sort of sash.

All the year long at the villa, nothing to see though you linger,
Except yon cypress that points like death' lean lifted forefinger.
Some think fireflies pretty, when they mix i' the corn and mingle,
Or thrid the stinking hemp till the stalks o' it seem a-tingle.
Late August or early September, the stunning cicala is shrill,
And the bees keep their tiresome whine round the resinous firs on the hill.
Enough of the seasons, — I spare you the months of the fever and chill.

Ere you open your eyes in the city, the blessed church-bells begin:
No sooner the bells leave off than the diligence rattles in:
You get the pick of the news, and it costs you never a pin.
By and by there's the travelling doctor gives pills, lets blood, draws teeth;
Or the Pulcinello-trumpet[1] breaks up the market beneath.
At the post-office such a scene-picture — the new play, piping hot!

1 The bugle-call announcing the beginning of the Punch and Judy show.

And a notice how, only this morning, three
liberal thieves were shot.
Above it, behold the Archbishop's most
fatherly of rebukes,
And beneath, with his crown and his lion,
some little new law of the Duke's!
Or a sonnet with flowery marge, to the
Reverend Don So-and-so,
Who is Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, Saint
Jerome, and Cicero,
"And moreover," (the sonnet goes rhyming,)
"the skirts of Saint Paul has reached,
Having preached us those six Lent-lec-
tures more unctuous than ever he
preached."
Noon strikes, — here sweeps the procession!
our Lady borne smiling and smart
With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and
seven swords stuck in her heart!
*Bang-whang-whang* goes the drum, *tootle-te-
tootle* the fife;
No keeping one's haunches still: it's the
greatest pleasure in life.

But bless you, it's dear — it's dear! fowls,
wine, at double the rate.
They have clapped a new tax upon salt, and
what oil pays passing the gate
It's horror to think of. And so, the villa for
me, not the city!
Beggars can scarcely be choosers: but still,
ah, the pity, the pity!
Look, two and two go the priests, then the
monks with cowls and sandals,
And the pénitents dressed in white shirts,
a-holding the yellow candles;
One, he carries a flag up straight, and another
a cross with handles,
And the Duke's guard brings up the rear, for
the better prevention of scandals:
*Bang-whang-whang* goes the drum, *tootle-te-
tootle* the fife.
Oh, a day in the city-square, there is no such
pleasure in life!

Pub. 1855.

## A TOCCATA OF GALUPPI'S

Baldassare Galuppi (1706–85) was an Italian composer of spirited music, chiefly operas. A toccata is a light musical composition depending mainly, as the name implies, upon touch.

Oh Galuppi, Baldassare, this is very sad to find!
I can hardly misconceive you; it would prove me deaf and blind;
But although I take your meaning, 'tis with such a heavy mind!

Here you come with your old music, and
here's all the good it brings.
What, they lived once thus at Venice where
the merchants were the kings,
Where St. Mark's is, where the Doges used
to wed the sea with rings?

Ay, because the sea's the street there; and
'tis arched by . . . what you call
. . . Shylock's bridge[1] with houses on it,
where they kept the carnival:
I was never out of England — it's as if I saw
it all.

Did young people take their pleasure when
the sea was warm in May?
Balls and masks begun at midnight, burning
ever to mid-day,
When they made up fresh adventures for
the morrow, do you say?

Was a lady such a lady, cheeks so round and
lips so red, —
On her neck the small face buoyant, like a
bell-flower on its bed,
O'er the breast's superb abundance where a
man might base his head?

Well, and it was graceful of them — they'd
break talk off and afford
— She, to bite her mask's black velvet —
he, to finger on his sword,
While you sat and played Toccatas, stately at
the clavichord?

What? Those lesser[2] thirds so plaintive,
sixths diminished, sigh on sigh,
Told them something? Those suspen-
sions,[3] those solutions[4] — "Must we
die?"
Those commiserating sevenths[5] — "Life
might last! we can but try!"

"Were you happy?" — "Yes." — "And are
you still as happy?" — "Yes. And
you?"
— "Then, more kisses!" — "Did *I* stop
them, when a million seemed so
few?"

1 The Rialto.

2 Thirds and sixths in music are intervals embracing three and six tones, respectively, of the ordinary scale. These intervals are called major. If the interval is reduced a half tone, it is called lesser or minor. If reduced still another half tone, it is said to be diminished. Minor and diminished intervals usually sound plaintive or sad.

3 A suspension is a special kind of dissonance.

4 A solution or resolution is the concord following a dissonance.

5 Intervals of seven tones. "Commiserating" suggests that they were minor, or less a half tone.

Hark, the dominant's persistence [1] till it must
be answered to!

So, an octave struck the answer. Oh, they
praised you, I dare say!
"Brave Galuppi! that was music! good alike
at grave and gay!
I can always leave off talking when I hear a
master play!"

Then they left you for their pleasure: till in
due time, one by one,
Some with lives that came to nothing, some
with deeds as well undone,
Death stepped tacitly and took them where
they never see the sun.

But when I sit down to reason, think to take
my stand nor swerve,
While I triumph o'er a secret wrung from
nature's close reserve,
In you come with your cold music till I creep
through every nerve.

Yes, you, like a ghostly cricket, creaking
where a house was burned:
"Dust and ashes, dead and done with, Venice
spent what Venice earned.
The soul, doubtless, is immortal — where a
soul can be discerned.

"Yours for instance: you know physics,
something of geology,
Mathematics are your pastime; souls shall
rise in their degree;
Butterflies may dread extinction, — you'll
not die, it cannot be!

"As for Venice and her people, merely born
to bloom and drop,
Here on earth they bore their fruitage, mirth
and folly were the crop:
What of soul was left, I wonder, when the
kissing had to stop?

"Dust and ashes!" So you creak it, and I
want the heart to scold.
Dear dead women, with such hair, too —
what's become of all the gold
Used to hang and brush their bosoms? I feel
chilly and grown old.

Pub. 1855.

[1] The dominant is a chord based upon the fifth note of the scale. It is called "persistent" because it usually requires a tonic (a chord based on the first note of the scale) to follow.

## ONE WAY OF LOVE

All June I bound the rose in sheaves.
Now, rose by rose, I strip the leaves
And strew them where Pauline may pass.
She will not turn aside? Alas!
Let them lie. Suppose they die?
The chance was they might take her eye.

How many a month I strove to suit
These stubborn fingers to the lute!
To-day I venture all I know.
She will not hear my music? So!
Break the string; fold music's wing:
Suppose Pauline had bade me sing!

My whole life long I learned to love.
This hour my utmost art I prove
And speak my passion — heaven or hell?
She will not give me heaven? 'Tis well!
Lose who may — I still can say,
Those who win heaven, blest are they!

Pub. 1855.

## RESPECTABILITY

The lovers in this poem are supposed to be George Sand and Jules Sandeau, strolling at night in Paris.

Dear, had the world in its caprice
Deigned to proclaim "I know you both
Have recognized your plighted troth,
Am sponsor for you: live in peace!" —
How many precious months and years
Of youth had passed, that speed so fast,
Before we found it out at last,
The world, and what it fears!

How much of priceless life were spent
With men that every virtue decks,
And women models of their sex,
Society's true ornament, —
Ere we dared wander, nights like this,
Through wind and rain, and watch the Seine,
And feel the Boulevard break again
To warmth and light and bliss!

I know! the world proscribes not love;
Allows my finger to caress
Your lips' contour and downiness,
Provided it supply a glove.
The world's good word! — the Institute! [1]

[1] The Institute of France, composed of five academies, election to which depends upon achievement in art, science, or literature.

Guizot receives Montalembert!
Eh? Down the court three lampions[1] flare:
Put forward your best foot!

Pub. 1855.

## THE GUARDIAN-ANGEL

The picture of the angel and child that Browning describes in the following poem is in the church of St. Augustine at Fano.

A PICTURE AT FANO

Dear and great Angel, wouldst thou only leave
That child, when thou hast done with him, for me!
Let me sit all the day here, that when eve
Shall find performed thy special ministry,
And time come for departure, thou, suspending,
Thy flight, may'st see another child for tending,
Another still, to quiet and retrieve.

Then I shall feel thee step one step, no more,
From where thou standest now, to where I gaze,
— And suddenly my head is covered o'er
With those wings, white above the child who prays
Now on that tomb — and I shall feel thee guarding
Me, out of all the world; for me, discarding
Yon heaven thy home, that waits and opes its door.

I would not look up thither past thy head
Because the door opes, like that child, I know,
For I should have thy gracious face instead,
Thou bird of God! And wilt thou bend me low
Like him, and lay, like his, my hands together,
And lift them up to pray, and gently tether
Me, as thy lamb there, with thy garment's spread.

If this was ever granted, I would rest
My head beneath thine, while thy healing hands
Close-covered both my eyes beside thy breast,
Pressing the brain, which too much thought expands,
Back to its proper size again, and smoothing
Distortion down till every nerve had soothing,
And all lay quiet, happy and suppressed.

How soon all worldly wrong would be repaired!
I think how I should view the earth and skies
And sea, when once again my brow was bared
After thy healing, with such different eyes.
O world, as God has made it! All is beauty:
And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.
What further may be sought for or declared?

Guercino drew this angel I saw teach
(Alfred,[1] dear friend!) — that little child to pray,
Holding the little hands up, each to each
Pressed gently, — with his own head turned away
Over the earth where so much lay before him
Of work to do, though heaven was opening o'er him,
And he was left at Fano by the beach.

We were at Fano, and three times we went
To sit and see him in his chapel there,
And drink his beauty to our soul's content
— My angel[2] with me too: and since I care
For dear Guercino's fame (to which in power
And glory comes this picture for a dower,
Fraught with a pathos so magnificent) —

And since he did not work thus earnestly
At all times, and has else endured some wrong —
I took one thought his picture struck from me,
And spread it out, translating it to song.
My love is here. Where are you, dear old friend?[3]
How rolls the Wairoa[4] at your world's far end?
This is Ancona,[5] yonder is the sea.

Pub. 1855.

1 i.e., a highly respectable party is being given.

1 Alfred Domett, a close friend of Browning's in their younger days in London, at this time a Government official in New Zealand. Browning describes him in *Waring*, which he wrote after Domett's departure from England.
2 Mrs. Browning.
3 Alfred Domett.
4 In New Zealand.
5 A seaside city in Italy.

## MEMORABILIA

Ah, did you once see Shelley plain,
And did he stop and speak to you,
And did you speak to him again?
How strange it seems and new!

But you were living before that,
And also you are living after;

And the memory I started at —
My starting moves your laughter!

I crossed a moor, with a name of its own
And a certain use in the world no doubt,
Yet a hand's-breadth of it shines alone
'Mid the blank miles round about:

For there I picked up on the heather,
And there I put inside my breast,
A molted feather, an eagle feather!
Well, I forget the rest.

Pub. 1855.

## THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER

I said — Then, dearest, since 'tis so,
Since now at length my fate I know,
Since nothing all my love avails,
Since all, my life seemed meant for, fails,
Since this was written and needs must be —
My whole heart rises up to bless
Your name in pride and thankfulness!
Take back the hope you gave, — I claim
Only a memory of the same,
— And this beside, if you will not blame,
Your leave for one more last ride with me.

My mistress bent that brow of hers;
Those deep dark eyes where pride demurs
When pity would be softening through,
Fixed me a breathing-while or two
With life or death in the balance: right!
The blood replenished me again;
My last thought was at least not vain:
I and my mistress, side by side
Shall be together, breathe and ride,
So, one day more am I deified.
Who knows but the world may end to-night?

Hush! if you saw some western cloud
All billowy-bosomed, over-bowed
By many benedictions — sun's
And moon's and evening-star's at once —
And so, you, looking and loving best,
Conscious grew, your passion drew
Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too,
Down on you, near and yet more near,
Till flesh must fade for heaven was here! —
Thus leant she and lingered — joy and fear!
Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride. My soul
Smoothed itself out, a long-cramped scroll
Freshening and fluttering in the wind.
Past hopes already lay behind.

What need to strive with a life awry?
Had I said that, had I done this,
So might I gain, so might I miss.
Might she have loved me? just as well
She might have hated, who can tell!
Where had I been now if the worst befell?
And here we are riding, she and I.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds?
Why, all men strive, and who succeeds?
We rode; it seemed my spirit flew,
Saw other regions, cities new,
As the world rushed by on either side.
I thought, — All labor, yet no less
Bear up beneath their unsuccess.
Look at the end of work, contrast
The petty done, the undone vast,
This present of theirs with the hopeful past
I hoped she would love me; here we ride.

What hand and brain went ever paired?
What heart alike conceived and dared?
What act proved all its thought had been?
What will but felt the fleshly screen?
We ride and I see her bosom heave.
There's many a crown for who can reach.
Ten lines, a statesman's life in each!
The flag stuck on a heap of bones,
A soldier's doing! what atones?
They scratch his name on the Abbey stones,
My riding is better, by their leave.

What does it all mean, poet? Well,
Your brains beat into rhythm, you tell
What we felt only; you expressed
You hold things beautiful the best,
And place them in rhyme so, side by side.
'Tis something, nay 'tis much: but then,
Have you yourself what's best for men?
Are you — poor, sick, old ere your time —
Nearer one whit your own sublime
Than we who never have turned a rhyme?
Sing, riding's a joy! For me, I ride.

And you, great sculptor — so, you gave
A score of years to Art, her slave,
And that's your Venus, whence we turn
To yonder girl that fords the burn!
You acquiesce, and shall I repine?
What, man of music, you grown gray
With notes and nothing else to say,
Is this your sole praise from a friend,
"Greatly his opera's strains intend,
But in music we know how fashions end!"
I gave my youth; but we ride, in fine.

1 Westminster Abbey.

Who knows what's fit for us? Had fate
Proposed bliss here should sublimate
My being — had I signed the bond —
Still one must lead some life beyond,
Have a bliss to die with, dim-descried.
This foot once planted on the goal,
This glory-garland round my soul,
Could I descry such? Try and test!
I sink back shuddering from the quest.
Earth being so good, would heaven seem best?
Now, heaven and she are beyond this ride.

And yet — she has not spoke so long!
What if heaven be that, fair and strong
At life's best, with our eyes upturned
Whither life's flower is first discerned,
We, fixed so, ever should so abide?
What if we still ride on, we two,
With life forever old yet new,
Changed not in kind but in degree,
The instant made eternity, —
And heaven just proved that I and she
Ride, ride together, forever ride?

Pub. 1855.

## A GRAMMARIAN'S FUNERAL

SHORTLY AFTER THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING IN EUROPE

Let us begin and carry up this corpse,
Singing together.
Leave we the common crofts,[1] the vulgar thorpes[2]
Each in its tether
Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain,
Cared-for till cock-crow:
Look out if yonder be not day again
Rimming the rock-row!
That's the appropriate country; there, man's thought,
Rarer, intenser,
Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it ought,
Chafes in the censer.
Leave we the unlettered plain its herd and crop;
Seek we sepulture
On a tall mountain, citied to the top,
Crowded with culture!
All the peaks soar, but one the rest excels;
Clouds overcome it;
Lo! yonder sparkle is the citadel's
Circling its summit.
Thither our path lies; wind we up the heights;
Wait ye the warning?
Our low life was the level's and the night's;
He's for the morning.

1 small farms. 2 villages.

Step to a tune, square chests, erect each head,
'Ware the beholders!
This is our master, famous, calm and dead,
Borne on our shoulders.

Sleep, crop and herd! sleep, darkling thorpe and croft,
Safe from the weather!
He, whom we convoy to his grave aloft,
Singing together,
He was a man born with thy face and throat,
Lyric Apollo!
Long he lived nameless: how should Spring take note
Winter would follow?
Till lo, the little touch, and youth was gone!
Cramped and diminished,
Moaned he, "New measures, other feet anon!
My dance is finished"?
No, that's the world's way: (keep the mountain-side,
Make for the city!)
He knew the signal, and stepped on with pride
Over men's pity;
Left play for work, and grappled with the world
Bent on escaping:
"What's in the scroll," quoth he, "thou keepest furled?
Show me their shaping,
Theirs who most studied man, the bard and sage, —
Give!" — So, he gowned him,
Straight got by heart that book to its last page:
Learned, we found him.
Yea, but we found him bald too, eyes like lead,
Accents uncertain:
"Time to taste life," another would have said,
"Up with the curtain!"
This man said rather, "Actual life comes next?
Patience a moment!
Grant I have mastered learning's crabbed text,
Still there's the comment.
Let me know all! Prate not of most or least,
Painful or easy!
Even to the crumbs I'd fain eat up the feast,
Ay, nor feel queasy."
Oh, such a life as he resolved to live,
When he had learned it,

When he had gathered all books had to give!
Sooner, he spurned it.
Image the whole, then execute the parts —
Fancy the fabric
Quite, ere you build, ere steel strike fire from quartz,
Ere mortar dab brick!

(Here's the town-gate reached: there's the market-place
Gaping before us.)
Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace
(Hearten our chorus!)
That before living he'd learn how to live —
No end to learning:
Earn the means first — God surely will contrive
Use for our earning.
Others mistrust and say, "But time escapes:
Live now or never!"
He said, "What's time? Leave Now for dogs and apes!
Man has Forever."
Back to his book then: deeper drooped his head:
*Calculus*[1] racked him:
Leaden before, his eyes grew dross of lead:
*Tussis*[2] attacked him.
"Now, master, take a little rest!" — not he!
(Caution redoubled,
Step two abreast, the way winds narrowly!)
Not a whit troubled,
Back to his studies, fresher than at first,
Fierce as a dragon
He (soul-hydroptic[3] with a sacred thirst)
Sucked at the flagon.
Oh, if we draw a circle premature,
Heedless of far gain,
Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure
Bad is our bargain!
Was it not great? did he not throw on God,
(He loves the burthen) —
God's task to make the heavenly period
Perfect the earthen?
Did he not magnify the mind, show clear
Just what it all meant?
He would not discount life, as fools do here,
Paid by instalment.
He ventured neck or nothing — heaven's success
Found, or earth's failure:
"Wilt thou trust death or not?" He answered "Yes!
Hence with life's pale lure!"
That low man seeks a little thing to do,
Sees it and does it:
This high man, with a great thing to pursue
Dies ere he knows it.
That low man goes on adding one to one,
His hundred's soon hit:
This high man, aiming at a million,
Misses an unit.
That, has the world here — should he need
the next,
Let the world mind him!
This, throws himself on God, and unperplexed
Seeking shall find him.
So, with the throttling hands of death at strife,
Ground he at grammar;
Still, through the rattle, parts of speech were rife:
While he could stammer
He settled *Hoti's* business — let it be! —
Properly based *Oun* —
Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*,[1]
Dead from the waist down.
Well, here's the platform, here's the proper place:
Hail to your purlieus,
All ye highfliers of the feathered race,
Swallows and curlews!
Here's the top-peak; the multitude below
Live, for they can, there:
This man decided not to Live but Know —
Bury this man there?
Here — here's his place, where meteors shoot, clouds form,
Lightnings are loosened,
Stars come and go! Let joy break with the storm,
Peace let the dew send!
Lofty designs must close in like effects:
Loftily lying,
Leave him — still loftier than the world suspects,
Living and dying.

Pub. 1855.

1 Stones in the bladder or kidney. 2 coughing.
3 Thirsty with a thirst that becomes more intense as one drinks.

## THE STATUE AND THE BUST

Browning gave the following answers to questions put to him regarding the poem: "1. 'This story the townsmen tell;' 'when, how, and where,' constitutes the subject of the poem. 2. The lady was the wife of Riccardi; and the duke, Ferdinand, just as the poem says. 3. As it was built by, and inhabited by, the Medici

1 The three words are particles or enclitics in Greek which indicate fine shades of meaning. Browning's Grammarian was able to fix these nice discriminations.

till sold, long after, to the Riccardi, it was not from the duke's palace, but a window in that of the Riccardi, that the lady gazed at her lover riding by. The statue is still in its place, looking at the window under which 'now is the empty shrine.' Can anything be clearer?"

Note the use of the *terza rima* of Dante: *aba, bcb, cdc,* etc.

There's a palace in Florence, the world knows well,
And a statue watches it from the square,
And this story of both do our townsmen tell.

Ages ago, a lady there,
At the farthest window facing the East
Asked, "Who rides by with the royal air?"

The bridesmaids' prattle around her ceased;
She leaned forth, one on either hand;
They saw how the blush of the bride increased —

They felt by its beats her heart expand —
As one at each ear and both in a breath
Whispered, "The Great-Duke Ferdinand."

That selfsame instant, underneath,
The Duke rode past in his idle way,
Empty and fine like a swordless sheath.

Gay he rode, with a friend as gay,
Till he threw his head back — "Who is she?"
— "A bride the Riccardi brings home today."

Hair in heaps lay heavily
Over a pale brow spirit-pure —
Carved like the heart of the coal-black tree,

Crisped like a war-steed's encolure —
And vainly sought to dissemble her eyes
Of the blackest black our eyes endure,

And lo, a blade for a knight's emprise
Filled the fine empty sheath of a man, —
The Duke grew straightway brave and wise.

He looked at her, as a lover can;
She looked at him, as one who awakes:
The past was a sleep, and her life began.

Now, love so ordered for both their sakes,
A feast was held that selfsame night
In the pile which the mighty shadow makes.

For Via Larga is three-parts light,
But the palace overshadows one,
Because of a crime, which may God requite!

To Florence and God the wrong was done,
Through the first republic's murder there
By Cosimo[1] and his cursed son.)

The Duke (with the statue's face in the square)
Turned in the midst of his multitude
At the bright approach of the bridal pair.

Face to face the lovers stood
A single minute and no more,
While the bridegroom bent as a man subdued —

Bowed till his bonnet brushed the floor —
For the Duke on the lady a kiss conferred,
As the courtly custom was of yore.

In a minute can lovers exchange a word?
If a word did pass, which I do not think,
Only one out of a thousand heard.

That was the bridegroom. At day's brink
He and his bride were alone at last
In a bed chamber by a taper's blink.

Calmly he said that her lot was cast,
That the door she had passed was shut on her
Till the final catafalk repassed.

The world meanwhile, its noise and stir,
Through a certain window facing the East
She could watch like a convent's chronicler.

Since passing the door might lead to a feast,
And a feast might lead to so much beside,
He, of many evils, chose the least.

"Freely I choose too," said the bride —
"Your window and its world suffice,"
Replied the tongue, while the heart replied —

"If I spend the night with that devil twice,
May his window serve as my loop of hell
Whence a damned soul looks on paradise!

"I fly to the Duke who loves me well,
Sit by his side and laugh at sorrow
Ere I count another ave-bell.

"'Tis only the coat of a page to borrow,
And tie my hair in a horse-boy's trim.
And I save my soul — but not to-morrow" —

1 Cosimo de' Medici, 1389–1464, head of the Florentine Republic.

(She checked herself and her eye grew dim)
"My father tarries to bless my state:
I must keep it one day more for him.

"Is one day more so long to wait?
Moreover the Duke rides past, I know;
We shall see each other, sure as fate."

She turned on her side and slept. Just so!
So we resolve on a thing and sleep:
So did the lady, ages ago.

That night the Duke said, "Dear or cheap
As the cost of this cup of bliss may prove
To body or soul, I will drain it deep."

And on the morrow, bold with love,
He beckoned the bridegroom (close on call,
As his duty bade, by the Duke's alcove)

And smiled "'Twas a very funeral,
Your lady will think, this feast of ours, —
A shame to efface, whate'er befall!

"What if we break from the Arno bowers,
And try if Petraja, cool and green,
Cure last night's fault with this morning's flowers?"

The bridegroom, not a thought to be seen
On his steady brow and quiet mouth,
Said, "Too much favor for me so mean!

"But, alas! my lady leaves[1] the South;
Each wind that comes from the Apennine
Is a menace to her tender youth:

"Nor a way exists, the wise opine,
If she quits her palace twice this year,
To avert the flower of life's decline."

Quoth the Duke, "A sage and a kindly fear.
Moreover Petraja is cold this spring:
Be our feast to-night as usual here!"

And then to himself — "Which night shall bring
Thy bride to her lover's embraces, fool —
Or I am the fool, and thou art the king!

"Yet my passion must wait a night, nor cool —
For to-night the Envoy arrives from France
Whose heart I unlock with thyself, my tool.

"I need thee still and might miss perchance.

[1] i.e., is from.

To-day is not wholly lost, beside,
With its hope of my lady's countenance:

"For I ride — what should I do but ride?
And passing her palace, if I list,
May glance at its window — well betide!"

So said, so done: nor the lady missed
One ray that broke from the ardent brow,
Nor a curl of the lips where the spi
kissed.

Be sure that each renewed the vow,
No morrow's sun should arise and set
And leave them then as it left them now.

But next day passed, and next day yet,
With still fresh cause to wait one day mor
Ere each leaped over the parapet.

And still, as love's brief morning wore,
With a gentle start, half smile, half sigh,
They found love not as it seemed before.

They thought it would work infallibly,
But not in despite of heaven and earth:
The rose would blow when the storm passe
by.

Meantime they could profit in winter's dear
By store of fruits that supplant the rose:
The world and its ways have a certain wort

And to press a point while these oppose
Were simple policy; better wait:
We lose no friends and we gain no foes.

Meantime, worse fates than a lover's fate,
Who daily may ride and pass and look
Where his lady watches behind the grate!

And she — she watched the square like book
Holding one picture and only one,
Which daily to find she undertook:

When the picture was reached the book wa
done,
And she turned from the picture at night t
scheme
Of tearing it out for herself next sun.

So weeks grew months, years; gleam b
gleam
The glory dropped from their youth an
love,
And both perceived they had dreamed
dream;

Which hovered as dreams do, still above:
But who can take a dream for a truth?
Oh, hide our eyes from the next remove!

One day as the lady saw her youth
Depart, and the silver thread that streaked
Her hair, and, worn by the serpent's tooth,

The brow so puckered, the chin so peaked, —
And wondered who the woman was,
Hollow-eyed and haggard-cheeked,

Fronting her silent in the glass —
"Summon here," she suddenly said,
"Before the rest of my old self pass,

"Him, the Carver, a hand to aid,
Who fashions the clay no love will change,
And fixes a beauty never to fade.

"Let Robbia's [1] craft so apt and strange
Arrest the remains of young and fair,
And rivet them while the seasons range.

"Make me a face on the window there,
Waiting as ever, mute the while,
My love to pass below in the square!

"And let me think that it may beguile
Dreary days which the dead must spend
Down in their darkness under the aisle,

"To say, 'What matters it at the end?
I did no more while my heart was warm
Than does that image, my pale-faced friend.'

"Where is the use of lip's red charm,
The heaven of hair, the pride of the brow,
And the blood that blues the inside arm —

"Unless we turn, as the soul knows how,
The earthly gift to an end divine?
A lady of clay is as good, I trow."

But long ere Robbia's cornice, fine,
With flowers and fruits which leaves enlace,
Was set where now is the empty shrine —

(And, leaning out of a bright blue space,
As a ghost might lean from a chink of sky,
The passionate pale lady's face —

Eying ever, with earnest eye
And quick-turned neck at its breathless stretch,
Some one who ever is passing by —)

[1] Robbia made the bust, but which della Robbia is uncertain.

The Duke had sighed like the simplest wretch
In Florence, "Youth — my dream escapes!
Will its record stay?" And he bade them fetch

Some subtle molder of brazen shapes —
"Can the soul, the will, die out of a man
Ere his body find the grave that gapes?

"John of Douay [1] shall effect my plan,
Set me on horseback here aloft,
Alive, as the crafty sculptor can,

"In the very square I have crossed so oft:
That men may admire, when future suns
Shall touch the eyes to a purpose soft,

"While the mouth and the brow stay brave in bronze —
Admire and say, 'When he was alive
How he would take his pleasure once!'

"And it shall go hard but I contrive
To listen the while, and laugh in my tomb
At idleness which aspires to strive."

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So! While these wait the trump of doom,
How do their spirits pass, I wonder,
Nights and days in the narrow room?

Still, I suppose, they sit and ponder
What a gift life was, ages ago,
Six steps out of the chapel yonder.

Only they see not God, I know,
Nor all that chivalry of his,
The soldier-saints who, row on row,

Burn upward each to his point of bliss —
Since, the end of life being manifest,
He had burned his way through the world to this.

I hear you reproach, "But delay was best,
For their end was a crime." — Oh, a crime will do
As well, I reply, to serve for a test,

As a virtue golden through and through,
Sufficient to vindicate itself
And prove its worth at a moment's view!

Must a game be played for the sake of pelf?
Where a button goes, 'twere an epigram
To offer the stamp of the very Guelph.

[1] A sculptor from Bologna, who made the statue in 1608.

The true has no value beyond the sham:
As well the counter as coin, I submit,
When your table's a hat, and your prize, a dram.

Stake your counter as boldly every whit,
Venture as warily, use the same skill,
Do your best, whether winning or losing it,

If you choose to play! — is my principle.
Let a man contend to the uttermost
For his life's set prize, be it what it will!

The counter our lovers staked was lost
As surely as if it were lawful coin:
And the sin I impute to each frustrate ghost

Is — the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin,
Though the end in sight was a vice, I say.
You of the virtue (we issue join)
How strive you? *De te, fabula!* [1]

Pub. 1855.

## "CHILDE ROLAND TO THE DARK TOWER CAME"

See Edgar's song in *Lear*

Childe Roland, a knight on a journey to a strange dark tower, which other knights have failed to reach, recounts the difficulties of his quest. The poem takes up the story after Childe Roland has received suspicious directions from a hoary cripple.

Browning said several times that *Childe Roland* was not an allegory, but simply an imaginative poem based upon a line in Shakespeare. Numerous interpretations of the underlying meaning of the poem have been suggested. Browning himself admitted once that the theme of the poem might be, "Follow an ideal; endure to the end."

My first thought was, he lied in every word,
That hoary cripple, with malicious eye
Askance to watch the working of his lie
On mine, and mouth scarce able to afford
Suppression of the glee, that pursed and scored
Its edge, at one more victim gained thereby.

What else should he be set for, with his staff?
What, save to waylay with his lies, ensnare
All travellers who might find him posted there,
And ask the road? I guessed what skull-like laugh
Would break, what crutch 'gin write n epitaph
For pastime in the dusty thoroughfare,

If at his counsel I should turn aside
Into that ominous tract which, all agree
Hides the Dark Tower. Yet acquies ingly
I did turn as he pointed: neither pride
Nor hope rekindling at the end descried,
So much as gladness that some end migl be.

For, what with my whole world-wide wande ing,
What with my search drawn out throug years, my hope
Dwindled into a ghost not fit to cope
With that obstreperous joy success woul bring, —
I hardly tried now to rebuke the spring
My heart made, finding failure in its scop

As when a sick man very near to death
Seems dead indeed, and feels begin an end
The tears, and takes the farewell of eac friend,
And hears one bid the other go, draw breat
Freelier outside, ("since all is o'er," he saith
"And the blow fallen no grieving ca amend;")

While some discuss if near the other graves
Be room enough for this, and when a day
Suits best for carrying the corpse away,
With care about the banners, scarves and staves:
And still the man hears all, and only craves
He may not shame such tender love and stay.

Thus, I had so long suffered in this quest,
Heard failure prophesied so oft, been writ
So many times among "The Band" — to wit,
The knights who to the Dark Tower's search addressed
Their steps — that just to fail as they, seemed best,
And all the doubt was now — should I be fit?

So, quiet as despair, I turned from him,
That hateful cripple, out of his highway
Into the path he pointed. All the day

[1] This is your story.

Had been a dreary one at best, and dim
Was settling to its close, yet shot one grim
Red leer to see the plain catch its estray.[1]

For mark! no sooner was I fairly found
Pledged to the plain, after a pace or two,
Than, pausing to throw backward a last view
O'er the safe road, 'twas gone; gray plain all round:
Nothing but plain to the horizon's bound.
I might go on; naught else remained to do.

So, on I went. I think I never saw
Such starved ignoble nature; nothing throve:
For flowers — as well expect a cedar grove!
But cockle, spurge,[2] according to their law
Might propagate their kind, with none to awe,
You'd think: a burr had been a treasure trove.

No! penury, inertness and grimace,
In some strange sort, were the land's portion. "See
Or shut your eyes," said Nature peevishly,
'It nothing skills: I cannot help my case:
'Tis the Last Judgment's fire must cure this place,
Calcine[3] its clods and set my prisoners free."

If there pushed any ragged thistle-stalk
Above its mates, the head was chopped; the bents[4]
Were jealous else. What made those holes and rents
In the dock's[5] harsh swarth leaves, bruised as to balk
All hope of greenness? 'tis a brute must walk
Pashing[6] their life out, with a brute's intents.

As for the grass, it grew as scant as hair
In leprosy; thin dry blades pricked the mud
Which underneath looked kneaded up with blood.
One stiff blind horse, his every bone a-stare,
Stood stupefied, however he came there:
Thrust out past service from the devil's stud!

Alive? he might be dead for aught I know,
With that red gaunt and colloped[7] neck a-strain,
And shut eyes underneath the rusty mane;
Seldom went such grotesqueness with such woe;
I never saw a brute I hated so;
He must be wicked to deserve such pain.

I shut my eyes and turned them on my heart.
As a man calls for wine before he fights,
I asked one draught of earlier, happier sights,
Ere fitly I could hope to play my part.
Think first, fight afterwards — the soldier's art:
One taste of the old time sets all to rights.

Not it! I fancied Cuthbert's reddening face
Beneath its garniture of curly gold,
Dear fellow, till I almost felt him fold
An arm in mine to fix me to the place,
That way he used. Alas, one night's disgrace.
Out went my heart's new fire and left it cold.

Giles then, the soul of honor — there he stands
Frank as ten years ago when knighted first.
What honest man should dare (he said) he durst.
Good — but the scene shifts — faugh! what hangman hands
Pin to his breast a parchment? His own bands
Read it. Poor traitor, spit upon and curst!

Better this present than a past like that;
Back therefore to my darkening path again!
No sound, no sight as far as eye could strain.
Will the night send a howlet or a bat?
I asked: when something on the dismal flat
Came to arrest my thoughts and change their train.

A sudden little river crossed my path
As unexpected as a serpent comes.
No sluggish tide congenial to the glooms;
This, as it frothed by, might have been a bath
For the fiend's glowing hoof — to see the wrath
Of its black eddy bespate[1] with flakes and spumes.

1 wanderer.
2 Cockle and spurge are common wild shrubs.
3 Pulverize by heat. 4 Tough grasses.
5 A generic term for a certain group of weeds.
6 crushing. 7 Having ridges of flesh.

1 spattered.

So petty yet so spiteful! All along,
Low scrubby alders kneeled down over it;
Drenched willows flung them headlong in a fit
Of mute despair, a suicidal throng:
The river which had done them all the wrong,
Whate'er that was, rolled by, deterred no whit.

Which, while I forded, — good saints, how I feared
To set my foot upon a dead man's cheek,
Each step, or feel the spear I thrust to seek
For hollows, tangled in his hair or beard!
— It may have been a water-rat I speared,
But, ugh! it sounded like a baby's shriek.

Glad was I when I reached the other bank.
Now for a better country. Vain presage!
Who were the strugglers, what war did they wage,
Whose savage trample thus could pad the dank
Soil to a plash? Toads in a poisoned tank,
Or wild cats in a red-hot iron cage —

The fight must so have seemed in that fell cirque.
What penned them there, with all the plain to choose?
No footprint leading to that horrid mews,
None out of it. Mad brewage set to work
Their brains, no doubt, like galley-slaves the Turk
Pits for his pastime, Christians against Jews.

And more than that — a furlong on — why, there!
What bad use was that engine for, that wheel,
Or brake, not wheel — that harrow fit to reel
Men's bodies out like silk? with all the air
Of Tophet's [1] tool, on earth left unaware,
Or brought to sharpen its rusty teeth of steel.

Then came a bit of stubbed ground, once a wood,
Next a marsh, it would seem, and now mere earth
Desperate and done with: (so a fool finds mirth,
Makes a thing and then mars it, till his mood
Changes and off he goes!) within a rood —
Bog, clay and rubble, sand and stark bla
dearth.

Now blotches rankling, colored gay and gri
Now patches where some leanness of t
soil's
Broke into moss or substances like boils
Then came some palsied oak, a cleft in hi
Like a distorted mouth that splits its rim
Gaping at death, and dies while it recoi

And just as far as ever from the end!
Naught in the distance but the evenin
naught
To point my footstep further! At t
thought,
A great black bird, Apollyon's [1] bosom-frien
Sailed past, nor beat his wide wing drago
penned
That brushed my cap — perchance t
guide I sought.

For, looking up, aware I somehow grew,
'Spite of the dusk, the plain had given pla
All round to mountains — with suc
name to grace
Mere ugly heights and heaps now stolen
view.
How thus they had surprised me, — solve i
you!
How to get from them was no clearer cas

Yet half I seemed to recognize some trick
Of mischief happened to me, God know
when —
In a bad dream perhaps. Here ended, the
Progress this way. When, in the very nic
Of giving up, one time more, came a click
As when a trap shuts — you're inside t
den!

Burningly it came on me all at once,
This was the place! those two hills on t
right,
Crouched like two bulls locked horn in hor
in fight;
While to the left, a tall scalped mountain . .
Dunce,
Dotard, a-dozing at the very nonce,
After a life spent training for the sight!

What in the midst lay but the Tower itself
The round squat turret, blind as the fool'
heart,
Built of brown stone, without a counte
part

[1] In the Old Testament, a valley where children were sacrificed by fire

[1] The angel of the bottomless pit. (Rev. IX, 11).

n the whole world. The tempest's mocking elf
'oints to the shipman thus the unseen shelf
He strikes on, only when the timbers start.

Not see? because of night perhaps? — why, day
Came back again for that! before it left,
The dying sunset kindled through a cleft:
The hills, like giants at a hunting, lay,
Chin upon hand, to see the game at bay, —
"Now stab and end the creature — to the heft!"

Not hear? when noise was everywhere! it tolled
Increasing like a bell. Names in my ears,
Of all the lost adventurers my peers, —
How such a one was strong, and such was bold,
And such was fortunate, yet each of old
Lost, lost! one moment knelled the woe of years.

There they stood, ranged along the hillsides, met
To view the last of me, a living frame
For one more picture! in a sheet of flame
I saw them and I knew them all. And yet
Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set,
And blew. *"Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came."*

Pub. 1855.

## FRA LIPPO LIPPI

Fra Lippo, a painter-monk, relates the story of his life and his philosophy to the watchmen who have just arrested him as he was stealing back, after a night of roistering, to his room in the Medici Palace.

Browning's source for this poem, as for most of his poems about painters, is Vasari's *Lives of the Painters.*

I am poor brother Lippo, by your leave!
You need not clap your torches to my face.
Zooks, what's to blame? you think you see a monk!
What, 'tis past midnight, and you go the rounds,
And here you catch me at an alley's end
Where sportive ladies leave their doors ajar?
The Carmine's my cloister: hunt it up.
Do, — harry out, if you must show your zeal,
Whatever rat, there, haps on his wrong hole,
And nip each softling of a wee white mouse,
*Weke, weke*, that's crept to keep him company!
Aha, you know your betters! Then, you'll take
Your hand away that's fiddling on my throat,
And please to know me likewise. Who am I?
Why, one, sir, who is lodging with a friend
Three streets off — he's a certain . . . how d'ye call?
Master — a . . . Cosimo of the Medici,[1]
I' the house that caps the corner. Boh! you were best!
Remember and tell me, the day you're hanged,
How you affected such a gullet's-gripe!
But you, sir, it concerns you that your knaves
Pick up a manner nor discredit you:
Zooks, are we pilchards,[2] that they sweep the streets
And count fair prize what comes into their net?
He's Judas to a tittle, that man is!
Just such a face! Why, sir, you make amends.
Lord, I'm not angry! Bid your hangdogs go
Drink out this quarter-florin to the health
Of the munificent House that harbors me
(And many more beside, lads! more beside!)
And all's come square again. I'd like his face —
His, elbowing on his comrade in the door
With the pike and lantern, — for the slave that holds
John Baptist's head a-dangle by the hair [3]
With one hand ("Look you, now," as who should say)
And his weapon in the other, yet unwiped!
It's not your chance to have a bit of chalk,
A wood-coal or the like? or you should see!
Yes, I'm the painter, since you style me so.
What, brother Lippo's doings, up and down,
You know them and they take you? like enough!
I saw the proper twinkle in your eye —
'Tell you, I liked your looks at very first.
Let's sit and set things straight now, hip to haunch.
Here's spring come, and the nights one makes up bands
To roam the town and sing out carnival,
And I've been three weeks shut within my mew,
A-painting for the great man, saints and saints

1 Cosimo de' Medici. See *The Statue and the Bust.*
2 A pilchard is an English fish resembling a herring.
3 Lippi is describing a picture.

And saints again. I could not paint all night —
Ouf! I leaned out of window for fresh air.
There came a hurry of feet and little feet,
A sweep of lute-strings, laughs, and whifts of song, —
*Flower o' the broom,*
*Take away love, and our earth is a tomb!*
*Flower o' the quince,*
*I let Lisa go, and what good in life since?*
*Flower o' the thyme* — and so on. Round they went.
Scarce had they turned the corner when a titter
Like the skipping of rabbits by moonlight, — three slim shapes,
And a face that looked up . . . zooks, sir, flesh and blood,
That's all I'm made of! Into shreds it went,
Curtain and counterpane and coverlet,
All the bed-furniture — a dozen knots,
There was a ladder! Down I let myself,
Hands and feet, scrambling somehow, and so dropped,
And after them. I came up with the fun
Hard by Saint Laurence,[1] hail fellow, well met, —
*Flower o' the rose,*
*If I've been merry, what matter who knows?*
And so as I was stealing back again
To get to bed and have a bit of sleep
Ere I rise up to-morrow and go work
On Jerome knocking at his poor old breast
With his great round stone to subdue the flesh,
You snap me of the sudden. Ah, I see!
Though your eye twinkles still, you shake your head —
Mine's shaved — a monk, you say — the sting's in that!
If Master Cosimo announced himself,
Mum's the word naturally; but a monk!
Come, what am I a beast for? tell us, now!
I was a baby when my mother died
And father died and left me in the street.
I starved there, God knows how, a year or two
On fig-skins, melon-parings, rinds and shucks,
Refuse and rubbish. One fine frosty day,
My stomach being empty as your hat,
The wind doubled me up and down I went.
Old Aunt Lapaccia trussed me with one hand,
(Its fellow was a stinger as I knew)
And so along the wall, over the bridge,
By the straight cut to the convent. Six words there,

1 The church of San Lorenzo.

While I stood munching my first bread th month:
"So boy, you're minded," quoth the good f father,
Wiping his own mouth, 'twas refectio time, —
"To quit this very miserable world?
Will you renounce" . . . "the mouthful bread?" thought I;
By no means! Brief, they made a monk me;
I did renounce the world, its pride and greed
Palace, farm, villa, shop, and banking-hous
Trash, such as these poor devils of Medici
Have given their hearts to — all at eigh years old.
Well, sir, I found in time, you may be sure
'Twas not for nothing — the good bellyful,
The warm serge and the rope that goes a round,
And day-long blessed idleness beside!
"Let's see what the urchin's fit for" — tha came next.
Not overmuch their way, I must confess.
Such a to-do! They tried me with the books;
Lord, they'd have taught me Latin in pur waste!
*Flower o' the clove,*
*All the Latin I construe is "amo," I love!*
But, mind you, when a boy starves in th streets
Eight years together, as my fortune was,
Watching folk's faces to know who will fling
The bit of half-stripped grape-bunch he desires,
And who will curse or kick him for his pains, —
Which gentleman processional and fine,
Holding a candle to the Sacrament,
Will wink and let him lift a plate and catch
The droppings of the wax to sell again,
Or holla for the Eight[1] and have hin whipped, —
How say I? — nay, which dog bites, which lets drop
His bone from the heap of offal in the street, —
Why, soul and sense of him grow sharp alike,
He learns the look of things, and none the less
For admonition from the hunger-pinch.
I had a store of such remarks, be sure,
Which, after I found leisure, turned to use.
I drew men's faces on my copy-books,
Scrawled them within the antiphonary's[2] marge,

1 The city magistrates of Florence.
2 hymn-book.

Joined legs and arms to the long music-notes,
Found eyes and nose and chin for A's and B's,
And made a string of pictures of the world
Betwixt the ins and outs of verb and noun,
On the wall, the bench, the door. The monks looked black.
"Nay," quoth the Prior, "turn him out, d'ye say?
In no wise. Lose a crow and catch a lark.
What if at last we get our man of parts,
We Carmelites, like those Camaldolese
And Preaching Friars,[1] to do our church up fine
And put the front on it that ought to be!"
And hereupon he bade me daub away.
Thank you! my head being crammed, the walls a blank,
Never was such prompt disemburdening.
First, every sort of monk, the black and white,
I drew them, fat and lean: then, folk at church,
From good old gossips waiting to confess
Their cribs of barrel-droppings, candle-ends, —
To the breathless fellow at the altar-foot,
Fresh from his murder, safe and sitting there
With the little children round him in a row
Of admiration, half for his beard and half
For that white anger of his victim's son
Shaking a fist at him with one fierce arm,
Signing himself with the other because of Christ
(Whose sad face on the cross sees only this
After the passion of a thousand years)
Till some poor girl, her apron o'er her head,
(Which the intense eyes looked through) came at eve
On tiptoe, said a word, dropped in a loaf,
Her pair of earrings and a bunch of flowers
(The brute took growling), prayed, and so was gone.
I painted all, then cried "'Tis ask and have;
Choose, for more's ready!" — laid the ladder flat,
And showed my covered bit of cloister-wall.
The monks closed in a circle and praised loud
Till checked, taught what to see and not to see,
Being simple bodies, — "That's the very man!
Look at the boy who stoops to pat the dog!
That woman's like the Prior's niece who comes
To care about his asthma: it's the life!"

1 The Dominicans.

But there my triumph's straw-fire flared and funked;
Their betters took their turn to see and say:
The Prior and the learned pulled a face
And stopped all that in no time. "How? what's here?
Quite from the mark of painting, bless us all!
Faces, arms, legs, and bodies like the true
As much as pea and pea! it's devil's-game!
Your business is not to catch men with show,
With homage to the perishable clay,
But lift them over it, ignore it all,
Make them forget there's such a thing as flesh.
Your business is to paint the souls of men —
Man's soul, and it's a fire, smoke . . . no, it's not . . .
It's vapor done up like a new-born babe —
(In that shape when you die it leaves your mouth)
It's . . . well, what matters talking, it's the soul!
Give us no more of body than shows soul!
Here's Giotto,[1] with his Saint a-praising God,
That sets us praising, — why not stop with him?
Why put all thoughts of praise out of our head
With wonder at lines, colors, and what not?
Paint the soul, never mind the legs and arms!
Rub all out, try at it a second time.
Oh, that white smallish female with the breasts,
She's just my niece . . . Herodias,[2] I would say, —
Who went and danced and got men's heads cut off!
Have it all out!" Now, is this sense, I ask?
A fine way to paint soul, by painting body
So ill, the eye can't stop there, must go further
And can't fare worse! Thus, yellow does for white
When what you put for yellow's simply black,
And any sort of meaning looks intense
When all beside itself means and looks naught.
Why can't a painter lift each foot in turn,
Left foot and right foot, go a double step,
Make his flesh liker and his soul more like,
Both in their order? Take the prettiest face,
The Prior's niece . . . patron-saint — is it so pretty
You can't discover if it means hope, fear,

1 Giotto di Bordone, 1266–1337, the famous Italian painter and architect.

2 For dancing before Herod, she was given John the Baptist's head. See Saint Matthew, XIV, 3–12.

Sorrow or joy? won't beauty go with these?
Suppose I've made her eyes all right and blue,
Can't I take breath and try to add life's flash,
And then add soul and heighten them three-fold?
Or say there's beauty with no soul at all — (I never saw it — put the case the same —)
If you get simple beauty and naught else,
You get about the best thing God invents:
That's somewhat: and you'll find the soul you have missed,
Within yourself, when you return him thanks.
"Rub all out!" Well, well, there's my life, in short,
And so the thing has gone on ever since.
I'm grown a man no doubt, I've broken bounds:
You should not take a fellow eight years old
And make him swear to never kiss the girls.
I'm my own master, paint now as I please —
Having a friend, you see, in the Corner-house!
Lord, it's fast holding by the rings in front —
Those great rings serve more purposes than just
To plant a flag in, or tie up a horse!
And yet the old schooling sticks, the old grave eyes
Are peeping o'er my shoulder as I work,
The heads shake still — "It's art's decline, my son!
You're not of the true painters, great and old;
Brother Angelico's[1] the man, you'll find;
Brother Lorenzo[2] stands his single peer:
Fag on at flesh, you'll never make the third!"
*Flower o' the pine,*
*You keep your mistr . . . manners, and I'll stick to mine!*
I'm not the third, then: bless us, they must know!
Don't you think they're the likeliest to know,
They with their Latin? So, I swallow my rage,
Clench my teeth, suck my lips in tight, and paint
To please them — sometimes do and sometimes don't;
For, doing most, there's pretty sure to come
A turn, some warm eve finds me at my saints —
A laugh, a cry, the business of the world —
(*Flower o' the peach,*
*Death for us all, and his own life for each!*)
And my whole soul revolves, the cup run over,
The world and life's too big to pass for dream,
And I do these wild things in sheer despite
And play the fooleries you catch me at,
In pure rage! The old mill-horse, out a grass
After hard years, throws up his stiff heels so
Although the miller does not preach t him
The only good of grass is to make chaff.
What would men have? Do they like gras or no —
May they or mayn't they? all I want's th thing
Settled for ever one way. As it is,
You tell too many lies and hurt yourself:
You don't like what you only like too much
You do like what, if given you at your word,
You find abundantly detestable.
For me, I think I speak as I was taught;
I always see the garden and God there
A-making man's wife: and, my lesson learned
The value and significance of flesh,
I can't unlearn ten minutes afterwards.

You understand me: I'm a beast, I know
But see, now — why, I see as certainly
As that the morning-star's about to shine,
What will hap some day. We've a youngste here
Comes to our convent, studies what I do,
Slouches and stares and lets no atom drop:
His name is Guidi[1] — he'll not mind th monks —
They call him Hulking Tom, he lets then talk —
He picks my practice up — he'll paint apace
I hope so — though I never live so long,
I know what's sure to follow. You be judge!
You speak no Latin more than I, belike;
However, you're my man, you've seen th world
— The beauty and the wonder and th power,
The shapes of things, their colors, lights an shades,
Changes, surprises, — and God made it all!
— For what? Do you feel thankful, ay o no,
For this fair town's face, yonder river's line
The mountain round it and the sky above,
Much more the figures of man, woman, child
These are the frame to? What's it al about?

1 Fra Angelico, 1387–1455, a deeply religious, spiritual painter.
2 Fra Lorenzo, another painter-monk.

1 Tommaso Guidi, painter and monk, more likely th teacher of Lippi, and not, as here, the pupil.

To be passed over, despised? or dwelt upon,
Wondered at? oh, this last of course! — you say.
But why not do as well as say, — paint these
Just as they are, careless what comes of it?
God's works — paint any one, and count it crime
To let a truth slip. Don't object, "His works
Are here already; nature is complete:
Suppose you reproduce her — (which you can't)
There's no advantage! you must beat her, then."
For, don't you mark? we're made so that we love
First when we see them painted, things we have passed
Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see;
And so they are better, painted — better to us,
Which is the same thing. Art was given for that;
God uses us to help each other so,
Lending our minds out. Have you noticed, now,
Your cullion's [1] hanging face? A bit of chalk,
And trust me but you should, though! How much more,
If I drew higher things with the same truth!
That were to take the Prior's pulpit-place,
Interpret God to all of you! Oh, oh,
It makes me mad to see what men shall do
And we in our graves! This world's no blot for us,
Nor blank; it means intensely, and means good:
To find its meaning is my meat and drink.
"Ay, but you don't so instigate to prayer!"
Strikes in the Prior: "when your meaning's plain
It does not say to folk — remember matins,
Or, mind you fast next Friday!" Why, for this
What need of art at all? A skull and bones,
Two bits of stick nailed crosswise, or, what's best,
A bell to chime the hour with, does as well.
I painted a Saint Laurence six months since
At Prato, splashed the fresco in fine style:
"How looks my painting, now the scaffold's down?"
I ask a brother: "Hugely," he returns —
"Already not one phiz of your three slaves
Who turn the Deacon [2] off his toasted side,
But's scratched and prodded to our heart's content,
The pious people have so eased their own
With coming to say prayers there in a rage:
We get on fast to see the bricks beneath.
Expect another job this time next year,
For pity and religion grow i' the crowd —
Your painting serves its purpose!" Hang the fools!

— That is — you'll not mistake an idle word
Spoke in a huff by a poor monk, God wot,
Tasting the air this spicy night which turns
The unaccustomed head like Chianti wine!
Oh, the church knows! don't misreport me, now!
It's natural a poor monk out of bounds
Should have his apt word to excuse himself:
And hearken how I plot to make amends.
I have bethought me: I shall paint a piece
. . . There's for you! Give me six months, then go, see
Something in Sant' Ambrogio's! [1] Bless the nuns!
They want a cast o' my office. I shall paint
God in the midst, Madonna and her babe,
Ringed by a bowery, flowery angel-brood,
Lilies and vestments and white faces, sweet
As puff on puff of grated orris-root
When ladies crowd to Church at midsummer.
And then i' the front, of course a saint or two —
Saint John, because he saves the Florentines,
Saint Ambrose, who puts down in black and white
The convent's friends and gives them a long day,
And Job, I must have him there past mistake,
The man of Uz [2] (and Us without the z,
Painters who need his patience). Well, all these
Secured at their devotion, up shall come
Out of a corner when you least expect,
As one by a dark stair into a great light,
Music and talking, who but Lippo! I! —
Mazed, motionless, and moonstruck — I'm the man!
Back I shrink — what is this I see and hear?
I, caught up with my monk's-things by mistake,
My old serge gown and rope that goes all round,
I, in this presence, this pure company!

1 base fellow's.
2 St. Lawrence was roasted to death on a gridiron.

1 St. Ambrose's, a Florentine convent.
2 "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job." — Job 1. 1.

Where's a hole, where's a corner for escape?
Then steps a sweet angelic slip of a thing
Forward, puts out a soft palm — "Not so fast!"
— Addresses the celestial presence, "nay —
He made you and devised you, after all,
Though he's none of you! Could Saint John there draw —
His camel-hair make up a painting-brush?
We come to brother Lippo for all that,
*Iste perfecit opus!*"[1] So, all smile —
I shuffle sideways with my blushing face
Under the cover of a hundred wings
Thrown like a spread of kirtles when you're gay
And play hot cockles, all the doors being shut,
Till, wholly unexpected, in there pops
The hothead husband! Thus I scuttle off
To some safe bench behind, not letting go
The palm of her, the little lily thing
That spoke the good word for me in the nick,
Like the Prior's niece . . . Saint Lucy, I would say.
And so all's saved for me, and for the church
A pretty picture gained. Go, six months hence!
Your hand, sir, and good-by: no lights, no lights!
The street's hushed, and I know my own way back,
Don't fear me! There's the gray beginning. Zooks!

Pub. 1855.

## ANDREA DEL SARTO

CALLED "THE FAULTLESS PAINTER"

Andrea, the painter with flawless technique, addresses his wife, Lucrezia.

But do not let us quarrel any more,
No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for once:
Sit down and all shall happen as you wish.
You turn your face, but does it bring your heart?
I'll work then for your friend's friend, never fear,
Treat his own subject after his own way,
Fix his own time, accept too his own price,
And shut the money into this small hand
When next it takes mine. Will it? tenderly?
Oh, I'll content him, — but to-morrow, Love!
I often am much wearier than you think,
This evening more than usual, and it seems
As if — forgive now — should you let me
Here by the window with your hand in mi
And look a half-hour forth on Fiesole,
Both of one mind, as married people use,
Quietly, quietly the evening through,
I might get up to-morrow to my work
Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try.
To-morrow, how you shall be glad for this!
Your soft hand is a woman of itself,
And mine the man's bared breast she cur
inside.
Don't count the time lost, neither; you mu
serve
For each of the five pictures we require:
It saves a model. So! keep looking so —
My serpentining beauty, rounds on rounds
— How could you ever prick those perfe
ears,
Even to put the pearl there! oh, so sweet —
My face, my moon, my everybody's moon
Which everybody looks on and calls his,
And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,
While she looks — no one's: very dear, n
less.
You smile? why, there's my picture read
made,
There's what we painters call our harmon
A common grayness silvers everything, —
All in a twilight, you and I alike
— You, at the point of your first pride in m
(That's gone you know), — but I, at ever
point;
My youth, my hope, my art, being all tone
down
To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole.
There's the bell clinking from the chapel-top
That length of convent-wall across the way
Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside;
The last monk leaves the garden; days de
crease,
And autumn grows, autumn in everything.
Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape
As if I saw alike my work and self
And all that I was born to be and do,
A twilight-piece. Love, we are in God'
hand.
How strange now looks the life he makes u
lead;
So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!
I feel he laid the fetter: let it lie!
This chamber for example — turn your head —
All that's behind us! You don't understanc
Nor care to understand about my art,
But you can hear at least when people speak
And that cartoon, the second from the door
— It is the thing, Love! so such thing should be —

[1] He painted the picture.

Behold Madonna! — I am bold to say.
I can do with my pencil what I know,
What I see, what at bottom of my heart
I wish for, if I ever wish so deep —
Do easily, too — when I say, perfectly,
I do not boast, perhaps: yourself are judge,
Who listened to the Legate's talk last week,
And just as much they used to say in France.
At any rate 'tis easy, all of it!
No sketches first, no studies, that's long past:
I do what many dream of all their lives,
— Dream? strive to do, and agonize to do,
And fail in doing. I could count twenty such
On twice your fingers, and not leave this town,
Who strive — you don't know how the others strive
To paint a little thing like that you smeared
Carelessly passing with your robes afloat, —
Yet do much less, so much less, Someone says,
(I know his name, no matter) — so much less!
Well, less is more, Lucrezia: I am judged.
There burns a truer light of God in them,
In their vexed beating stuffed and stopped-up brain,
Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to prompt
This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's hand of mine.
Their works drop groundward, but themselves, I know,
Reach many a time a heaven that's shut to me,
Enter and take their place there sure enough,
Though they come back and cannot tell the world.
My works are nearer heaven, but I sit here.
The sudden blood of these men! at a word —
Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it boils too.
I, painting from myself and to myself,
Know what I do, am unmoved by men's blame
Or their praise either. Somebody remarks
Morello's [1] outline there is wrongly traced,
His hue mistaken; what of that? or else,
Rightly traced and well ordered; what of that?
Speak as they please, what does the mountain care?
Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for? All is silver-gray
Placid and perfect with my art: the worse!
I know both what I want and what might gain,
And yet how profitless to know, to sigh
"Had I been two, another and myself,
Our head would have o'erlooked the world!"
No doubt.
Yonder's a work now, of that famous youth
The Urbinate [1] who died five years ago.
('Tis copied, George Vasari sent it me.)
Well, I can fancy how he did it all,
Pouring his soul, with kings and popes to see,
Reaching, that heaven might so replenish him,
Above and through his art — for it gives way;
That arm is wrongly put — and there again —
A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,
Its body, so to speak: its soul is right,
He means right — that, a child may understand.
Still, what an arm! and I could alter it:
But all the play, the insight and the stretch —
Out of me, out of me! And wherefore out?
Had you enjoined them on me, given me soul,
We might have risen to Rafael, I and you!
Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I think —
More than I merit, yes, by many times.
But had you — oh, with the same perfect brow,
And perfect eyes, and more than perfect mouth,
And the low voice my soul hears, as a bird
The fowler's pipe, and follows to the snare —
Had you, with these the same, but brought a mind!
Some women do so. Had the mouth there urged
"God and the glory! never care for gain.
The present by the future, what is that?
Live for fame, side by side with Agnolo! [2]
Rafael is waiting: up to God, all three!"
I might have done it for you. So it seems:
Perhaps not. All is as God overrules.
Besides, incentives come from the soul's self;
The rest avail not. Why do I need you?
What wife had Rafael, or has Agnolo?
In this world, who can do a thing, will not;
And who would do it, cannot, I perceive:
Yet the will's somewhat — somewhat, too, the power —

1 One of the peaks of the Apennines.

1 The painter Raphael, 1483–1520, born in Urbino.
2 Michael Angelo, 1475–1564.

And thus we half-men struggle. At the end,
God, I conclude, compensates, punishes.
'Tis safer for me, if the award be strict,
That I am something underrated here,
Poor this long while, despised, to speak the truth.
I dared not, do you know, leave home all day,
For fear of chancing on the Paris lords.
The best is when they pass and look aside;
But they speak sometimes; I must bear it all.
Well may they speak! That Francis,[1] that first time,
And that long festal year at Fontainebleau!
I surely then could sometimes leave the ground,
Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,
In that humane great monarch's golden look, —
One finger in his beard or twisted curl
Over his mouth's good mark that made the smile,
One arm about my shoulder, round my neck,
The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,
I painting proudly with his breath on me,
All his court round him, seeing with his eyes,
Such frank French eyes, and such a fire of souls
Profuse, my hand kept plying by those hearts, —
And, best of all, this, this, this face beyond,
This in the background, waiting on my work,
To crown the issue with a last reward!
A good time, was it not, my kingly days?
And had you not grown restless . . . but I know —
'Tis done and past; 'twas right, my instinct said;
Too live the life grew, golden and not gray,
And I'm the weak-eyed bat no sun should tempt
Out of the grange whose four walls make his world.
How could it end in any other way?
You called me, and I came home to your heart.
The triumph was — to reach and stay there; since
I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost?
Let my hands frame your face in your hair's gold,
You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!

"Rafael did this, Andrea painted that;
The Roman's is the better when you pray,
But still the other's Virgin was his wife" —
Men will excuse me. I am glad to judge
Both pictures in your presence; clearer grow
My better fortune, I resolve to think.
For, do you know, Lucrezia, as God lives,
Said one day Agnolo, his very self,
To Rafael . . . I have known it all these years . . .
(When the young man was flaming out his thoughts
Upon a palace-wall for Rome to see,
Too lifted up in heart because of it)
"Friend, there's a certain sorry little scrub
Goes up and down our Florence, none cares how,
Who, were he set to plan and execute
As you are, pricked on by your popes and kings,
Would bring the sweat into that brow of yours!"
To Rafael's! — And indeed the arm is wrong.
I hardly dare . . . yet, only you to see,
Give the chalk here — quick, thus the line should go!
Ay, but the soul! he's Rafael! rub it out!
Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth,
(What he? why, who but Michel Agnolo?
Do you forget already words like those?)
If really there was such a chance, so lost, —
Is, whether you're — not grateful — but more pleased.
Well, let me think so. And you smile indeed!
This hour has been an hour! Another smile?
If you would sit thus by me every night
I should work better, do you comprehend?
I mean that I should earn more, give you more.
See, it is settled dusk now; there's a star;
Morello's gone, the watch-lights show the wall,
The cue-owls speak the name[1] we call them by.
Come from the window, love, — come in, at last,
Inside the melancholy little house
We built to be so gay with. God is just.
King Francis may forgive me: oft at nights
When I look up from painting, eyes tired out,
The walls become illumined, brick from brick
Distinct, instead of mortar, fierce bright gold

1 King Francis I of France. In 1518 Andrea lived in France as painter to the king. He returned to Italy, at the wish of his wife and, according to one story, built a house for himself with money entrusted to him by the king for the buying of pictures.

1 Italian *civù*.

That gold of his I did cement them with!
Let us but love each other. Must you go?
That Cousin here again? he waits outside?
Must see you — you, and not with me? Those loans?
More gaming debts to pay? you smiled for that?
Well, let smiles buy me! have you more to spend?
While hand and eye and something of a heart
Are left me, work's my ware, and what's it worth?
I'll pay my fancy. Only let me sit
The gray remainder of the evening out,
Idle, you call it, and muse perfectly
How I could paint, were I but back in France,
One picture, just one more — the Virgin's face,
Not yours this time! I want you at my side
To hear them — that is, Michel Agnolo — Judge all I do and tell you of its worth.
Will you? To-morrow, satisfy your friend.
I take the subjects for his corridor,
Finish the portrait out of hand — there, there,
And throw him in another thing or two
If he demurs; the whole should prove enough
To pay for this same Cousin's freak. Beside,
What's better and what's all I care about,
Get you the thirteen scudi[1] for the ruff!
Love, does that please you? Ah, but what does he,
The Cousin! what does he to please you more?

I am grown peaceful as old age to-night.
I regret little, I would change still less.
Since there my past life lies, why alter it?
The very wrong to Francis! — it is true
I took his coin, was tempted and complied,
And built this house and sinned, and all is said.
My father and my mother died of want.
Well, had I riches of my own? you see
How one gets rich! Let each one bear his lot.
They were born poor, lived poor, and poor they died:
And I have labored somewhat in my time
And not been paid profusely. Some good son
Paint my two hundred pictures — let him try!
No doubt, there's something strikes a balance. Yes,
You loved me quite enough, it seems to-night.
This must suffice me here. What would one have?
In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one more chance —
Four great walls in the New Jerusalem,
Meted on each side by the angel's reed,
For Leonard,[1] Rafael, Agnolo and me
To cover — the three first without a wife,
While I have mine! So — still they overcome
Because there's still Lucrezia, — as I choose.

Again the Cousin's whistle! Go, my Love.

Pub. 1855.

1 A scudo is worth a little less than a dollar.

## PROSPICE[2]

This poem was written a few months after Mrs. Browning's death. The concluding lines refer to her.

Fear death? — to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so — one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,
And bade me creep past.
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay life's glad arrears
Of pain, darkness and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,

1 Leonardo da Vinci, 1452–1519.
2 "Look forward."

Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

1861.

## EPILOGUE

*Epilogue* is the last poem in Browning's last volume, a collection of disconnected verses brought together under the title *Asolando*. The book appeared on the day that Browning died. (It is dated, however, 1890.)

At the midnight in the silence of the sleeptime,
When you set your fancies free,
Will they pass to where — by death, fools think, imprisoned —
Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved so,
— Pity me?

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken!
What had I on earth to do
With the slothful, with the mawkish, th unmanly?
Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did drivel
— Being — who?

One who never turned his back but marche breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight bette Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work time
Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Bid him forward, breast and back as eithe should be,
"Strive and thrive!" cry "Speed, — figh on, fare ever
There as here!"

1889.

## JOHN RUSKIN (1819–1900)

John Ruskin was born in London, February 8, 1819. His father was a Scotchman who ha built up a prosperous wine business in London. As an only child, John Ruskin was given a strictl private education, the best part of which consisted of journeys by carriage about England an Scotland and on the continent. When he was fourteen he had his first glimpse of the Alps fro the terrace at Schaffhausen whence he came down with "my destiny fixed in all of it that was to b sacred and useful." He attended Christ Church College, Oxford, and in an interval of ill healt spent two years in the study of the pre-Raphaelite painters of Italy. He took his degree in 1842 and three years later published the first volume of *Modern Painters*. Ruskin early came unde the influence of Carlyle, whose disciple and interpreter he professed himself. He was engaged wit Thomas Hughes, the Reverend F. D. Maurice, and others in founding a Working Men's Colleg in London. As a teacher of art he considered that his first business was to endeavor to brin about such conditions in society that worthy art would be possible, art growing directly out o and expressing the life of the people, and not mere decoration as a matter of individual luxury He therefore devoted himself more and more to social criticism. In 1869 he was elected Slad Professor of Art at Oxford, where his lectures were on a great variety of aspects of life. Instea of setting his pupils to draw and paint, he led them out to repair roads. He engaged in a numbe of other social experiments, model housing, Saint George's Guild, etc., on which he spent th large fortune left him by his father. The failure of these plans, and the complacency of his pros perous countrymen who would not be stirred to similar activity in behalf of the suffering an submerged class, wore upon his spirit. He became subject to attacks of brain fever, and afte 1884 he retired to Brantwood, an estate which he had purchased on Coniston Lake, where he die in 1900.

Ruskin's work falls into two periods, the first including *Modern Painters* (1845–60), *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849), and *The Stones of Venice* (1851–53). The second period begins with *The Political Economy of Art*, later called *A Joy Forever* (1857). It includes two works on political economy, *Unto this Last* and *Munera Pulveris, Sesame and Lilies* (1864), *The Crown of Wild Olive*, consisting of three lectures on Work, Traffic and War, (1866), *Fors Clavigera* (1871–84). His last work was a delightful autobiography called *Præterita* (1889).

Ruskin's earlier style was modeled on the English prose of the seventeenth century. It was highly elaborate and rhetorical, dazzling by sheer abundance. His later writing was restrained to a grave and somber eloquence, in which the matchless sense of cadence of his earlier sentences played its part. Nothing more moving has been written in prose in the nineteenth century than Ruskin's pleading for a social life animated by sincerity, compassion, and beauty.

The *Life of John Ruskin*, by Sir E. T. Cook, is the chief authority. For his art and art theories, Professor Charles Waldstein's *The Work of John Ruskin*, and for his social theories Mr. John A. Hobson's *John Ruskin, Social Reformer*, should be consulted. Volumes of selections have been edited by Professor Chauncey Tinker (Houghton Mifflin Company) and Professor Vida Scudder.

## THE STONES OF VENICE

1851–53

### THE NATURE OF GOTHIC

This selection is the first part of Chapter VI, Volume II, of *The Stones of Venice*. It illustrates Ruskin's view that the art and particularly the architecture of a people is an expression "of their religion, their morality, their national aspirations and social habits." Fine art is thus dependent upon the social system of the people who produce it, and its worth or unworth is the final test of that system. The chapter thus marks the connection between Ruskin's art criticism and the social criticism which he was to make his chief work during the latter part of his life.

I shall endeavor to give the reader in this chapter an idea, at once broad and definite, of the true nature of *Gothic* architecture, properly so called; not of that of Venice only, but of universal Gothic: for it will be one of the most interesting parts of our subsequent inquiry, to find out how far Venetian architecture reached the universal or perfect type of Gothic, and how far it either fell short of it, or assumed foreign and independent forms.

§ II. The principal difficulty in doing this arises from the fact that every building of the Gothic period differs in some important respect from every other; and many include features which, if they occurred in other buildings, would not be considered Gothic at all; so that all we have to reason upon is merely, if I may be allowed so to express it, a greater or less degree of *Gothicness* in each building we examine. And it is this Gothicness, — the character which, according as it is found more or less in a building, makes it more or less Gothic, — of which I want to define the nature; and I feel the same kind of difficulty in doing so which would be encountered by any one who undertook to explain, for instance, the nature of Redness, without any actually red thing to point to, but only orange and purple things. Suppose he had only a piece of heather and a dead oak-leaf to do it with. He might say, the color which is mixed with the yellow in this oak-leaf, and with the blue in this heather, would be red, if you had it separate; but it would be difficult, nevertheless, to make the abstraction perfectly intelligible: and it is so in a far greater degree to make the abstraction of the Gothic character intelligible, because that character itself is made up of many mingled ideas, and can consist only in their union. That is to say, pointed arches do not constitute Gothic, nor vaulted roofs, nor flying buttresses, nor grotesque sculptures; but all or some of these things, and many other things with them, when they come together so as to have life.

§ III. Observe also, that, in the definition proposed, I shall only endeavor to analyze the idea which I suppose already to exist in the reader's mind. We all have some notion, most of us a very determined one, of the meaning of the term Gothic; but I know that many persons have this idea in their minds without being able to define it: that is to say, understanding generally that Westminster Abbey is Gothic, and St. Paul's is not, that Strasburg Cathedral is Gothic, and St. Peter's is not, they have, nevertheless, no clear notion of what it is that they recognize in the one or miss in the other, such as would enable them to say how far the work at Westminster or Strasburg is good and pure of its kind; still less to say of any nondescript building, like St. James's Palace or Windsor Castle, how much right Gothic element there is in it, and how much wanting. And I believe this inquiry to be a pleasant and profitable one; and that there will be found something more than usually interesting in tracing out this grey, shadowy, many-pinnacled image of the Gothic spirit within us; and discerning what fellowship there is between it and our Northern hearts. And if, at any point of the inquiry, I should interfere with any of the reader's previously formed conceptions, and use the term Gothic in any sense which he would not willingly attach to it, I do not ask him to accept, but only to examine and understand, my interpretation, as necessary to the intelligibility of what follows in the rest of the work.

§ IV. We have, then, the Gothic character submitted to our analysis, just as the rough mineral is submitted to that of the chemist, entangled with many other foreign substances, itself perhaps in no place pure, or ever to be obtained or seen in purity for more than an instant; but nevertheless a thing

of definite and separate nature, however inextricable or confused in appearance. Now observe: the chemist defines his mineral by two separate kinds of character; one external, its crystalline form, hardness, lustre, etc.; the other internal, the proportions and nature of its constituent atoms. Exactly in the same manner, we shall find that Gothic architecture has external forms, and internal elements. Its elements are certain mental tendencies of the builders, legibly expressed in it; as fancifulness, love of variety, love of richness, and such others. Its external forms are pointed arches, vaulted roofs, etc. And unless both the elements and the forms are there, we have no right to call the style Gothic. It is not enough that it has the Form, if it have not also the power and life. It is not enough that it has the Power, if it have not the form. We must therefore inquire into each of these characters successively; and determine first, what is the Mental Expression, and secondly, what the Material Form, of Gothic architecture, properly so called.

1st. *Mental Power or Expression.* What characters, we have to discover, did the Gothic builders love, or instinctively express in their work, as distinguished from all other builders?

§ v. Let us go back for a moment to our chemistry, and note that, in defining a mineral by its constituent parts, it is not one nor another of them, that can make up the mineral, but the union of all: for instance, it is neither in charcoal, nor in oxygen, nor in lime, that there is the making of chalk, but in the combination of all three in certain measures; they are all found in very different things from chalk, and there is nothing like chalk either in charcoal or in oxygen, but they are nevertheless necessary to its existence.

So in the various mental characters which make up the soul of Gothic. It is not one nor another that produces it; but their union in certain measures. Each one of them is found in many other architectures besides Gothic; but Gothic cannot exist where they are not found, or, at least, where their place is not in some way supplied. Only there is this great difference between the composition of the mineral, and of the architectural style, that if we withdraw one of its elements from the stone, its form is utterly changed, and its existence as such and such a mineral is destroyed; but if we withdraw one of its mental elements from the Gothic style, it is only a little less Gothic than it was before and the union of two or three of its elements is enough already to bestow a certain Gothicness of character, which gains in intensity as we add the others, and loses as we again withdraw them.

§ vi. I believe, then, that the characteristic or moral elements of Gothic are the following, placed in the order of their importance:

1. Savageness.
2. Changefulness.
3. Naturalism.
4. Grotesqueness.
5. Rigidity.
6. Redundance.

These characters are here expressed as belonging to the building; as belonging to the builder, they would be expressed thus: 1. Savageness, or Rudeness. 2. Love of Change. 3. Love of Nature. 4. Disturbed Imagination. 5. Obstinacy. 6. Generosity. And I repeat, that the withdrawal of any one, or any two, will not at once destroy the Gothic character of a building, but the removal of a majority of them will. I shall proceed to examine them in their order.

§ vii. 1. Savageness. I am not sure when the word "Gothic" was first generically applied to the architecture of the North; but I presume that, whatever the date of its original usage, it was intended to imply reproach, and express the barbaric character of the nations among whom that architecture arose. It never implied that they were literally of Gothic lineage, far less that their architecture had been originally invented by the Goths themselves; but it did imply that they and their buildings together exhibited a degree of sternness and rudeness, which, in contradistinction to the character of Southern and Eastern nations, appeared like a perpetual reflection of the contrast between the Goth and the Roman in their first encounter. And when that fallen Roman, in the utmost impotence of his luxury, and insolence of his guilt, became the model for the imitation of civilized Europe, at the close of the so-called Dark ages, the word Gothic became a term of unmitigated contempt, not unmixed with aversion. From that contempt, by the exertion of the antiquaries and architects of this century, Gothic architecture has been sufficiently vindicated; and perhaps some among us, in our admiration of the magnificent science of its structure, and sacredness of its expression, might desire that the term of ancient reproach should be withdrawn, and some other, of more apparent honorableness, adopted in its place. There is no chance, as there is no need, of such a substi-

tution. As far as the epithet was used scornfully, it was used falsely; but there is no reproach in the word, rightly understood; on the contrary, there is a profound truth, which the instinct of mankind almost unconsciously recognizes. It is true, greatly and deeply true, that the architecture of the North is rude and wild; but it is not true, that, for this reason, we are to condemn it, or despise. Far otherwise: I believe it is in this very character that it deserves our profoundest reverence.

§ VIII. The charts of the world which have been drawn up by modern science have thrown into a narrow space the expression of a vast amount of knowledge, but I have never yet seen any one pictorial enough to enable the spectator to imagine the kind of contrast in physical character which exists between Northern and Southern countries. We know the differences in detail, but we have not that broad glance and grasp which would enable us to feel them in their fulness. We know that gentians grow on the Alps, and olives on the Apennines; but we do not enough conceive for ourselves that variegated mosaic of the world's surface which a bird sees in its migration, that difference between the district of the gentian and of the olive which the stork and the swallow see far off, as they lean upon the sirocco wind. Let us, for a moment, try to raise ourselves even above the level of their flight, and imagine the Mediterranean lying beneath us like an irregular lake, and all its ancient promontories sleeping in the sun: here and there an angry spot of thunder, a grey stain of storm, moving upon the burning field; and here and there a fixed wreath of white volcano smoke, surrounded by its circle of ashes; but for the most part a great peacefulness of light, Syria and Greece, Italy and Spain, laid like pieces of a golden pavement into the sea-blue, chased, as we stoop nearer to them, with bossy beaten work of mountain chains, and glowing softly with terraced gardens, and flowers heavy with frankincense, mixed among masses of laurel, and orange, and plumy palm, that abate with their grey-green shadows the burning of the marble rocks, and of the ledges of porphyry sloping under lucent sand. Then let us pass farther towards the north, until we see the orient colors change gradually into a vast belt of rainy green, where the pastures of Switzerland, and poplar valleys of France, and dark forests of the Danube and Carpathians stretch from the mouths of the Loire to those of the Volga, seen through clefts in grey swirls of rain-cloud and flaky veils of the mist of the brooks, spreading low along the pasture lands: and then, farther north still, to see the earth heave into mighty masses of leaden rock and heathy moor, bordering with a broad waste of gloomy purple that belt of field and wood, and splintering into irregular and grisly islands amidst the northern seas, beaten by storm, and chilled by ice-drift, and tormented by furious pulses of contending tide, until the roots of the last forests fail from among the hill ravines, and the hunger of the north wind bites their peaks into barrenness; and, at last, the wall of ice, durable like iron, sets, deathlike, its white teeth against us out of the polar twilight. And, having once traversed in thought this gradation of the zoned iris of the earth in all its material vastness, let us go down nearer to it, and watch the parallel change in the belt of animal life: the multitudes of swift and brilliant creatures that glance in the air and sea, or tread the sands of the southern zone; striped zebras and spotted leopards, glistening serpents, and birds arrayed in purple and scarlet. Let us contrast their delicacy and brilliancy of color, and swiftness of motion, with the frost-cramped strength, and shaggy covering, and dusky plumage of the northern tribes; contrast the Arabian horse with the Shetland, the tiger and leopard with the wolf and bear, the antelope with the elk, the bird of paradise with the osprey: and then, submissively acknowledging the great laws by which the earth and all that it bears are ruled throughout their being, let us not condemn, but rejoice in the expression by man of his own rest in the statutes of the lands that gave him birth. Let us watch him with reverence as he sets side by side the burning gems, and smooths with soft sculpture the jasper pillars, that are to reflect a ceaseless sunshine, and rise into a cloudless sky: but not with less reverence let us stand by him, when, with rough strength and hurried stroke, he smites an uncouth animation out of the rocks which he has torn from among the moss of the moorland, and heaves into the darkened air the pile of iron buttress and rugged wall, instinct with work of an imagination as wild and wayward as the northern sea; creations of ungainly shape and rigid limb, but full of wolfish life; fierce as the winds that beat, and changeful as the clouds that shade them.

There is, I repeat, no degradation, no reproach in this, but all dignity and honor-

ableness: and we should err grievously in refusing either to recognize as an essential character of the existing architecture of the North, or to admit as a desirable character in that which it yet may be, this wildness of thought, and roughness of work; this look of mountain brotherhood between the cathedral and the Alp; this magnificence of sturdy power, put forth only the more energetically because the fine finger-touch was chilled away by the frosty wind, and the eye dimmed by the moor-mist, or blinded by the hail; this outspeaking of the strong spirit of men who may not gather redundant fruitage from the earth, nor bask in dreamy benignity of sunshine, but must break the rock for bread, and cleave the forest for fire, and show, even in what they did for their delight, some of the hard habits of the arm and heart that grew on them as they swung the axe or pressed the plough.

§ IX. If, however, the savageness of Gothic architecture, merely as an expression of its origin among Northern nations, may be considered, in some sort, a noble character, it possesses a higher nobility still, when considered as an index, not of climate, but of religious principle.

In the 13th and 14th paragraphs of Chapter XXI. of the first volume of this work, it was noticed that the systems of architectural ornament, properly so called, might be divided into three: 1. Servile ornament, in which the execution or power of the inferior workman is entirely subjected to the intellect of the higher; 2. Constitutional ornament, in which the executive inferior power is, to a certain point, emancipated and independent, having a will of its own, yet confessing its inferiority and rendering obedience to higher powers; and 3. Revolutionary ornament, in which no executive inferiority is admitted at all. I must here explain the nature of these divisions at somewhat greater length.

Of Servile ornament, the principal schools are the Greek, Ninevite, and Egyptian; but their servility is of different kinds. The Greek master-workman was far advanced in knowledge and power above the Assyrian or Egyptian. Neither he nor those for whom he worked could endure the appearance of imperfection in anything; and, therefore, what ornament he appointed to be done by those beneath him was composed of mere geometrical forms, — balls, ridges, and perfectly symmetrical foliage, — which could be executed with absolute precision by line and rule, and were as perfect in their way, when completed, as his own figure sculpture. The Assyrian and Egyptian, on the contrary, less cognizant of accurate form in anything, were content to allow their figure sculpture to be executed by inferior workmen, but lowered the method of its treatment to a standard which every workman could reach, and then trained him by discipline so rigid, that there was no chance of his falling beneath the standard appointed. The Greek gave to the lower workman no subject which he could not perfectly execute. The Assyrian gave him subjects which he could only execute imperfectly, but fixed a legal standard for his imperfection. The workman was, in both systems, a slave.[1]

§ X. But in the mediæval, or especially Christian, system of ornament, this slavery is done away with altogether; Christianity having recognized, in small things as well as great, the individual value of every soul. But it not only recognizes its value; it confesses its imperfection, in only bestowing dignity upon the acknowledgment of unworthiness. That admission of lost power and fallen nature, which the Greek or Ninevite felt to be intensely painful, and, as far as might be, altogether refused, the Christian makes daily and hourly, contemplating the fact of it without fear, as tending, in the end, to God's greater glory. Therefore, to every spirit which Christianity summons to her service, her exhortation is: Do what you can, and confess frankly what you are unable to do; neither let your effort be shortened for fear of failure, nor your confession silenced for fear of shame. And it is, perhaps, the principal admirableness of the Gothic schools of architecture, that they thus receive the results of the labor of inferior minds; and out of fragments full of imperfection, and betraying that imperfection in every touch, indulgently raise up a stately and unaccusable whole.

§ XI. But the modern English mind has this much in common with that of the Greek, that it intensely desires, in all things, the utmost completion or perfection compatible with their nature. This is a noble

1 The third kind of ornament, the Renaissance, is that in which the inferior detail becomes principal, the executor of every minor portion being required to exhibit skill and possess knowledge as great as that which is possessed by the master of the design; and in the endeavor to endow him with this skill and knowledge, his own original power is overwhelmed, and the whole building becomes a wearisome exhibition of well-educated imbecility. We must fully inquire into the nature of this form of error, when we arrive at the examination of the Renaissance schools. (Ruskin's note.)

character in the abstract, but becomes ignoble when it causes us to forget the relative dignities of that nature itself, and to prefer the perfectness of the lower nature to the imperfection of the higher; not considering that as, judged by such a rule, all the brute animals would be preferable to man, because more perfect in their functions and kind, and yet are always held inferior to him, so also in the works of man, those which are more perfect in their kind are always inferior to those which are, in their nature, liable to more faults and shortcomings. For the finer the nature, the more flaws it will show through the clearness of it; and it is a law of this universe, that the best things shall be seldomest seen in their best form. The wild grass grows well and strongly, one year with another; but the wheat is, according to the greater nobleness of its nature, liable to the bitterer blight. And therefore, while in all things that we see, or do, we are to desire perfection, and strive for it, we are nevertheless not to set the meaner thing, in its narrow accomplishment, above the nobler thing, in its mighty progress; not to esteem smooth minuteness above shattered majesty; not to prefer mean victory to honorable defeat; not to lower the level of our aim, that we may the more surely enjoy the complacency of success.[1] But, above all, in our dealings with the souls of other men, we are to take care how we check, by severe requirement or narrow caution, efforts which might otherwise lead to a noble issue; and, still more, how we withhold our admiration from great excellencies, because they are mingled with rough faults. Now, in the make and nature of every man, however rude or simple, whom we employ in manual labor, there are some powers for better things: some tardy imagination, torpid capacity of emotion, tottering steps of thought, there are, even at the worst; and in most cases it is all our own fault that they *are* tardy or torpid. But they cannot be strengthened, unless we are content to take them in their feebleness, and unless we prize and honor them in their imperfection above the best and most perfect manual skill. And this is what we have to do with all our laborers; to look for the *thoughtful* part of them, and get that out of them, whatever we lose for it, whatever faults and errors we are obliged to take with it. For the best that is in them cannot manifest itself, but in company with much error. Understand this clearly: You can teach a man to draw a straight line, and to cut one; to strike a curved line, and to carve it; and to copy and carve any number of given lines or forms, with admirable speed and perfect precision; and you find his work perfect of its kind: but if you ask him to think about any of those forms, to consider if he cannot find any better in his own head, he stops; his execution becomes hesitating; he thinks, and ten to one he thinks wrong; ten to one he makes a mistake in the first touch he gives to his work as a thinking being. But you have made a man of him for all that. He was only a machine before, an animated tool.

§ XII. And observe, you are put to stern choice in this matter. You must either make a tool of the creature, or a man of him. You cannot make both. Men were not intended to work with the accuracy of tools, to be precise and perfect in all their actions. If you will have that precision out of them, and make their fingers measure degrees like cogwheels, and their arms strike curves like compasses, you must unhumanize them. All the energy of their spirits must be given to make cogs and compasses of themselves. All their attention and strength must go to the accomplishment of the mean act. The eye of the soul must be bent upon the fingerpoint, and the soul's force must fill all the invisible nerves that guide it, ten hours a day, that it may not err from its steely precision, and so soul and sight be worn away, and the whole human being be lost at last — a heap of sawdust, so far as its intellectual work in this world is concerned; saved only by its Heart, which cannot go into the form of cogs and compasses, but expands, after the ten hours are over, into fireside humanity. On the other hand, if you will make a man of the working creature, you cannot make a tool. Let him but begin to imagine, to think, to try to do anything worth doing; and the engine-turned precision is lost at once. Out come all his roughness, all his dulness, all his incapability; shame upon shame, failure upon failure, pause after pause: but out comes the whole majesty of him also; and we know the height of it only, when we see the clouds settling upon him. And, whether the clouds be bright or dark, there will be transfiguration behind and within them.

§ XIII. And now, reader, look round this English room of yours, about which you have been proud so often, because the work of it was so good and strong, and the ornaments of it so finished. Examine again all those ac-

[1] A doctrine characteristic of nineteenth-century idealism, notably in Browning.

curate moldings, and perfect polishings, and unerring adjustments of the seasoned wood and tempered steel. Many a time you have exulted over them, and thought how great England was, because her slightest work was done so thoroughly. Alas! if read rightly, these perfectnesses are signs of a slavery in our England a thousand times more bitter and more degrading than that of the scourged African, or helot Greek. Men may be beaten, chained, tormented, yoked like cattle, slaughtered like summer flies, and yet remain in one sense, and the best sense, free. But to smother their souls within them, to blight and hew into rotting pollards the suckling branches of their human intelligence, to make the flesh and skin which, after the worm's work on it, is to see God, into leathern thongs to yoke machinery with, — this it is to be slave-masters indeed; and there might be more freedom in England, though her feudal lords' lightest words were worth men's lives, and though the blood of the vexed husbandman dropped in the furrows of her fields, than there is while the animation of her multitudes is sent like fuel to feed the factory smoke, and the strength of them is given daily to be wasted into the fineness of a web, or racked into the exactness of a line.

§ XIV. And, on the other hand, go forth again to gaze upon the old cathedral front, where you have smiled so often at the fantastic ignorance of the old sculptors: examine once more those ugly goblins, and formless monsters, and stern statues, anatomiless and rigid; but do not mock at them, for they are signs of the life and liberty of every workman who struck the stone; a freedom of thought, and rank in scale of being, such as no laws, no charters, no charities can secure; but which it must be the first aim of all Europe at this day to regain for her children.

§ XV. Let me not be thought to speak wildly or extravagantly. It is verily this degradation of the operative into a machine, which, more than any other evil of the times, is leading the mass of the nations everywhere into vain, incoherent, destructive struggling for a freedom of which they cannot explain the nature to themselves. Their universal outcry against wealth, and against nobility, is not forced from them either by the pressure of famine, or the sting of mortified pride. These do much, and have done much in all ages; but the foundations of society were never yet shaken as they are at this day. It is not that men are ill fed, but that they have no pleasure in the work by which they make their bread, and therefore look to wealth as the only means of pleasure. It is not that men are pained by the scorn of the upper classes, but they cannot endure their own; for they feel that the kind of labor to which they are condemned is verily a degrading one, and makes them less than men. Never had the upper classes so much sympathy with the lower, or charity for them, as they have at this day, and yet never were they so much hated by them: for, of old, the separation between the noble and the poor was merely a wall built by law; now it is a veritable difference in level of standing, a precipice between upper and lower grounds in the field of humanity, and there is pestilential air at the bottom of it. I know not if a day is ever to come when the nature of right freedom will be understood, and when men will see that to obey another man, to labor for him, yield reverence to him or to his place, is not slavery. It is often the best kind of liberty, — liberty from care. The man who says to one, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh, has, in most cases, more sense of restraint and difficulty than the man who obeys him. The movements of the one are hindered by the burden on his shoulder; of the other, by the bridle on his lips: there is no way by which the burden may be lightened; but we need not suffer from the bridle if we do not champ at it. To yield reverence to another, to hold ourselves and our lives at his disposal, is not slavery; often, it is the noblest state in which a man can live in this world. There is, indeed, a reverence which is servile, that is to say irrational or selfish: but there is also noble reverence, that is to say, reasonable and loving; and a man is never so noble as when he is reverent in this kind; nay, even if the feeling pass the bounds of mere reason, so that it be loving, a man is raised by it. Which had, in reality, most of the serf nature in him, — the Irish peasant who was lying in wait yesterday for his landlord, with his musket muzzle thrust through the ragged hedge; or that old mountain servant, who, 200 years ago, at Inverkeithing, gave up his own life, and the lives of his seven sons for his chief [1]? — as each fell, calling forth his brother to the death, "Another for Hector!" And therefore, in all ages and all countries, reverence has been paid and sacrifice made by men to each other, not only without complaint, but rejoicingly; and famine, and peril, and sword, and all evil, and all shame, have

1 Vide Preface to *Fair Maid of Perth*. (Ruskin's note.)

been borne willingly in the causes of masters and kings; for all these gifts of the heart ennobled the men who gave, not less than the men who received them, and nature prompted, and God rewarded the sacrifice. But to feel their souls withering within them, unthanked, to find their whole being sunk into an unrecognized abyss, to be counted off into a heap of mechanism, numbered with its wheels, and weighed with its hammer strokes; — this nature bade not, — this God blesses not, — this humanity for no long time is able to endure.

§ XVI. We have much studied and much perfected, of late, the great civilized invention of the division of labor; only we give it a false name. It is not, truly speaking, the labor that is divided; but the men: Divided into mere segments of men — broken into small fragments and crumbs of life; so that all the little piece of intelligence that is left in a man is not enough to make a pin, or a nail, but exhausts itself in making the point of a pin, or the head of a nail. Now it is a good and desirable thing, truly, to make many pins in a day; but if we could only see with what crystal sand their points were polished, — sand of human soul, much to be magnified before it can be discerned for what it is, — we should think there might be some loss in it also. And the great cry that rises from all our manufacturing cities, louder than their furnace blast, is all in very deed for this, — that we manufacture everything there except men; we blanch cotton, and strengthen steel, and refine sugar, and shape pottery; but to brighten, to strengthen, to refine, or to form a single living spirit, never enters into our estimate of advantages. And all the evil to which that cry is urging our myriads can be met only in one way: not by teaching nor preaching, for to teach them is but to show them their misery, and to preach to them, if we do nothing more than preach, is to mock at it. It can be met only by a right understanding, on the part of all classes, of what kinds of labor are good for men, raising them, and making them happy; by a determined sacrifice of such convenience, or beauty, or cheapness as is to be got only by the degradation of the workman; and by equally determined demand for the products and results of healthy and ennobling labor.

§ XVII. And how, it will be asked, are these products to be recognized, and this demand to be regulated? Easily: by the observance of three broad and simple rules:

1. Never encourage the manufacture of any article not absolutely necessary, in the production of which *Invention* has no share.

2. Never demand an exact finish for its own sake, but only for some practical or noble end.

3. Never encourage imitation or copying of any kind, except for the sake of preserving record of great works.

The second of these principles is the only one which directly rises out of the consideration of our immediate subject; but I shall briefly explain the meaning and extent of the first also, reserving the enforcement of the third for another place.

1. Never encourage the manufacture of anything not necessary, in the production of which invention has no share.

For instance. Glass beads are utterly unnecessary, and there is no design or thought employed in their manufacture. They are formed by first drawing out the glass into rods; these rods are chopped up into fragments of the size of beads by the human hand, and the fragments are then rounded in the furnace. The men who chop up the rods sit at their work all day, their hands vibrating with a perpetual and exquisitely timed palsy, and the beads dropping beneath their vibration like hail. Neither they, nor the men who draw out the rods or fuse the fragments, have the smallest occasion for the use of any single human faculty; and every young lady, therefore, who buys glass beads is engaged in the slave-trade, and in a much more cruel one than that which we have so long been endeavoring to put down.

But glass cups and vessels may become the subjects of exquisite invention; and if in buying these we pay for the invention, that is to say for the beautiful form, or color, or engraving, and not for mere finish of execution, we are doing good to humanity.

§ XVIII. So, again, the cutting of precious stones, in all ordinary cases, requires little exertion of any mental faculty; some tact and judgment in avoiding flaws, and so on, but nothing to bring out the whole mind. Every person who wears cut jewels merely for the sake of their value is, therefore, a slave-driver.

But the working of the goldsmith, and the various designing of grouped jewellery and enamel-work, may become the subject of the most noble human intelligence. Therefore, money spent in the purchase of well-designed plate, of precious engraved vases, cameos, or enamels, does good to humanity; and, in

work of this kind, jewels may be employed to heighten its splendor; and their cutting is then a price paid for the attainment of a noble end, and thus perfectly allowable.

§ XIX. I shall perhaps press this law farther elsewhere, but our immediate concern is chiefly with the second, namely, never to demand an exact finish, when it does not lead to a noble end. For observe, I have only dwelt upon the rudeness of Gothic, or any other kind of imperfectness, as admirable, where it was impossible to get design or thought without it. If you are to have the thought of a rough and untaught man, you must have it in a rough and untaught way; but from an educated man, who can without effort express his thoughts in an educated way, take the graceful expression, and be thankful. Only *get* the thought, and do not silence the peasant because he cannot speak good grammar, or until you have taught him his grammar. Grammar and refinement are good things, both, only be sure of the better thing first. And thus in art, delicate finish is desirable from the greatest masters, and is always given by them. In some places Michael Angelo, Leonardo, Phidias, Perugino, Turner, all finished with the most exquisite care; and the finish they give always leads to the fuller accomplishment of their noble purposes. But lower men than these cannot finish, for it requires consummate knowledge to finish consummately, and then we must take their thoughts as they are able to give them. So the rule is simple: Always look for invention first, and after that, for such execution as will help the invention, and as the inventor is capable of without painful effort, and *no more*. Above all, demand no refinement of execution where there is no thought, for that is slaves' work, unredeemed. Rather choose rough work than smooth work, so only that the practical purpose be answered, and never imagine there is reason to be proud of anything that may be accomplished by patience and sand-paper.

§ XX. I shall only give one example, which however will show the reader what I mean, from the manufacture already alluded to, that of glass. Our modern glass is exquisitely clear in its substance, true in its form, accurate in its cutting. We are proud of this. We ought to be ashamed of it. The old Venice glass was muddy, inaccurate in all its forms, and clumsily cut, if at all. And the old Venetian was justly proud of it. For there is this difference between the English and Venetian workman, that the former thinks only of accurately matching his pa terns, and getting his curves perfectly tru and his edges perfectly sharp, and become a mere machine for rounding curves an sharpening edges, while the old Venetia cared not a whit whether his edges were shar or not, but he invented a new design fo every glass that he made, and never molde a handle or a lip without a new fancy in i And therefore, though some Venetian glass ugly and clumsy enough, when made b clumsy and uninventive workmen, othe Venetian glass is so lovely in its forms tha no price is too great for it; and we never se the same form in it twice. Now you cannc have the finish and the varied form too. I the workman is thinking about his edges, h cannot be thinking of his design; if of hi design, he cannot think of his edges. Choos whether you will pay for the lovely form o the perfect finish, and choose at the sam moment whether you will make the worke a man or a grindstone.

§ XXI. Nay, but the reader interrupts me — "If the workman can design beautifully I would not have him kept at the furnace Let him be taken away and made a gentle man, and have a studio, and design his glas there, and I will have it blown and cut fo him by common workmen, and so I will hav my design and my finish too."

All ideas of this kind are founded upon tw mistaken suppositions: the first, that on man's thoughts can be, or ought to be, exe cuted by another man's hands; the second that manual labor is a degradation, when i is governed by intellect.

On a large scale, and in work determinable by line and rule, it is indeed both possible and necessary that the thoughts of one mar should be carried out by the labor of others in this sense I have already defined the bes architecture to be the expression of the minc of manhood by the hands of childhood. Bu on a smaller scale, and in a design which can not be mathematically defined, one man's thoughts can never be expressed by another and the difference between the spirit of touch of the man who is inventing, and of the mar who is obeying directions, is often all the difference between a great and a commor work of art. How wide the separation is between original and second-hand execution, I shall endeavor to show elsewhere; it is not so much to our purpose here as to mark the other and more fatal error of despising manual labor when governed by intellect; for it is no less fatal an error to despise it when

thus regulated by intellect, than to value it for its own sake. We are always in these days endeavoring to separate the two; we want one man to be always thinking, and another to be always working, and we call one a gentleman, and the other an operative; whereas the workman ought often to be thinking, and the thinker often to be working, and both should be gentlemen, in the best sense. As it is, we make both ungentle, the one envying, the other despising, his brother; and the mass of society is made up of morbid thinkers, and miserable workers. Now it is only by labor that thought can be made healthy, and only by thought that labor can be made happy, and the two cannot be separated with impunity. It would be well if all of us were good handicraftsmen in some kind, and the dishonor of manual labor done away with altogether; so that though there should still be a trenchant distinction of race between nobles and commoners, there should not, among the latter, be a trenchant distinction of employment, as between idle and working men, or between men of liberal and illiberal professions. All professions should be liberal, and there should be less pride felt in peculiarity of employment, and more in excellence of achievement. And yet more, in each several profession, no master should be too proud to do its hardest work. The painter should grind his own colors; the architect work in the mason's yard with his men; the master-manufacturer be himself a more skilful operative than any man in his mills; and the distinction between one man and another be only in experience and skill, and the authority and wealth which these must naturally and justly obtain.

§ XXII. I should be led far from the matter in hand, if I were to pursue this interesting subject. Enough, I trust, has been said to show the reader that the rudeness or imperfection which at first rendered the term "Gothic" one of reproach is indeed, when rightly understood, one of the most noble characters of Christian architecture, and not only a noble but an *essential* one. It seems a fantastic paradox, but it is nevertheless a most important truth, that no architecture can be truly noble which is *not* imperfect. And this is easily demonstrable. For since the architect, whom we will suppose capable of doing all in perfection, cannot execute the whole with his own hands, he must either make slaves of his workmen in the old Greek, and present English fashion, and level his work to a slave's capacities, which is to degrade it; or else he must take his workmen as he finds them, and let them show their weaknesses together with their strength, which will involve the Gothic imperfection, but render the whole work as noble as the intellect of the age can make it.

§ XXIII. But the principle may be stated more broadly still. I have confined the illustration of it to architecture, but I must not leave it as if true of architecture only. Hitherto I have used the words imperfect and perfect merely to distinguish between work grossly unskilful, and work executed with average precision and science; and I have been pleading that any degree of unskilfulness should be admitted, so only that the laborer's mind had room for expression. But, accurately speaking, no good work whatever can be perfect, and *the demand for perfection is always a sign of a misunderstanding of the ends of art.*

§ XXIV. This for two reasons, both based on everlasting laws. The first, that no great man ever stops working till he has reached his point of failure; that is to say, his mind is always far in advance of his powers of execution, and the latter will now and then give way in trying to follow it; besides that, he will always give to the inferior portions of his work only such inferior attention as they require; and according to his greatness he becomes so accustomed to the feeling of dissatisfaction with the best he can do, that in moments of lassitude or anger with himself he will not care though the beholder be dissatisfied also. I believe there has only been one man who would not acknowledge this necessity, and strove always to reach perfection, Leonardo; the end of his vain effort being merely that he would take ten years to a picture, and leave it unfinished. And therefore, if we are to have great men working at all, or less men doing their best, the work will be imperfect, however beautiful. Of human work none but what is bad can be perfect, in its own bad way.[1]

§ XXV. The second reason is, that imperfection is in some sort essential to all that we know of life. It is the sign of life in a mortal body, that is to say, of a state of progress and change. Nothing that lives is, or can be, rigidly perfect; part of it is decaying, part nascent. The foxglove blossom, — a third

[1] The Elgin marbles are supposed by many persons to be "perfect." In the most important portions they indeed approach perfection, but only there. The draperies are unfinished, the hair and wool of the animals are unfinished, and the entire bas-reliefs of the frieze are roughly cut. (Ruskin's note.)

part bud, a third part past, a third part in full bloom, — is a type of the life of this world. And in all things that live there are certain irregularities and deficiencies which are not only signs of life, but sources of beauty. No human face is exactly the same in its lines on each side, no leaf perfect in its lobes, no branch in its symmetry. All admit irregularity as they imply change; and to banish imperfection is to destroy expression, to check exertion, to paralyze vitality. All things are literally better, lovelier, and more beloved for the imperfections which have been divinely appointed, that the law of human life may be Effort, and the law of human judgment, Mercy.

Accept this then for a universal law, that neither architecture nor any other noble work of man can be good unless it be imperfect; and let us be prepared for the otherwise strange fact, which we shall discern clearly as we approach the period of the Renaissance, that the first cause of the fall of the arts of Europe was a relentless requirement of perfection, incapable alike either of being silenced by veneration for greatness, or softened into forgiveness of simplicity.

Thus far then of the Rudeness or Savageness, which is the first mental element of Gothic architecture. It is an element in many other healthy architectures also, as in Byzantine and Romanesque; but true Gothic cannot exist without it.

§ XXVI. The second mental element above named was CHANGEFULNESS, or Variety.

I have already enforced the allowing independent operation to the inferior workman, simply as a duty *to him*, and as ennobling the architecture by rendering it more Christian. We have now to consider what reward we obtain for the performance of this duty, namely, the perpetual variety of every feature of the building.

Wherever the workman is utterly enslaved, the parts of the building must of course be absolutely like each other; for the perfection of his execution can only be reached by exercising him in doing one thing, and giving him nothing else to do. The degree in which the workman is degraded may be thus known at a glance, by observing whether the several parts of the building are similar or not; and if, as in Greek work, all the capitals are alike, and all the moldings unvaried, then the degradation is complete; if, as in Egyptian or Ninevite work, though the manner of executing certain figures is always the same, the order of design is perpetually varied, the degradation is less total; if, as in Gothic wo there is perpetual change both in design a execution, the workman must have be altogether set free.

§ XXVII. How much the beholder gai from the liberty of the laborer may perha be questioned in England, where one of t strongest instincts in nearly every mind that Love of Order which makes us desi that our house windows should pair like o carriage horses, and allows us to yield o faith unhesitatingly to architectural theori which fix a form for everything, and fort variation from it. I would not impeach lo of order: it is one of the most useful elemen of the English mind; it helps us in our co merce and in all purely practical matters; a it is in many cases one of the foundati stones of morality. Only do not let us su pose that love of order is love of art. It true that order, in its highest sense, is one the necessities of art, just as time is a nece sity of music; but love of order has no mo to do with our right enjoyment of archite ture or painting, than love of punctuali with the appreciation of an opera. Exper ence, I fear, teaches us that accurate ar methodical habits in daily life are seldo characteristic of those who either quick perceive, or richly possess, the creativ powers of art; there is, however, nothing i consistent between the two instincts, ar nothing to hinder us from retaining o business habits, and yet fully allowing ar enjoying the noblest gifts of Invention. W already do so, in every other branch of a except architecture, and we only do *not* s there because we have been taught that would be wrong. Our architects gravel inform us that, as there are four rules arithmetic, there are five orders of arch tecture; we, in our simplicity, think that th sounds consistent, and believe them. The inform us also that there is one proper for for Corinthian capitals, another for Dori and another for Ionic. We, considering tha there is also a proper form for the letters A B, and C, think that this also sounds consis ent, and accept the proposition. Unde standing, therefore, that one form of the sai capitals is proper, and no other, and having conscientious horror of all impropriety, w allow the architect to provide us with th said capitals, of the proper form, in such an such a quantity, and in all other points t take care that the legal forms are observed which having done, we rest in forced conf dence that we are well housed.

§ XXVIII. But our higher instincts are not eceived. We take no pleasure in the build- ng provided for us, resembling that which we ake in a new book or a new picture. We ay be proud of its size, complacent in its orrectness, and happy in its convenience. Ve may take the same pleasure in its sym- metry and workmanship as in a well-ordered oom, or a skilful piece of manufacture. And his we suppose to be all the pleasure that rchitecture was ever intended to give us. he idea of reading a building as we would ead Milton or Dante, and getting the same ind of delight out of the stones as out of the anzas, never enters our minds for a mo- ient. And for good reason; — There is ideed rhythm in the verses, quite as strict s the symmetries or rhythm of the archi- ecture, and a thousand times more beauti- l, but there is something else than rhythm. he verses were neither made to order, nor match, as the capitals were; and we have herefore a kind of pleasure in them other an a sense of propriety. But it requires a rong effort of common sense to shake our- lves quit of all that we have been taught r the last two centuries, and wake to the erception of a truth just as simple and cer- in as it is new: that great art, whether ex- ressing itself in words, colors, or stones, oes *not* say the same thing over and over gain; that the merit of architectural, as of very other art, consists in its saying new and ifferent things; that to repeat itself is no ore a characteristic of genius in marble than is of genius in print; and that we may, with- t offending any laws of good taste, re- uire of an architect, as we do of a novelist, hat he should be not only correct, but enter- aining.

Yet all this is true, and self-evident; only dden from us, as many other self-evident hings are, by false teaching. Nothing is a eat work of art, for the production of which ther rules or models can be given. Ex- tly so far as architecture works on known les, and from given models, it is not an rt, but a manufacture; and it is, of the two rocedures, rather less rational (because ore easy) to copy capitals or moldings om Phidias, and call ourselves architects, an to copy heads and hands from Titian, nd call ourselves painters.

§ XXIX. Let us then understand at once, at change or variety is as much a necessity the human heart and brain in buildings as books; that there is no merit, though there some occasional use, in monotony; and that we must no more expect to derive either pleasure or profit from an architecture whose ornaments are of one pattern, and whose pillars are of one proportion, than we should out of a universe in which the clouds were all of one shape, and the trees all of one size.

§ XXX. And this we confess in deeds, though not in words. All the pleasure which the people of the nineteenth century take in art, is in pictures, sculpture, minor objects of virtù, or mediæval architecture, which we enjoy under the term picturesque: no pleasure is taken anywhere in modern buildings, and we find all men of true feeling delighting to escape out of modern cities into natural scenery: hence, as I shall hereafter show, that peculiar love of landscape which is characteristic of the age. It would be well, if, in all other matters, we were as ready to put up with what we dislike, for the sake of compliance with established law, as we are in architecture.

§ XXXI. How so debased a law ever came to be established, we shall see when we come to describe the Renaissance schools: here we have only to note, as the second most essential element of the Gothic spirit, that it broke through that law wherever it found it in existence; it not only dared, but delighted in, the infringement of every servile principle; and invented a series of forms of which the merit was, not merely that they were new, but that they were *capable of perpetual novelty*. The pointed arch was not merely a bold variation from the round, but it admitted of millions of variations in itself; for the proportions of a pointed arch are changeable to infinity, while a circular arch is always the same. The grouped shaft was not merely a bold variation from the single one, but it admitted of millions of variations in its grouping, and in the proportions resultant from its grouping. The introduction of tracery was not only a startling change in the treatment of window lights, but admitted endless changes in the interlacement of the tracery bars themselves. So that, while in all living Christian architecture the love of variety exists, the Gothic schools exhibited that love in culminating energy; and their influence, wherever it extended itself, may be sooner and farther traced by this character than by any other; the tendency to the adoption of Gothic types being always first shown by greater irregularity and richer variation in the forms of the architecture it is about to supersede, long before the appearance of the pointed arch or of any other

recognizable *outward* sign of the Gothic mind.

§ XXXII. We must, however, herein note carefully what distinction there is between a healthy and a diseased love of change; for as it was in healthy love of change that the Gothic architecture rose, it was partly in consequence of diseased love of change that it was destroyed. In order to understand this clearly, it will be necessary to consider the different ways in which change and monotony are presented to us in nature; both having their use, like darkness and light, and the one incapable of being enjoyed without the other: change being most delightful after some prolongation of monotony, as light appears most brilliant after the eyes have been for some time closed.

§ XXXIII. I believe that the true relations of monotony and change may be most simply understood by observing them in music. We may therein notice, first, that there is a sublimity and majesty in monotony which there is not in rapid or frequent variation. This is true throughout all nature. The greater part of the sublimity of the sea depends on its monotony; so also that of desolate moor and mountain scenery; and especially the sublimity of motion, as in the quiet, unchanged fall and rise of an engine beam. So also there is sublimity in darkness which there is not in light.

§ XXXIV. Again, monotony after a certain time, or beyond a certain degree, becomes either uninteresting or intolerable, and the musician is obliged to break it in one or two ways: either while the air or passage is perpetually repeated, its notes are variously enriched and harmonized; or else, after a certain number of repeated passages, an entirely new passage is introduced, which is more or less delightful according to the length of the previous monotony. Nature, of course, uses both these kinds of variation perpetually. The sea-waves, resembling each other in general mass, but none like its brother in minor divisions and curves, are a monotony of the first kind; the great plain, broken by an emergent rock or clump of trees, is a monotony of the second.

§ XXXV. Farther: in order to the enjoyment of the change in either case, a certain degree of patience is required from the hearer or observer. In the first case, he must be satisfied to endure with patience the recurrence of the great masses of sound or form, and to seek for entertainment in a careful watchfulness of the minor details. In the second case, he must bear patiently the infl tion of the monotony for some moments, order to feel the full refreshment of change. This is true even of the short musical passage in which the element monotony is employed. In cases of m majestic monotony, the patience requirec so considerable that it becomes a kind pain, — a price paid for the future ple ure.

§ XXXVI. Again: the talent of the co poser is not in the monotony, but in t changes; he may show feeling and taste his use of monotony in certain places or c grees: that is to say, by his *various* emplc ment of it; but it is always in the new a rangement or invention that his intellect shown, and not in the monotony which i lieves it.

Lastly: if the pleasure of change be t often repeated, it ceases to be delightful, f then change itself becomes monotonous, a we are driven to seek delight in extreme a fantastic degrees of it. This is the diseas love of change of which we have abo spoken.

§ XXXVII. From these facts we may gath generally that monotony is, and ought to b in itself painful to us, just as darkness i that an architecture which is altogeth monotonous is a dark or dead architectur and, of those who love it, it may be tru said, "they love darkness rather than light But monotony in certain measure, used order to give value to change, and, above a that *transparent* monotony which, like t shadows of a great painter, suffers all ma ner of dimly suggested form to be se through the body of it, is an essential in a chitectural as in all other composition; a the endurance of monotony has about t same place in a healthy mind that the e durance of darkness has: that is to say, as strong intellect will have pleasure in t solemnities of storm and twilight, and in t broken and mysterious lights that glea among them, rather than in mere brillian and glare, while a frivolous mind will dre the shadow and the storm; and as a gre man will be ready to endure much darkne of fortune in order to reach greater eminen of power or felicity, while an inferior ma will not pay the price; exactly in like mann a great mind will accept, or even delight i monotony which would be wearisome to a inferior intellect, because it has more p tience and power of expectation, and is rea to pay the full price for the great futu

pleasure of change. But in all cases it is not that the noble nature loves monotony, any more than it loves darkness or pain. But it can bear with it, and receives a high pleasure in the endurance or patience, a pleasure necessary to the well-being of this world; while those who will not submit to the temporary sameness, but rush from one change to another, gradually dull the edge of change itself, and bring a shadow and weariness over the whole world from which there is no escape.

§ XXXVIII. From these general uses of variety in the economy of the world, we may at once understand its use and abuse in architecture. The variety of the Gothic schools is the more healthy and beautiful, because in many cases it is entirely unstudied, and results, not from the mere love of change, but from practical necessities. For in one point of view Gothic is not only the best, but the *only rational* architecture, as being that which can fit itself most easily to all services, vulgar or noble. Undefined in its slope of roof, height of shaft, breadth of arch, or disposition of ground plan, it can shrink into a turret, expand into a hall, coil into a staircase, or spring into a spire, with undegraded grace and unexhausted energy; and whenever it finds occasion for change in its form or purpose, it submits to it without the slightest sense of loss either to its unity or majesty, — subtle and flexible like a fiery serpent, but ever attentive to the voice of the charmer. And it is one of the chief virtues of the Gothic builders, that they never suffered ideas of outside symmetries and consistencies to interfere with the real use and value of what they did. If they wanted a window, they opened one; a room, they added one; a buttress, they built one; utterly regardless of any established conventionalities of external appearance, knowing (as indeed it always happened) that such jarring interruptions of the formal plan would rather give additional interest to its symmetry than injure it. So that, in the best times of Gothic, a useless window would rather have been opened in an unexpected place for the sake of the surprise, than a useful one forbidden for the sake of symmetry. Every successive architect, employed upon a great work, built the pieces he added in his own way, utterly regardless of the style adopted by his predecessors; and if two towers were raised in nominal correspondence at the sides of a cathedral front, one was nearly sure to be different from the other, and in each the style at the top to be different from the style at the bottom.[1]

§ XXXIX. These marked variations were, however, only permitted as part of the great system of perpetual change which ran through every member of Gothic design, and rendered it as endless a field for the beholder's inquiry, as for the builder's imagination: change, which in the best schools is subtle and delicate, and rendered more delightful by intermingling of a noble monotony; in the more barbaric schools is somewhat fantastic and redundant; but, in all, a necessary and constant condition of the life of the school. Sometimes the variety is in one feature, sometimes in another; it may be in the capitals or crockets, in th niches or the traceries, or in all together, but in some one or other of the features it will be found always. If the moldings are constant, the surface sculpture will change; if the capitals are of a fixed design, the traceries will change; if the traceries are monotonous, the capitals will change; and if even, as in some fine schools, the early English for example, there is the slightest approximation to an unvarying type of moldings, capitals, and floral decoration, the variety is found in the disposition of the masses, and in the figure sculpture.

§ XL. I must now refer for a moment, before we quit the consideration of this, the second mental element of Gothic, to the opening of the third chapter of the *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, in which the distinction was drawn (§ 2) between man gathering and man governing; between his acceptance of the sources of delight from nature, and his development of authoritative or imaginative power in their arrangement: for the two mental elements, not only of Gothic, but of all good architecture, which we have just been examining, belong to it, and are admirable in it, chiefly as it is, more than any other subject of art, the work of man, and the expression of the average power of man. A picture or poem is often little more than a feeble utterance of man's admiration of something out of himself; but architecture approaches more to a creation of his own, born of his necessities, and expressive of his nature. It is also, in some sort, the work of the whole race, while the picture or statue are the work of one only, in most cases more highly gifted than his fellows. And therefore we may expect that

[1] In the eighth chapter we shall see a remarkable instance of this sacrifice of symmetry to convenience in the arrangement of the windows of the Ducal Palace. (Ruskin's note.)

the first two elements of good architecture should be expressive of some great truths commonly belonging to the whole race, and necessary to be understood or felt by them in all their work that they do under the sun. And observe what they are: the confession of Imperfection, and the confession of Desire of Change. The building of the bird and the bee needs not express anything like this. It is perfect and unchanging. But just because we are something better than birds or bees, our building must confess that we have not reached the perfection we can imagine, and cannot rest in the condition we have attained. If we pretend to have reached either perfection or satisfaction, we have degraded ourselves and our work. God's work only may express that; but ours may never have that sentence written upon it, — "And behold, it was very good." And, observe again, it is not merely as it renders the edifice a book of various knowledge, or a mine of precious thought, that variety is essential to its nobleness. The vital principle is not the love of *Knowledge*, but the love of *Change*. It is that strange *disquietude* of the Gothic spirit that is its greatness; that restlessness of the dreaming mind, that wanders hither and thither among the niches, and flickers feverishly around the pinnacles, and frets and fades in labyrinthine knots and shadows along wall and roof, and yet is not satisfied, nor shall be satisfied. The Greek could stay in his triglyph furrow, and be at peace; but the work of the Gothic heart is fretwork still, and it can neither rest in, nor from, its labor, but must pass on, sleeplessly, until its love of change shall be pacified for ever in the change that must come alike on them that wake and them that sleep.

§ XLI. The third constituent element of the Gothic mind was stated to be NATURALISM; that is to say, the love of natural objects for their own sake, and the effort to represent them frankly, unconstrained by artistical laws.

This characteristic of the style partly follows in necessary connection with those named above. For, so soon as the workman is left free to represent what subjects he chooses, he must look to the nature that is round him for material, and will endeavor to represent it as he sees it, with more or less accuracy according to the skill he possesses, and with much play of fancy, but with small respect for law. There is, however, a marked distinction between the imaginations of the Western and Eastern races, even when both are left free; the Western, or Gothic, delighting most in the representation of facts, and the Eastern (Arabian, Persian, and Chinese) in the harmony of colors and forms. Each of these intellectual dispositions has its particular forms of error and abuse, which though I have often before stated, I must here again briefly explain; and this the rather because the word Naturalism is, in one of its senses, justly used as a term of reproach, and the questions respecting the real relation of art and nature are so many and so confused throughout all the schools of Europe at this day, that I cannot clearly enunciate any single truth without appearing to admit in fellowship with it, some kind of error unless the reader will bear with me in entering into such an analysis of the subject as will serve us for general guidance.

§ XLII. We are to remember, in the first place, that the arrangement of colors and lines is an art analogous to the composition of music, and entirely independent of the representation of facts. Good coloring does not necessarily convey the image of anything but itself. It consists in certain proportions and arrangements of rays of light, but not in likenesses to anything. A few touches of certain greys and purples laid by a master's hand on white paper, will be good coloring as more touches are added beside them, we may find out that they were intended to represent a dove's neck, and we may praise, as the drawing advances, the perfect imitation of the dove's neck. But the good coloring does not consist in that imitation, but in the abstract qualities and relations of the grey and purple.

In like manner, as soon as a great sculptor begins to shape his work out of the block, we shall see that its lines are nobly arranged, and of noble character. We may not have the slightest idea for what the forms are intended whether they are of man or beast, of vegetation or drapery. Their likeness to anything does not affect their nobleness. They are magnificent forms, and that is all we need

1 I am always afraid to use this word "Composition;" it is so utterly misused in the general parlance respecting art. Nothing is more common than to hear divisions of art into "form, composition, and color," or "light and shade and composition," or "sentiment and composition," or it matters not what else and composition; the speakers in each case attaching a perfectly different meaning to the word, generally an indistinct one, and always a wrong one. Composition is, in plain English, "putting together," and it means the putting together of lines, of forms, of colors, of shades, or of ideas. Painters compose in color, compose in thought, compose in form, and compose in effect; the word being of use merely in order to express a scientific, disciplined, and inventive arrangement of any of these, instead of a merely natural or accidental one. (Ruskin's note.)

care to know of them, in order to say whether the workman is a good or bad sculptor.

§ XLIII. Now the noblest art is an exact unison of the abstract value, with the imitative power, of forms and colors. It is the noblest composition, used to express the noblest facts. But the human mind cannot in general unite the two perfections: it either pursues the fact to the neglect of the composition, or pursues the composition to the neglect of the fact.

§ XLIV. And it is intended by the Deity that it *should* do this; the best art is not always wanted. Facts are often wanted without art, as in a geological diagram; and art often without facts, as in a Turkey carpet. And most men have been made capable of giving either one or the other, but not both; only one or two, the very highest, can give both.

Observe then. Men are universally divided, as respects their artistical qualifications, into three great classes; a right, a left, and a centre. On the right side are the men of facts, on the left the men of design,[1] in the centre the men of both.

The three classes of course pass into each other by imperceptible gradations. The men of facts are hardly ever altogether without powers of design; the men of design are always in some measure cognizant of facts; and as each class possesses more or less of the powers of the opposite one, it approaches to the character of the central class. Few men, even in that central rank, are so exactly throned on the summit of the crest that they cannot be perceived to incline in the least one way or the other, embracing both horizons with their glance. Now each of these classes has, as I above said, a healthy function in the world, and correlative diseases or unhealthy functions; and, when the work of either of them is seen in its morbid condition, we are apt to find fault with the class of workmen, instead of finding fault only with the particular abuse which has perverted their action.

§ XLV. Let us first take an instance of the healthy action of the three classes on a simple subject, so as fully to understand the distinction between them, and then we shall more easily examine the corruptions to which they are liable. Fig. 1 in Plate VI. is a spray of vine with a bough of cherry-tree, which I have outlined from nature as accurately as I could, without in the least endeavoring to compose or arrange the form. It is a simple piece of fact-work, healthy and good as such, and useful to any one who wanted to know plain truths about tendrils of vines, but there is no attempt at design in it. Plate XIX., below, represents a branch of vine used to decorate the angle of the Ducal Palace. It is faithful as a representation of vine, and yet so designed that every leaf serves an architectural purpose, and could not be spared from its place without harm. This is central work; fact and design together. Fig. 2 in Plate VI. is a spandril from St. Mark's, in which the forms of the vine are dimly suggested, the object of the design being merely to obtain graceful lines and well proportioned masses upon the gold ground. There is not the least attempt to inform the spectator of any facts about the growth of the vine; there are no stalks or tendrils, — merely running bands with leaves emergent from them, of which nothing but the outline is taken from the vine, and even that imperfectly. This is design, unregardful of facts.

Now the work is, in all these three cases, perfectly healthy. Fig. 1 is not bad work because it has not design, nor fig. 2 bad work because it has not facts. The object of the one is to give pleasure through truth, and of the other to give pleasure through composition. And both are right.

What, then, are the diseased operations to which the three classes of workmen are liable?

§ XLVI. Primarily, two; affecting the two inferior classes:

1st, When either of those two classes Despises the other;

2nd, When either of the two classes Envies the other;

producing, therefore, four forms of dangerous error.

First, when the men of facts despise design. This is the error of the common Dutch painters, of merely imitative painters of still life, flowers, etc., and other men who, having either the gift of accurate imitation or strong sympathies with nature, suppose that all is done when the imitation is perfected or sympathy expressed. A large body of English landscapists come into this class, including most clever sketchers from nature, who fancy that to get a sky of true tone, and a gleam of sunshine or sweep of shower faithfully expressed, is all that can be required of

[1] Design is used in this place as expressive of the power to arrange lines and colors nobly. By facts, I mean facts perceived by the eye and mind, not facts accumulated by knowledge. See the chapter on Roman Renaissance (vol. III, chap. II) for this distinction. (Ruskin's note.)

art. These men are generally themselves answerable for much of their deadness of feeling to the higher qualities of composition. They probably have not originally the high gifts of design, but they lose such powers as they originally possessed by despising, and refusing to study, the results of great power of design in others. Their knowledge, as far as it goes, being accurate, they are usually presumptuous and self-conceited, and gradually become incapable of admiring anything but what is like their own works. They see nothing in the works of great designers but the faults, and do harm almost incalculable in the European society of the present day by sneering at the compositions of the greatest men of the earlier ages,[1] because they do not absolutely tally with their own ideas of "Nature."

§ XLVII. The second form of error is when the men of design despise facts. All noble design must deal with facts to a certain extent, for there is no food for it but in nature. The best colorist invents best by taking hints from natural colors; from birds, skies, or groups of figures. And if, in the delight of inventing fantastic color and form, the truths of nature are wilfully neglected, the intellect becomes comparatively decrepit, and that state of art results which we find among the Chinese. The Greek designers delighted in the facts of the human form, and became great in consequence; but the facts of lower nature were disregarded by them, and their inferior ornament became, therefore, dead and valueless.

§ XLVIII. The third form of error is when the men of facts envy design: that is to say, when, having only imitative powers, they refuse to employ those powers upon the visible world around them; but, having been taught that composition is the end of art, strive to obtain the inventive powers which nature has denied them, study nothing but the works of reputed designers, and perish in a fungous growth of plagiarism and laws of art.

Here was the great error of the beginning of this century; it is the error of the meanest kind of men that employ themselves in painting, and it is the most fatal of all, rendering those who fall into it utterly useless, incapable of helping the world with either truth or fancy, while, in all probability, they deceive it by base resemblances of both, until it hardly recognizes truth or fancy when th really exist.

§ XLIX. The fourth form of error is wh the men of design envy facts; that is to sa when the temptation of closely imitati nature leads them to forget their own prop ornamental function, and when they lose t power of the composition for the sake graphic truth; as, for instance, in the ha thorn molding so often spoken of round t porch of Bourges Cathedral, which, thou very lovely, might perhaps, as we saw abov have been better, if the old builder, in h excessive desire to make it look like ha thorn, had not painted it green.

§ L. It is, however, carefully to be note that the two morbid conditions to which th men of facts are liable are much mo dangerous and harmful than those to whi the men of design are liable. The morb state of men of design injures themselv only; that of the men of facts injures t whole world. The Chinese porcelain-paint is, indeed, not so great a man as he might b but he does not want to break everythi that is not porcelain: but the modern Engli fact-hunter, despising design, wants to d stroy everything that does not agree wi his own notions of truth, and becomes th most dangerous and despicable of icon clasts, excited by egotism instead of religio Again: the Bourges sculptor, painting h hawthorns green, did indeed somewhat hu the effect of his own beautiful design, but d not prevent any one from loving hawthor but Sir George Beaumont, trying to mak Constable paint grass brown *instead* of gree was setting himself between Constable an nature, blinding the painter, and blasphem ing the work of God.

§ LI. So much, then, of the diseases of th inferior classes, caused by their envying despising each other. It is evident that th men of the central class cannot be liable t any morbid operation of this kind, they po sessing the powers of both.

But there is another order of disease which affect all the three classes, considere with respect to their pursuit of facts. Fo observe, all the three classes are in som degree pursuers of facts; even the men of de sign not being in any case altogether inde pendent of external truth. Now, consider ing them *all* as more or less searchers afte truth, there is another triple division to b made of them. Everything presented t them in nature has good and evil mingled i it: and artists, considered as searchers afte

1 "Earlier," that is to say, pre-Raphaelite ages. Men of this stamp will praise Claude, and such other comparatively debased artists; but they cannot taste the work of the thirteenth century. (Ruskin's note.)

truth, are again to be divided into three great classes, a right, a left, and a centre. Those in the right perceive, and pursue, the good, and leave the evil: those in the centre, the greatest, perceive and pursue the good and evil together, the whole thing as it verily is: those on the left perceive and pursue the evil, and leave the good.

§ LII. The first class, I say, take the good and leave the evil. Out of whatever is presented to them, they gather what it has of grace, and life, and light, and holiness, and have all, or at least as much as possible, of the rest undrawn. The faces of their figures express no evil passions; the skies of their landscapes are without storm; the prevalent character of their color is brightness, and of their chiaroscuro fulness of light. The early Italian and Flemish painters, Angelico and Hemling, Perugino, Francia, Raffaelle in his best time, John Bellini, and our own Stothard, belong eminently to this class.

§ LIII. The second, or greatest class, render all that they see in nature unhesitatingly, with a kind of divine grasp and government of the whole, sympathizing with all the good, and yet confessing, permitting, and bringing good out of the evil also. Their subject is infinite as nature, their color equally balanced between splendor and sadness, reaching occasionally the highest degrees of both, and their chiaroscuro equally balanced between light and shade.

The principal men of this class are Michael Angelo, Leonardo, Giotto, Tintoret, and Turner. Raffaelle in his second time, Titian, and Rubens are transitional; the first inclining to the eclectic, and the last two to the impure class, Raffaelle rarely giving all the evil, Titian and Rubens rarely all the good.

§ LIV. The last class perceive and imitate evil only. They cannot draw the trunk of a tree without blasting and shattering it, nor the sky except covered with stormy clouds; they delight in the beggary and brutality of the human race; their color is for the most part subdued or lurid, and the greatest spaces of their pictures are occupied by darkness.

Happily the examples of this class are seldom seen in perfection. Salvator Rosa and Caravaggio are the most characteristic: the other men belonging to it approach towards the central rank by imperceptible gradations, as they perceive and represent more and more of good. But Murillo, Zurbaran, Camillo Procaccini, Rembrandt, and Teniers, all belong naturally to this lower class.

§ LV. Now, observe: the three classes into which artists were previously divided, of men of fact, men of design, and men of both, are all of Divine institution; but of these latter three, the last is in no wise of Divine institution. It is entirely human, and the men who belong to it have sunk into it by their own faults. They are, so far forth, either useless or harmful men. It is indeed good that evil should be occasionally represented, even in its worst forms, but never that it should be taken delight in: and the mighty men of the central class will always give us all that is needful of it; sometimes, as Hogarth did, dwelling upon it bitterly as satirists, — but this with the more effect, because they will neither exaggerate it, nor represent it mercilessly, and without the atoning points that all evil shows to a Divinely guided glance, even at its deepest. So then, though the third class will always, I fear, in some measure exist, the two necessary classes are only the first two; and this is so far acknowledged by the general sense of men, that the basest class has been confounded with the second; and painters have been divided commonly only into two ranks, now known, I believe, throughout Europe by the names which they first received in Italy, "Puristi and Naturalisti." Since, however, in the existing state of things, the degraded or evil-loving class, though less defined than that of the Puristi, is just as vast as it is indistinct, this division has done infinite dishonor to the great faithful painters of nature: and it has long been one of the objects I have had most at heart to show that, in reality, the Purists, in their sanctity, are less separated from these natural painters than the Sensualists in their foulness; and that the difference, though less discernible, is in reality greater, between the man who pursues evil for its own sake, and him who bears with it for the sake of truth, than between this latter and the man who will not endure it at all.

§ LVI. Let us, then, endeavor briefly to mark the real relations of these three vast ranks of men, whom I shall call, for convenience in speaking of them, Purists, Naturalists, and Sensualists; not that these terms express their real characters, but I know no word, and cannot coin a convenient one, which would accurately express the opposite of Purist; and I keep the terms Purist and Naturalist in order to comply, as far as possible, with the established usage of language on the Continent. Now, observe:

in saying that nearly everything presented to us in nature has mingling in it of good and evil, I do not mean that nature is conceivably improvable, or that anything that God has made could be called evil, if we could see far enough into its uses, but that, with respect to immediate effects or appearances, it may be so, just as the hard rind or bitter kernel of a fruit may be an evil to the eater, though in the one is the protection of the fruit, and in the other its continuance. The Purist, therefore, does not mend nature, but receives from nature and from God that which is good for him; while the Sensualist fills himself "with the husks that the swine did eat."

The three classes may, therefore, be likened to men reaping wheat, of which the Purists take the fine flour, and the Sensualists the chaff and straw, but the Naturalists take all home, and make their cake of the one, and their couch of the other.

§ LVII. For instance. We know more certainly every day that whatever appears to us harmful in the universe has some beneficent or necessary operation; that the storm which destroys a harvest brightens the sunbeams for harvests yet unsown, and that the volcano which buries a city preserves a thousand from destruction. But the evil is not for the time less fearful, because we have learned it to be necessary; and we easily understand the timidity or the tenderness of the spirit which would withdraw itself from the presence of destruction, and create in its imagination a world of which the peace should be unbroken, in which the sky should not darken nor the sea rage, in which the leaf should not change nor the blossom wither. That man is greater, however, who contemplates with an equal mind the alternations of terror and of beauty; who, not rejoicing less beneath the sunny sky, can bear also to watch the bars of twilight narrowing on the horizon; and, not less sensible to the blessing of the peace of nature, can rejoice in the magnificence of the ordinances by which that peace is protected and secured. But separated from both by an immeasurable distance would be the man who delighted in convulsion and disease for their own sake; who found his daily food in the disorder of nature mingled with the suffering of humanity; and watched joyfully at the right hand of the Angel whose appointed work is to destroy as well as to accuse, while the corners of the house of feasting were struck by the wind from the wilderness.

§ LVIII. And far more is this true, when the subject of contemplation is humanity it The passions of mankind are partly pr tive, partly beneficent, like the chaff grain of the corn; but none without their none without nobleness when seen in anced unity with the rest of the spirit w they are charged to defend. The pass of which the end is the continuance of race; the indignation which is to arn against injustice, or strengthen it to r wanton injury; and the fear[1] which lie the root of prudence, reverence, and a are all honorable and beautiful, so long man is regarded in his relations to the e ing world. The religious Purist, strivin conceive him withdrawn from those relati effaces from the countenance the trace all transitory passion, illumines it with hope and love, and seals it with the sere of heavenly peace; he conceals the form the body by the deep-folded garment, else represents them under severely chaste types, and would rather paint them e ciated by the fast, or pale from the tort than strengthened by exertion, or flushed emotion. But the great Naturalist takes human being in its wholeness, in its morta well as its spiritual strength. Capable sounding and sympathizing with the w range of its passions, he brings one maje harmony out of them all; he represent fearlessly in all its acts and thoughts, in haste, its anger, its sensuality, and its pr as well as in its fortitude or faith, but ma it noble in them all; he casts aside the from the body, and beholds the mysterie its form like an angel looking down on inferior creature: there is nothing which h reluctant to behold, nothing that he ashamed to confess; with all that li triumphing, falling, or suffering, he cla kindred, either in majesty or in mercy, standing, in a sort, afar off, unmoved e in the deepness of his sympathy; for spirit within him is too thoughtful to grieved, too brave to be appalled, and pure to be polluted.

§ LIX. How far beneath these two rank men shall we place, in the scale of be those whose pleasure is only in sin or suffering; who habitually contemplate manity in poverty or decrepitude, fury sensuality; whose works are either temp tions to its weakness, or triumphs over ruin, and recognize no other subjects

[1] Not selfish fear, caused by want of trust in Go of resolution in the soul. Compare *Modern Pai* vol. II, pt. III, sect. I, chap. XIV, § XXVII. (Ruskin's n

thought or admiration than the subtlety of the robber, the rage of the soldier, or the joy of the Sybarite. It seems strange, when thus definitely stated, that such a school should exist. Yet consider a little what gaps and blanks would disfigure our gallery and chamber walls, in places that we have long approached with reverence, if every picture, every statue, were removed from them, of which the subject was either the vice or the misery of mankind, portrayed without any moral purpose: consider the innumerable groups having reference merely to various forms of passion, low or high; drunken revels and brawls among peasants, gambling or fighting scenes among soldiers, amours and intrigues among every class, brutal battle pieces, banditti subjects, gluts of torture and death in famine, wreck, or slaughter, for the sake merely of the excitement, — that quickening and supplying of the dull spirit that cannot be gained for it but by bathing it in blood, afterward to wither back into stained and stiffened apathy; and then that whole vast false heaven of sensual passion, full of nymphs, satyrs, graces, goddesses, and I know not what, from its high seventh circle in Correggio's Antiope, down to the Grecised ballet-dancers and smirking Cupids of the Parisian upholsterer. Sweep away all this, remorselessly, and see how much art we should have left.

§ LX. And yet these are only the grossest manifestations of the tendency of the school. There are subtler, yet not less certain, signs of it in the works of men who stand high in the world's list of sacred painters. I doubt not that the reader was surprised when I named Murillo among the men of this third rank. Yet, go into the Dulwich Gallery, and meditate for a little over that much celebrated picture of the two beggar boys, one eating, lying on the ground, the other standing beside him. We have among our own painters one who cannot indeed be set beside Murillo as a painter of Madonnas, for he is a pure Naturalist, and, never having seen a Madonna, does not paint any; but who, as a painter of beggar or peasant boys, may be set beside Murillo, or any one else, — W. Hunt. He loves peasant boys, because he finds them more roughly and picturesquely dressed, and more healthily colored, than others. And he paints all that he sees in them fearlessly; all the health and humor, and freshness and vitality, together with such awkwardness and stupidity, and what else of negative or positive harm there may be in the creature; but yet so that on the whole we love it, and find it perhaps even beautiful, or if not, at least we see that there is capability of good in it, rather than of evil; and all is lighted up by a sunshine and sweet color that makes the smockfrock as precious as cloth of gold. But look at those two ragged and vicious vagrants that Murillo has gathered out of the street. You smile at first, because they are eating so naturally, and their roguery is so complete. But is there anything else than roguery there, or was it well for the painter to give his time to the painting of those repulsive and wicked children? Do you feel moved with any charity towards children as you look at them? Are we the least more likely to take any interest in ragged schools, or to help the next pauper child that comes in our way, because the painter has shown us a cunning beggar feeding greedily? Mark the choice of the act. He might have shown hunger in other ways, and given interest to even this act of eating, by making the face wasted, or the eye wistful. But he did not care to do this. He delighted merely in the disgusting manner of eating, the food filling the cheek; the boy is not hungry, else he would not turn round to talk and grin as he eats.

§ LXI. But observe another point in the lower figure. It lies so that the sole of the foot is turned towards the spectator; not because it would have lain less easily in another attitude, but that the painter may draw, and exhibit, the grey dust engrained in the foot. Do not call this the painting of nature: it is mere delight in foulness. The lesson, if there be any, in the picture, is not one whit the stronger. We all know that a beggar's bare foot cannot be clean; there is no need to thrust its degradation into the light, as if no human imagination were vigorous enough for its conception.

§ LXII. The position of the Sensualists, in treatment of landscape, is less distinctly marked than in that of the figure, because even the wildest passions of nature are noble: but the inclination is manifested by carelessness in marking generic form in trees and flowers; by their preferring confused and irregular arrangements of foliage or foreground to symmetrical and simple grouping; by their general choice of such picturesqueness as results from decay, disorder, and disease, rather than of that which is consistent with the perfection of the things in which it is found; and by their imperfect rendering of the elements of strength and beauty in all things. I pro-

pose to work out this subject fully in the last volume of *Modern Painters;* but I trust that enough has been here said to enable the reader to understand the relations of the three great classes of artists, and therefore also the kinds of morbid condition into which the two higher (for the last has no other than a morbid condition) are liable to fall. For, since the function of the Naturalists is to represent, as far as may be, the whole of nature, and the Purists to represent what is absolutely good for some special purpose or time, it is evident that both are liable to error from shortness of sight, and the last also from weakness of judgment. I say, in the first place, both may err from shortness of sight, from not seeing all that there is in nature; seeing only the outsides of things, or those points of them which bear least on the matter in hand. For instance, a modern continental Naturalist sees the anatomy of a limb thoroughly, but does not see its color against the sky, which latter fact is to a painter far the more important of the two. And because it is always easier to see the surface than the depth of things, the full sight of them requiring the highest powers of penetration, sympathy, and imagination, the world is full of vulgar Naturalists: not Sensualists, observe, not men who delight in evil; but men who never see the deepest good, and who bring discredit on all painting of Nature by the little that they discover in her. And the Purist, besides being liable to this same short-sightedness, is liable also to fatal errors of judgment; for he may think that good which is not so, and that the highest good which is the least. And thus the world is full of vulgar Purists,[1] who bring discredit on all selection by the silliness of their choice; and this the more, because the very becoming a Purist is commonly indicative of some slig degree of weakness, readiness to be offende or narrowness of understanding of the en of things: the greatest men being, in all tim of art, Naturalists, without any exceptio and the greatest Purists being those who a proach nearest to the Naturalists, as Benoz Gozzoli and Perugino. Hence there is tendency in the Naturalists to despise t Purists, and in the Purists to be offended wi the Naturalists (not understanding them, a confounding them with the Sensualists and this is grievously harmful to both.

§ LXIII. Of the various forms of resulta mischief it is not here the place to speak: t reader may already be somewhat wearied wi a statement which has led us apparently far from our immediate subject. But t digression was necessary, in order that might clearly define the sense in which I u the word Naturalism when I state it to be t third most essential characteristic of Got architecture. I mean that the Gothic buil ers belong to the central or greatest rank *both* the classifications of artists which have just made; that, considering all arti as either men of design, men of facts, or m of both, the Gothic builders were men both; and that again, considering all arti as either Purists, Naturalists, or Sensualis the Gothic builders were Naturalists.

§ LXIV. I say first, that the Gothic buil ers were of that central class which unit fact with design; but that the part of t work which was more especially their o was the truthfulness. Their power of artis cal invention or arrangement was not great than that of Romanesque and Byzanti workmen: by those workmen they we taught the principles, and from them ceived their models, of design; but to t ornamental feeling and rich fancy of t Byzantine the Gothic builder added a lo of *fact* which is never found in the Sout Both Greek and Roman used conventior foliage in their ornament, passing into son thing that was not foliage at all, knotti itself into strange cup-like buds or cluste and growing out of lifeless rods instead stems; the Gothic sculptor received the types, at first, as things that ought to b just as we have a second time received the but he could not rest in them. He saw the was not veracity in them, no knowledge, vitality. Do what he would, he could n help liking the true leaves better; and ca tiously, a little at a time, he put more nature into his work, until at last it was

[1] I reserve for another place the full discussion of this interesting subject, which here would have led me too far; but it must be noted, in passing, that this vulgar Purism, which rejects truth, not because it is vicious, but because it is humble, and consists not in choosing what is good, but in disguising what is rough, extends itself into every species of art. The most definite instance of it is the dressing of characters of peasantry in an opera or ballet scene: and the walls of our exhibitions are full of works of art which "exalt nature" in the same way, not by revealing what is great in the heart, but by smoothing what is coarse in the complexion. There is nothing, I believe, so vulgar, so hopeless, so indicative of an irretrievably base mind, as this species of Purism. Of healthy Purism carried to the utmost endurable length in this direction, exalting the heart first, and the features with it, perhaps the most characteristic instance I can give is Stothard's vignette to "Jorasse," in Rogers's Italy; at least it would be so if it could be seen beside a real group of Swiss girls. The poems of Rogers, compared with those of Crabbe, are admirable instances of the healthiest Purism and healthiest Naturalism in poetry. The first great Naturalists of Christian art were Orcagna and Giotto. (Ruskin's note.)

true, retaining, nevertheless, every valuable character of the original well-disciplined and designed arrangement.

§ LXV. Nor is it only in external and visible subject that the Gothic workman wrought for truth: he is as firm in his rendering of imaginative as of actual truth; that is to say, when an idea would have been by a Roman, or Byzantine, symbolically represented, the Gothic mind realizes it to the utmost. For instance, the purgatorial fire is represented in the mosaic of Torcello (Romanesque) as a red stream, longitudinally striped like a riband, descending out of the throne of Christ, and gradually extending itself to envelope the wicked. When we are once informed what this means, it is enough for its purpose; but the Gothic inventor does not leave the sign in need of interpretation. He makes the fire as like real fire as he can; and in the porch of St. Maclou at Rouen the sculptured flames burst out of the Hades gate, and flicker up, in writhing tongues of stone, through the interstices of the niches, as if the church itself were on fire. This is an extreme instance, but it is all the more illustrative of the entire difference in temper and thought between the two schools of art, and of the intense love of veracity which influenced the Gothic design.

§ LXVI. I do not say that this love of veracity is always healthy in its operation. I have above noticed the errors into which it falls from despising design; and there is another kind of error noticeable in the instance just given, in which the love of truth is too hasty, and seizes on a surface truth instead of an inner one. For in representing the Hades fire, it is not the mere *form* of the flame which needs most to be told, but its unquenchableness, its Divine ordainment and limitation, and its inner fierceness, not physical and material, but in being the expression of the wrath of God. And these things are not to be told by imitating the fire that flashes out of a bundle of sticks. If we think over his symbol a little, we shall perhaps find that the Romanesque builder told more truth in that likeness of a blood-red stream, flowing between definite shores, and out of God's throne, and expanding, as if fed by a perpetual current, into the lake wherein the wicked are cast, than the Gothic builder in those torch-flickerings about his niches. But this is not to our immediate purpose; I am not at present to insist upon the faults into which the love of truth was led in the later Gothic times, but on the feeling itself, as a glorious and peculiar characteristic of the Northern builders. For, observe, it is not, even in the above instance, love of truth, but want of thought, which *causes* the fault. The love of truth, as such, is good, but when it is misdirected by thoughtlessness or overexcited by vanity, and either seizes on facts of small value, or gathers them chiefly that it may boast of its grasp and apprehension, its work may well become dull or offensive. Yet let us not, therefore, blame the inherent love of facts, but the incautiousness of their selection, and impertinence of their statement.

§ LXVII. I said, in the second place, that Gothic work, when referred to the arrangement of all art, as purist, naturalist, or sensualist, was naturalist. This character follows necessarily on its extreme love of truth, prevailing over the sense of beauty, and causing it to take delight in portraiture of every kind, and to express the various characters of the human countenance and form, as it did the varieties of leaves and the ruggedness of branches. And this tendency is both increased and ennobled by the same Christian humility which we saw expressed in the first character of Gothic work, its rudeness. For as that resulted from a humility which confessed the imperfection of the *workman*, so this naturalist portraiture is rendered more faithful by the humility which confesses the imperfection of the *subject*. The Greek sculptor could neither bear to confess his own feebleness, nor to tell the faults of the forms that he portrayed. But the Christian workman, believing that all is finally to work together for good, freely confesses both, and neither seeks to disguise his own roughness of work, nor his subject's roughness of make. Yet this frankness being joined, for the most part, with depth of religious feeling in other directions, and especially with charity, there is sometimes a tendency to Purism in the best Gothic sculpture; so that it frequently reaches great dignity of form and tenderness of expression, yet never so as to lose the veracity of portraiture, wherever portraiture is possible: not exalting its kings into demi-gods, nor its saints into archangels, but giving what kingliness and sanctity was in them, to the full, mixed with due record of their faults; and this in the most part with a great indifference like that of Scripture history, which sets down, with unmoved and unexcusing resoluteness, the virtues and errors of all men of whom it speaks, often leaving the reader

to form his own estimate of them, without an indication of the judgment of the historian. And this veracity is carried out by the Gothic sculptors in the minuteness and generality, as well as the equity, of their delineation: for they do not limit their art to the portraiture of saints and kings, but introduce the most familiar scenes and most simple subjects; filling up the backgrounds of Scripture histories with vivid and curious representations of the commonest incidents of daily life, and availing themselves of every occasion in which, either as a symbol, or an explanation of a scene or time, the things familiar to the eye of the workman could be introduced and made of account. Hence Gothic sculpture and painting are not only full of valuable portraiture of the greatest men, but copious records of all the domestic customs and inferior arts of the ages in which it flourished.[1]

§ LXVIII. There is, however, one direction in which the Naturalism of the Gothic workmen is peculiarly manifested; and this direction is even more characteristic of the school than the Naturalism itself; I mean their peculiar fondness for the forms of Vegetation. In rendering the various circumstances of daily life, Egyptian and Ninevite sculpture is as frank and as diffuse as the Gothic. From the highest pomps of state or triumphs of battle, to the most trivial domestic arts and amusements, all is taken advantage of to fill the field of granite with the perpetual interest of a crowded drama; and the early Lombardic and Romanesque sculpture is equally copious in its description of the familiar circumstances of war and the chase. But in all the scenes portrayed by the workmen of these nations, vegetation occurs only as an explanatory accessary; the reed is introduced to mark the course of the river, or the tree to mark the covert of the wild beast, or the ambush of the enemy, but there is no especial interest in the forms of the vegetation strong enough to induce them to make it a subject of separate and accurate study. Again, among the nations who followed the arts of design exclusively, the forms of foliage introduced were meagre and general, and their real intricacy and life were neither admired nor expressed. But to the Gothic workman the living foliage became a subject of intense affection, and he struggled to render all its characters with as much accuracy as was compatible with the laws of his design and the nature of his material, not unfrequently tempted in his enthusiasm to transgress the one and disguise the other.

§ LXIX. There is a peculiar significance in this, indicative both of higher civilization and gentler temperament, than had before been manifested in architecture. Rudeness and the love of change, which we have insisted upon as the first elements of Gothic, are also elements common to all healthy schools. But here is a softer element mingled with them, peculiar to the Gothic itself. The rudeness or ignorance which would have been painfully exposed in the treatment of the human form, are still not so great as to prevent the successful rendering of the wayside herbage; and the love of change, which becomes morbid and feverish in following the haste of the hunter, and the rage of the combatant, is at once soothed and satisfied as it watches the wandering of the tendril, and the budding of the flower. Nor is this all: the new direction of mental interest marks an infinite change in the means and the habits of life. The nations whose chief support was in the chase, whose chief interest was in the battle, whose chief pleasure was in the banquet, would take small care respecting the shapes of leaves and flowers; and notice little in the forms of the forest trees which sheltered them, except the signs indicative of the wood which would make the toughest lance, the closest roof, or the clearest fire. The affectionate observation of the grace and outward character of vegetation is the sure sign of a more tranquil and gentle existence, sustained by the gifts, and gladdened by the splendor, of the earth. It is that careful distinction of species, and richness of delicate and undisturbed organization, which characterize the Gothic design; there is the history of rural and thoughtful life, influenced by habitual tenderness, and devoted to subtle inquiry; and every discriminating and delicate touch of the chisel as it rounds the petal or guides the branch is a prophecy of the development of the entire body of the natural sciences, beginning with that of medicine, of the recovery of literature, and the establishment of the most necessary principles of domestic wisdom and national peace.

§ LXX. I have before alluded to the strange and vain supposition, that the original con-

1 The best art either represents the facts of its own day, or, if facts of the past, expresses them with accessories of the time in which the work was done. All good art, representing past events, is therefore full of the most frank anachronism, and always *ought* to be. No painter has any business to be an antiquarian. We do not want his impressions or suppositions respecting things that are past. We want his clear assertions respecting things present. (Ruskin's note.)

ception of Gothic architecture had been derived from vegetation, — from the symmetry of avenues, and the interlacing of branches. It is a supposition which never could have existed for a moment in the mind of any person acquainted with early Gothic; but, however idle as a theory, it is most valuable as a testimony to the character of the perfected style. It is precisely because the reverse of this theory is the fact, because the Gothic did not arise out of, but develope itself into, a resemblance to vegetation, that this resemblance is so instructive as an indication of the temper of the builders. It was no chance suggestion of the form of an arch from the bending of a bough, but a gradual and continual discovery of a beauty in natural forms which could be more and more perfectly transferred into those of stone, that influenced at once the heart of the people, and the form of the edifice. The Gothic architecture arose in massy and mountainous strength, axe-hewn, and iron-bound, block heaved upon block by the monk's enthusiasm and the soldier's force; and cramped and manchioned into such weight of grisly wall, as might bury the anchoret in darkness, and beat back the utmost storm of battle, suffering but by the same narrow crosslet the passing of the sunbeam, or of the arrow. Gradually, as that monkish enthusiasm became more thoughtful, and as the sound of war became more and more intermittent beyond the gates of the convent or the keep, the stony pillar grew slender and the vaulted roof grew light, till they had wreathed themselves into the semblance of the summer woods at their fairest, and of the dead field-flowers, long trodden down in blood, sweet monumental statues were set to bloom for ever, beneath the porch of the temple, or the canopy of the tomb.

§ LXXI. Nor is it only as a sign of greater gentleness or refinement of mind, but as a proof of the best possible direction of this refinement, that the tendency of the Gothic to the expression of vegetative life is to be admired. That sentence of Genesis, "I have given thee every green herb for meat," like all the rest of the book, has a profound symbolical as well as a literal meaning. It is not merely the nourishment of the body, but the food of the soul, that is intended. The green herb is, of all nature, that which is most essential to the healthy spiritual life of man. Most of us do not need fine scenery; the precipice and the mountain peak are not intended to be seen by all men. — perhaps their power is greatest over those who are unaccustomed to them. But trees, and fields, and flowers were made for all, and are necessary for all. God has connected the labor which is essential to the bodily sustenance, with the pleasures which are healthiest for the heart; and while He made the ground stubborn, He made its herbage fragrant, and its blossoms fair. The proudest architecture that man can build has no higher honor than to bear the image and recall the memory of that grass of the field which is, at once, the type and the support of his existence; the goodly building is then most glorious when it is sculptured into the likeness of the leaves of Paradise; and the great Gothic spirit, as we showed it to be noble in its disquietude, is also noble in its hold of nature; it is, indeed, like the dove of Noah, in that she found no rest upon the face of the waters, — but like her in this also, "LO, IN HER MOUTH WAS AN OLIVE BRANCH, PLUCKED OFF."

§ LXXII. The fourth essential element of the Gothic mind was above stated to be the sense of the GROTESQUE; but I shall defer the endeavor to define this most curious and subtle character until we have occasion to examine one of the divisions of the Renaissance schools, which was morbidly influenced by it (Vol. III, Chap. III). It is the less necessary to insist upon it here, because every reader familiar with Gothic architecture must understand what I mean, and will, I believe, have no hesitation in admitting that the tendency to delight in fantastic and ludicrous, as well as in sublime, images, is a universal instinct of the Gothic imagination.

§ LXXIII. The fifth element above named was RIGIDITY; and this character I must endeavor carefully to define, for neither the word I have used, nor any other that I can think of, will express it accurately. For I mean, not merely stable, but *active* rigidity; the peculiar energy which gives tension to movement, and stiffness to resistance, which makes the fiercest lightning forked rather than curved, and the stoutest oak-branch angular rather than bending, and is as much seen in the quivering of the lance as in the glittering of the icicle.

§ LXXIV. I have before had occasion (Vol. I, Chap. XIII, § VII) to note some manifestations of this energy or fixedness; but it must be still more attentively considered here, as it shows itself throughout the whole structure and decoration of Gothic work. Egyptian and Greek buildings stand, for the most part, by their own weight and mass

one stone passively incumbent on another: but in the Gothic vaults and traceries there is a stiffness analogous to that of the bones of a limb, or fibres of a tree; an elastic tension and communication of force from part to part, and also a studious expression of this throughout every visible line of the building. And, in like manner, the Greek and Egyptian ornament is either mere surface engraving, as if the face of the wall had been stamped with a seal, or its lines are flowing, lithe, and luxuriant; in either case, there is no expression of energy in the framework of the ornament itself. But the Gothic ornament stands out in prickly independence, and frosty fortitude, jutting into crockets, and freezing into pinnacles; here starting up into a monster, there germinating into a blossom; anon knitting itself into a branch, alternately thorny, bossy, and bristly, or writhed into every form of nervous entanglement; but, even when most graceful, never for an instant languid, always quickset; erring, if at all, ever on the side of brusquerie.

§ LXXV. The feelings or habits in the workman which give rise to this character in the work, are more complicated and various than those indicated by any other sculptural expression hitherto named. There is, first, the habit of hard and rapid working; the industry of the tribes of the North, quickened by the coldness of the climate, and giving an expression of sharp energy to all they do (as above noted, Vol. I, Chap. XIII, § VII), as opposed to the languor of the Southern tribes, however much of fire there may be in the heart of that languor, for lava itself may flow languidly. There is also the habit of finding enjoyment in the signs of cold, which is never found, I believe, in the inhabitants of countries south of the Alps. Cold is to them an unredeemed evil, to be suffered, and forgotten as soon as may be; but the long winter of the North forces the Goth (I mean the Englishman, Frenchman, Dane, or German), if he would lead a happy life at all, to find sources of happiness in foul weather as well as fair, and to rejoice in the leafless as well as in the shady forest. And this we do with all our hearts; finding perhaps nearly as much contentment by the Christmas fire as in the summer sunshine, and gaining health and strength on the ice-fields of winter, as well as among the meadows of spring. So that there is nothing adverse or painful to our feelings in the cramped and stiffened structure of vegetation checked by cold; and instead of seeking, like the Southern sculptor, to express only the softness of leafage nourished in a tenderness, and tempted into all luxuriance by warm winds and glowing rays, we find pleasure in dwelling upon the crabbed, perverse, and morose animation of plants that have known little kindness from earth or heaven, but, season after season, have had their best efforts palsied by frost, their brightest buds buried under snow, and their goodliest limbs lopped by tempest.

§ LXXVI. There are many subtle sympathies and affections which join to confirm the Gothic mind in this peculiar choice of subject; and when we add to the influence of these, the necessities consequent upon the employment of a rougher material, compelling the workman to seek for vigor of effect rather than refinement of texture or accuracy of form, we have direct and manifest causes for much of the difference between the Northern and Southern cast of conception; but there are indirect causes holding a far more important place in the Gothic heart, though less immediate in their influence on design. Strength of will, independence of character, resoluteness of purpose, impatience of undue control, and that general tendency to set the individual reason against authority, and the individual deed against destiny, which, in the Northern tribes, has opposed itself throughout all ages to the languid submission, in the Southern, of thought to tradition, and purpose to fatality, are all more or less traceable in the rigid lines, vigorous and various masses, and daringly projecting and independent structure of the Northern Gothic ornament: while the opposite feelings are in like manner legible in the graceful and softly guided waves and wreathed bands, in which Southern decoration is constantly disposed; in its tendency to lose its independence, and fuse itself into the surface of the masses upon which it is traced; and in the expression seen so often in the arrangement of those masses themselves, of an abandonment of their strength to an inevitable necessity, or a listless repose.

§ LXXVII. There is virtue in the measure and error in the excess, of both these characters of mind, and in both of the styles which they have created; the best architecture, and the best temper, are those which unite them both; and this fifth impulse of the Gothic heart is therefore that which needs most caution in its indulgence. It is more definitely Gothic than any other, but the best Gothic building is not that which is *most* Gothic: it can hardly be too frank in its con-

'ession of rudeness, hardly too rich in its changefulness, hardly too faithful in its naturalism; but it may go too far in its rigidity, and, like the great Puritan spirit in its extreme, lose itself either in frivolity of division, or perversity of purpose.[1] It actually did so in its later times; but it is gladdening to remember that in its utmost nobleness, the very temper which has been thought most adverse to it, the Protestant spirit of self-dependence and inquiry, was expressed in its every line. Faith and aspiration there were, in every Christian ecclesiastical building, from the first century to the fifteenth; but the moral habits to which England in this age owes the kind of greatness that she has, — the habits of philosophical investigation, of accurate thought, of domestic seclusion and independence, of stern self-reliance, and sincere upright searching into religious truth, — were only traceable in the features which were the distinctive creation of the Gothic schools, in the veined foliage, and thorny fretwork, and shadowy niche, and buttressed pier, and fearless height of subtle pinnacle and crested tower, sent like an "unperplexed question up to Heaven." [2]

§ LXXVIII. Last, because the least essential, of the constituent elements of this noble school, was placed that of REDUNDANCE, — the uncalculating bestowal of the wealth of its labor. There is, indeed, much Gothic, and that of the best period, in which this element is hardly traceable, and which depends for its effect almost exclusively on loveliness of simple design and grace of unwolved proportion: still, in the most characteristic buildings, a certain portion of their effect depends upon accumulation of ornament; and many of those which have most influence on the minds of men, have attained it by means of this attribute alone. And although, by careful study of the school, it is possible to arrive at a condition of taste which shall be better contented by a few perfect lines than by a whole façade covered with fretwork, the building which only satisfies such a taste is not to be considered the best. For the very first requirement of Gothic architecture being, as we saw above, that it shall both admit the aid, and appeal to the admiration, of the rudest as well as the most refined minds, the richness of the work is, paradoxical as the statement may appear, a part of its humility. No architecture is so haughty as that which is simple; which refuses to address the eye, except in a few clear and forceful lines; which implies, in offering so little to our regards, that all it has offered is perfect; and disdains, either by the complexity or the attractiveness of its features, to embarrass our investigation, or betray us into delight. That humility, which is the very life of the Gothic school, is shown not only in the imperfection, but in the accumulation, of ornament. The inferior rank of the workman is often shown as much in the richness, as the roughness, of his work; and if the co-operation of every hand, and the sympathy of every heart, are to be received, we must be content to allow the redundance which disguises the failure of the feeble, and wins the regard of the inattentive. There are, however, far nobler interests mingling, in the Gothic heart, with the rude love of decorative accumulation: a magnificent enthusiasm, which feels as if it never could do enough to reach the fulness of its ideal; an unselfishness of sacrifice, which would rather cast fruitless labor before the altar than stand idle in the market; and, finally, a profound sympathy with the fulness and wealth of the material universe, rising out of that Naturalism whose operation we have already endeavored to define. The sculptor who sought for his models among the forest leaves, could not but quickly and deeply feel that complexity need not involve the loss of grace, nor richness that of repose; and every hour which he spent in the study of the minute and various work of Nature, made him feel more forcibly the barrenness of what was best in that of man: nor is it to be wondered at, that, seeing her perfect and exquisite creations poured forth in a profusion which conception could not grasp nor calculation sum, he should think that it ill became him to be niggardly of his own rude craftsmanship; and where he saw throughout the universe a faultless beauty lavished on measureless spaces of broidered field and blooming mountain, to grudge his poor and imperfect labor to the few stones that he had raised one upon another, for habitation or memorial. The years of his life passed away before his task was accomplished; but generation succeeded genera-

1 See the account of the meeting at Talla Linns, in 1582, given in the fourth chapter of the *Heart of Midlothian*. At length they arrived at the conclusion that they who owned (or allowed) such names as Monday, Tuesday, January, February, and so forth, served themselves heirs to the same if not greater punishment than had been denounced against the idolaters of old." (Ruskin's note.)

2 See the beautiful description of Florence in Elizabeth Browning's *Casa Guidi Windows*, which is not only a noble poem, but the only book I have seen which, favorable to the Liberal cause in Italy, gives a just account of the incapacities of the modern Italian. (Ruskin's note.)

tion with unwearied enthusiasm, and the cathedral front was at last lost in the tapestry of its traceries, like a rock among the thickets and herbage of spring.[1]

## UNTO THIS LAST

### 1860

In 1860 Ruskin began a series of papers on political economy in the *Cornhill Magazine* then edited by W. M. Thackeray, which were republished in *Harper's Magazine*. He undertook to combat the views of the orthodox economists, such as John Stuart Mill, in regard to the law of supply and demand, wages, capital, and especially the nature of wealth, the measure of which Ruskin insisted was to be real and intrinsic value, and not merely value in exchange. He later included in his protest the taking of rent and interest. The series ceased after four numbers in consequence of the outcry from readers of the magazine. The articles appeared in book form in 1862. *Unto This Last* is the development into political economy of the social views which began to take form in the chapter on "The Nature of Gothic." Ruskin wrote of these essays in his preface: "I believe them to be the best, that is to say, the truest, rightest-worded, and most serviceable things I have ever written." . . .

### Essay I

#### THE ROOTS OF HONOR

1. Among the delusions which at different periods have possessed themselves of the minds of large masses of the human race, perhaps the most curious — certainly the least creditable — is the modern *soi-disant* science of political economy, based on the idea that an advantageous code of social action may be determined irrespectively of the influence of social affection.

Of course, as in the instances of alchemy, astrology, witchcraft, and other such popular creeds, political economy has a plausible idea at the root of it. "The social affections," says the economist, "are accidental and disturbing elements in human nature; but avarice and the desire of progress are constant elements. Let us eliminate the inconstants, and, considering the human being merely as a covetous machine, examine by what laws of labor, purchase, and sale, the greatest accumulative result in wealth is attainable. Those laws once determined, it will be for each individual afterwards to introduce as much of the disturbing affect ate element as he chooses, and to detern for himself the result on the new conditi supposed."

II. This would be a perfectly logical successful method of analysis, if the a dentals afterwards to be introduced were the same nature as the powers first examin Supposing a body in motion to be influen by constant and inconstant forces, it is u ally the simplest way of examining its co to trace it first under the persistent cor tions, and afterwards introduce the cause variation. But the disturbing elements the social problem are not of the same nat as the constant ones; they alter the essenc the creature under examination the mom they are added; they operate, not mat matically, but chemically, introducing con tions which render all our previous kn ledge unavailable. We made learned exp ments upon pure nitrogen, and have c vinced ourselves that it is a very manage gas: but behold! the thing which we h practically to deal with is its chloride; a this, the moment we touch it on our est lished principles, sends us and our appara through the ceiling.

III. Observe, I neither impugn nor dou the conclusions of the science, if its terms accepted. I am simply uninterested in the as I should be in those of a science of gy nastics which assumed that men had skeletons. It might be shown, on that s position, that it would be advantageous roll the students up into pellets, flatten th into cakes, or stretch them into cables; a that when these results were effected, the insertion of the skeleton would be attend with various inconveniences to their consti tion. The reasoning might be admirable, conclusions true, and the science deficie only in applicability. Modern political e nomy stands on a precisely similar ba Assuming, not that the human being has skeleton, but that it is all skeleton, it four an ossifiant theory of progress on this ne tion of a soul; and having shown the utm that may be made of bones, and construct a number of interesting geometrical figu with death's-heads and humeri, successfu proves the inconvenience of the reappearan of a soul among these corpuscular structur I do not deny the truth of this theory: simply deny its applicability to the pres phase of the world.

IV. This inapplicability has been curious

[1] The remainder of the chapter is devoted to a discussion of the outward forms in which the moral or imaginative elements which composed the inner spirit of Gothic architecture are exhibited.

manifested during the embarrassment caused by the late strikes of our workmen.[1] Here occurs one of the simplest cases, in a pertinent and positive form, of the first vital problem which political economy has to deal with (the relation between employer and employed); and at a severe crisis, when lives in multitudes, and wealth in masses, are at stake, the political economists are helpless — practically mute; no demonstrable solution of the difficulty can be given by them, such as may convince or calm the opposing parties. Obstinately the masters take one view of the matter; obstinately the operatives another; and no political science can set them at one.

v. It would be strange if it could, it being not by "science" of any kind that men were ever intended to be set at one. Disputant after disputant vainly strives to show that the interests of the masters are, or are not, antagonistic to those of the men: none of the pleaders ever seeming to remember that it does not absolutely or always follow that the persons must be antagonistic because their interests are. If there is only a crust of bread in the house, and mother and children are starving, their interests are not the same. If the mother eats it, the children want it; if the children eat it, the mother must go hungry to her work. Yet it does not necessarily follow that there will be "antagonism" between them, that they will fight for the crust, and that the mother, being strongest, will get it, and eat it. Neither, in any other case, whatever the relations of the persons may be, can it be assumed for certain that, because their interests are diverse, they must necessarily regard each other with hostility, and use violence or cunning to obtain the advantage.

VI. Even if this were so, and it were as just as it is convenient to consider men as actuated by no other moral influences than those which affect rats or swine, the logical conditions of the question are still indeterminable. It can never be shown generally either that the interests of master and laborer are alike, or that they are opposed; for, according to circumstances, they may be either. It is, indeed, always the interest of both that the work should be rightly done, and a just price obtained for it; but, in the division of profits, the gain of the one may or may not be the loss of the other. It is not the master's interest to pay wages so low as to leave the men sickly and depressed, nor the workman's interest to be paid high wages if the smallness of the master's profit hinders him from enlarging his business, or conducting it in a safe and liberal way. A stoker ought not to desire high pay if the company is too poor to keep the engine-wheels in repair.

VII. And the varieties of circumstance which influence these reciprocal interests are so endless, that all endeavor to deduce rules of action from balance of expediency is in vain. And it is meant to be in vain. For no human actions ever were intended by the Maker of men to be guided by balances of expediency, but by balances of justice. He has therefore rendered all endeavors to determine expediency futile for evermore. No man ever knew, or can know, what will be the ultimate result to himself, or to others, of any given line of conduct. But every man may know, and most of us do know, what is a just and unjust act. And all of us may know also, that the consequences of justice will be ultimately the best possible, both to others and ourselves, though we can neither say what *is* best, nor how it is likely to come to pass.

I have said balances of justice, meaning, in the term justice, to include affection, — such affection as one man *owes* to another. All right relations between master and operative, and all their best interests, ultimately depend on these.

VIII. We shall find the best and simplest illustration of the relations of master and operative in the position of domestic servants.

We will suppose that the master of a household desires only to get as much work out of his servants as he can, at the rate of wages he gives. He never allows them to be idle; feeds them as poorly and lodges them as ill as they will endure, and in all things pushes his requirements to the exact point beyond which he cannot go without forcing the servant to leave him. In doing this, there is no violation on his part of what is commonly called "justice." He agrees with the domestic for his whole time and service, and takes them; — the limits of hardship in treatment being fixed by the practice of other masters in his neighborhood; that is to say, by the current rate of wages for domestic labor. If the servant can get a better place, he is free to take one, and the master can only tell what is the real market value of his labor, by requiring as much as he will give.

This is the politico-economical view of the case, according to the doctors of that science; who assert that by this procedure the great-

[1] The reference is to the builders' strike in the autumn of 1859.

est average of work will be obtained from the servant, and therefore, the greatest benefit to the community, and through the community, by reversion, to the servant himself.

That, however, is not so. It would be so if the servant were an engine of which the motive power was steam, magnetism, gravitation, or any other agent of calculable force. But he being, on the contrary, an engine whose motive power is a Soul, the force of this very peculiar agent, as an unknown quantity, enters into all the political economist's equations, without his knowledge, and falsifies every one of their results. The largest quantity of work will not be done by this curious engine for pay, or under pressure, or by help of any kind of fuel which may be supplied by the chaldron. It will be done only when the motive force, that is to say, the will or spirit of the creature, is brought to its greatest strength by its own proper fuel; namely, by the affections.

IX. It may indeed happen, and does happen often, that if the master is a man of sense and energy, a large quantity of material work may be done under mechanical pressure, enforced by strong will and guided by wise method; also it may happen, and does happen often, that if the master is indolent and weak (however good-natured), a very small quantity of work, and that bad, may be produced by the servant's undirected strength, and contemptuous gratitude. But the universal law of the matter is that, assuming any given quantity of energy and sense in master and servant, the greatest material result obtainable by them will be, not through antagonism to each other, but through affection for each other; and that if the master, instead of endeavoring to get as much work as possible from the servant, seeks rather to render his appointed and necessary work beneficial to him, and to forward his interests in all just and wholesome ways, the real amount of work ultimately done, or of good rendered, by the person so cared for, will indeed be the greatest possible.

Observe, I say, "of good rendered," for a servant's work is not necessarily or always the best thing he can give his master. But good of all kinds, whether in material service, in protective watchfulness of his master's interest and credit, or in joyful readiness to seize unexpected and irregular occasions of help.

Nor is this one whit less generally true because indulgence will be frequently abused, and kindness met with ingratitude. For th servant who, gently treated, is ungratefu treated ungently, will be revengeful; and th man who is dishonest to a liberal master wi be injurious to an unjust one.

X. In any case, and with any person, th unselfish treatment will produce the mos effective return. Observe, I am here cor sidering the affections wholly as a motiv power; not at all as things in themselves de sirable or noble, or in any other way ab stractedly good. I look at them simply a an anomalous force, rendering every one c the ordinary political economist's calcula tions nugatory; while, even if he desired t introduce this new element into his estimate he has no power of dealing with it; for th affections only become a true motive powe when they ignore every other motive an condition of political economy. Treat th servant kindly, with the idea of turning h gratitude to account, and you will get, a you deserve, no gratitude, nor any value fo your kindness; but treat him kindly withou any economical purpose, and all economica purposes will be answered; in this, as in a other matters, whosoever will save his lif shall lose it, whoso loses it shall find it.[1]

XI. The next clearest and simplest examp of relation between master and operative that which exists between the commander c a regiment and his men.

Supposing the officer only desires to appl the rules of discipline so as, with least troub to himself, to make the regiment most effe

1 The difference between the two modes of treatmer and between their effective material results, may be se very accurately by a comparison of the relations of Esth and Charlie in *Bleak House*, with those of Miss Brass a the Marchioness in *Master Humphrey's Clock*.

The essential value and truth of Dickens's writings ha been unwisely lost sight of by many thoughtful perso merely because he presents his truth with some co of caricature. Unwisely, because Dickens's caricatu though often gross, is never mistaken. Allowing f his manner of telling them, the things he tells us a always true. I wish that he could think it right to lin his brilliant exaggeration to works written only for pub amusement; and when he takes up a subject of high r tional importance, such as that which he handled *Hard Times*, that he would use severer and more acc rate analysis. The usefulness of that work (to r mind, in several respects, the greatest he has written) with many persons seriously diminished because M Bounderby is a dramatic monster, instead of a charact istic example of a worldly master; and Stephen Blackp a dramatic perfection, instead of a characteristic exam of an honest workman. But let us not lose the use Dickens's wit and insight, because he chooses to spe in a circle of stage fire. He is entirely right in his ma drift and purpose in every book he has written; and of them, but especially *Hard Times*, should be studi with close and earnest care by persons interested in soci questions. They will find much that is partial, and, b cause partial, apparently unjust; but if they examine the evidence on the other side, which Dickens seems overlook, it will appear, after all their trouble, that h view was the finally right one, grossly and sharply to (Ruskin's note.)

tive, he will not be able, by any rules, or administration of rules, on this selfish principle, to develop the full strength of his subordinates. If a man of sense and firmness, he may, as in the former instance, produce a better result than would be obtained by the irregular kindness of a weak officer; but let the sense and firmness be the same in both cases, and assuredly the officer who has the most direct personal relations with his men, the most care for their interests, and the most value for their lives, will develop their effective strength, through their affection for his own person, and trust in his character, to a degree wholly unattainable by other means. The law applies still more stringently as the numbers concerned are larger; a charge may often be successful, though the men dislike their officers; a battle has rarely been won, unless they loved their general.

XII. Passing from these simple examples to the more complicated relations existing between a manufacturer and his workmen, we are met first by certain curious difficulties, resulting, apparently, from a harder and colder state of moral elements. It is easy to imagine an enthusiastic affection existing among soldiers for the colonel. Not so easy to imagine an enthusiastic affection among cotton-spinners for the proprietor of the mill. A body of men associated for purposes of robbery (as a Highland clan in ancient times) shall be animated by perfect affection, and every member of it be ready to lay down his life for the life of his chief. But a band of men associated for purposes of legal production and accumulation is usually animated, it appears, by no such emotions, and none of them are in anywise willing to give his life for the life of his chief. Not only are we met by this apparent anomaly, in moral matters, but by others connected with it, in administration of system. For a servant or a soldier is engaged at a definite rate of wages, for a definite period; but a workman at a rate of wages variable according to the demand for labor, and with the risk of being at any time thrown out of his situation by chances of trade. Now, as, under these contingencies, no action of the affections can take place, but only an explosive action of *dis*affections, two points offer themselves for consideration in the matter.

The first — How far the rate of wages may be so regulated as not to vary with the demand for labor.

The second — How far it is possible that bodies of workmen may be engaged and maintained at such fixed rate of wages (whatever the state of trade may be), without enlarging or diminishing their number, so as to give them permanent interest in the establishment with which they are connected, like that of the domestic servants in an old family, or an *esprit de corps*, like that of the soldiers in a crack regiment.

XIII. The first question is, I say, how far it may be possible to fix the rate of wages irrespectively of the demand for labor.

Perhaps one of the most curious facts in the history of human error is the denial by the common political economist of the possibility of thus regulating wages; while, for all the important, and much of the unimportant, labor on the earth, wages are already so regulated.

We do not sell our prime-ministership by Dutch auction; nor, on the decease of a bishop, whatever may be the general advantages of simony, do we (yet) offer his diocese to the clergyman who will take the episcopacy at the lowest contract. We (with exquisite sagacity of political economy!) do indeed sell commissions, but not openly, generalships: sick, we do not inquire for a physician who takes less than a guinea; litigious, we never think of reducing six-and-eightpence to four-and-sixpence; caught in a shower, we do not canvass the cabmen, to find one who values his driving at less than sixpence a mile.

It is true that in all these cases there is, and in every conceivable case there must be, ultimate reference to the presumed difficulty of the work, or number of candidates for the office. If it were thought that the labor necessary to make a good physician would be gone through by a sufficient number of students with the prospect of only half-guinea fees, public consent would soon withdraw the unnecessary half-guinea. In this ultimate sense, the price of labor is indeed always regulated by the demand for it; but so far as the practical and immediate administration of the matter is regarded, the best labor always has been, and is, as *all* labor ought to be, paid by an invariable standard.

XIV. "What!" the reader perhaps answers amazedly: "pay good and bad workmen alike?"

Certainly. The difference between one prelate's sermons and his successor's, — or between one physician's opinion and another's, — is far greater, as respects the

qualities of mind involved, and far more important in result to you personally, than the difference between good and bad laying of bricks (though that is greater than most people suppose). Yet you pay with equal fee, contentedly, the good and bad workmen upon your soul, and the good and bad workmen upon your body; much more may you pay, contentedly, with equal fees, the good and bad workmen upon your house.

"Nay, but I choose my physician and (?) my clergyman, thus indicating my sense of the quality of their work." By all means, also, choose your bricklayer; that is the proper reward of the good workman, to be "chosen." The natural and right system respecting all labor is, that it should be paid at a fixed rate, but the good workman employed, and the bad workman unemployed. The false, unnatural, and destructive system is when the bad workman is allowed to offer his work at half-price, and either take the place of the good, or force him by his competition to work for an inadequate sum.

XV. This equality of wages, then, being the first object towards which we have to discover the directest available road; the second is, as above stated, that of maintaining constant numbers of workmen in employment, whatever may be the accidental demand for the article they produce.

I believe the sudden and extensive inequalities of demand which necessarily arise in the mercantile operations of an active nation, constitute the only essential difficulty which has to be overcome in a just organization of labor. The subject opens into too many branches to admit of being investigated in a paper of this kind; but the following general facts bearing on it may be noted.

The wages which enable any workman to live are necessarily higher, if his work is liable to intermission, than if it is assured and continuous; and however severe the struggle for work may become, the general law will always hold, that men must get more daily pay if, on the average, they can only calculate on work three days a week, than they would require if they were sure of work six days a week. Supposing that a man cannot live on less than a shilling a day, his seven shillings he must get, either for three days' violent work, or six days' deliberate work. The tendency of all modern mercantile operations is to throw both wages and trade into the form of a lottery, and to make the workman's pay depend on intermittent exertion, and the principal's profit on dexterously us chance.

XVI. In what partial degree, I repeat, th may be necessary, in consequence of t activities of modern trade, I do not he investigate; contenting myself with the fac that in its fatallest aspects it is assuredly u necessary, and results merely from love gambling on the part of the masters, an from ignorance and sensuality in the me The masters cannot bear to let any oppo tunity of gain escape them, and frantical rush at every gap and breach in the walls Fortune, raging to be rich, and affrontin with impatient covetousness, every risk ruin; while the men prefer three days violent labor, and three days of drunkenne to six days of moderate work and wise re There is no way in which a principal, wh really desires to help his workmen, may d it more effectually than by checking thes disorderly habits both in himself and them keeping his own business operations on scale which will enable him to pursue the securely, not yielding to temptations of pr carious gain; and, at the same time, leadin his workmen into regular habits of labor an life, either by inducing them rather to tak low wages in the form of a fixed salary, tha high wages, subject to the chance of thei being thrown out of work; or, if this be im possible, by discouraging the system o violent exertion for nominally high da wages, and leading the men to take lower pa for more regular labor.

In effecting any radical changes of thi kind, doubtless there would be great incon venience and loss incurred by all the origi nators of movement. That which can b done with perfect convenience and withou loss, is not always the thing that most need to be done, or which we are most impera tively required to do.

XVII. I have already alluded to the differ ence hitherto existing between regiments o men associated for purposes of violence, an for purposes of manufacture; in that th former appear capable of self-sacrifice — th latter, not; which singular fact is the rea reason of the general lowness of estimate i which the profession of commerce is held, a compared with that of arms. Philosophi cally, it does not, at first sight, appear reasonable (many writers have endeavored t prove it unreasonable) that a peaceable and rational person, whose trade is buying and selling, should be held in less honor than a unpeaceable and often irrational person

whose trade is slaying. Nevertheless, the consent of mankind has always, in spite of the philosophers, given precedence to the soldier. And this is right.

For the soldier's trade, verily and essentially, is not slaying, but being slain. This, without well knowing its own meaning, the world honors it for. A bravo's trade is slaying; but the world has never respected bravos more than merchants: the reason it honors the soldier is, because he holds his life at the service of the State. Reckless he may be — fond of pleasure or of adventure — all kinds of bye-motives and mean impulses may have determined the choice of his profession, and may affect (to all appearance exclusively) his daily conduct in it; but our estimate of him is based on this ultimate fact — of which we are well assured — that, put him in a fortress breach, with all the pleasures of the world behind him, and only death and his duty in front of him, he will keep his face to the front; and he knows that this choice may be put to him at any moment, and has beforehand taken his part — virtually takes such part continually — does, in reality, die daily.

XVIII. Not less is the respect we pay to the lawyer and physician, founded ultimately on their self-sacrifice. Whatever the learning or acuteness of a great lawyer, our chief respect for him depends on our belief that, set in a judge's seat, he will strive to judge justly, come of it what may. Could we suppose that he would take bribes, and use his acuteness and legal knowledge to give plausibility to iniquitous decisions, no degree of intellect would win for him our respect. Nothing will win it, short of our tacit conviction, that in all important acts of his life justice is first with him; his own interest, second.

In the case of a physician, the ground of the honor we render him is clearer still. Whatever his science, we should shrink from him in horror if we found him regard his patients merely as subjects to experiment upon; much more, if we found that, receiving bribes from persons interested in their deaths, he was using his best skill to give poison in the mask of medicine.

Finally, the principle holds with utmost clearness as it respects clergymen. No goodness of disposition will excuse want of science in a physician or of shrewdness in an advocate; but a clergyman, even though his power of intellect be small, is respected on the presumed ground of his unselfishness and serviceableness.

XIX. Now there can be no question but that the tact, foresight, decision, and other mental powers, required for the successful management of a large mercantile concern, if not such as could be compared with those of a great lawyer, general, or divine, would at least match the general conditions of mind required in the subordinate officers of a ship, or of a regiment, or in the curate of a country parish. If, therefore, all the efficient members of the so-called liberal professions are still, somehow, in public estimate of honor, preferred before the head of a commercial firm, the reason must lie deeper than in the measurement of their several powers of mind.

And the essential reason for such preference will be found to lie in the fact that the merchant is presumed to act always selfishly. His work may be very necessary to the community; but the motive of it is understood to be wholly personal. The merchant's first object in all his dealings must be (the public believe) to get as much for himself, and leave as little to his neighbor (or customer) as possible. Enforcing this upon him, by political statute, as the necessary principle of his action; recommending it to him on all occasions, and themselves reciprocally adopting it; proclaiming vociferously, for law of the universe, that a buyer's function is to cheapen, and a seller's to cheat, — the public, nevertheless, involuntarily condemn the man of commerce for his compliance with their own statement, and stamp him for ever as belonging to an inferior grade of human personality.

XX. This they will find, eventually, they must give up doing. They must not cease to condemn selfishness; but they will have to discover a kind of commerce which is not exclusively selfish. Or, rather, they will have to discover that there never was, or can be, any other kind of commerce; that this which they have called commerce was not commerce at all, but cozening; and that a true merchant differs as much from a merchant according to laws of modern political economy, as the hero of the *Excursion* from Autolycus. They will find that commerce is an occupation which gentlemen will every day see more need to engage in, rather than in the businesses of talking to men, or slaying them: that, in true commerce, as in true preaching, or true fighting, it is necessary to admit the idea of occasional voluntary loss; — that sixpences have to be lost, as well as lives, under a sense of duty; that the market may have its martyrdoms as well as the

pulpit; and trade its heroisms, as well as war.

May have — in the final issue, must have — and only has not had yet, because men of heroic temper have always been misguided in their youth into other fields, not recognizing what is in our days, perhaps, the most important of all fields; so that, while many a zealous person loses his life in trying to teach the form of a gospel, very few will lose a hundred pounds in showing the practice of one.

XXI. The fact is, that people never have had clearly explained to them the true functions of a merchant with respect to other people. I should like the reader to be very clear about this.

Five great intellectual professions, relating to daily necessities of life, have hitherto existed — three exist necessarily, in every civilized nation:

The Soldier's profession is to *defend* it.

The Pastor's to *teach* it.

The Physician's, to *keep it in health.*

The Lawyer's, to *enforce justice* in it.

The Merchant's, to *provide* for it.

And the duty of all these men is, on due occasion, to *die* for it.

"On due occasion," namely:

The Soldier, rather than leave his post in battle.

The Physician, rather than leave his post in plague.

The Pastor, rather than teach Falsehood.

The Lawyer, rather than countenance Injustice.

The Merchant — What is *his* "due occasion" of death?

XXII. It is the main question for the merchant, as for all of us. For, truly, the man who does not know when to die, does not know how to live.

Observe, the merchant's function (or manufacturer's, for in the broad sense in which it is here used the word must be understood to include both) is to provide for the nation. It is no more his function to get profit for himself out of that provision than it is a clergyman's function to get his stipend. The stipend is a due and necessary adjunct, but not the object, of his life, if he be a true clergyman, any more than his fee (or *honorarium*) is the object of life to a true physician. Neither is his fee the object of life to a true merchant. All three, if true men, have a work to be done irrespective of fee — to be done even at any cost, or for quite the contrary of fee; the pastor's function being to teach, the physician's to heal, and the merchant's, as I have said, to provide. That is to say, he has to understand to their very root the qualities of the thing he deals in, and the means of obtaining or producing it; and he has to apply all his sagacity and energy to the producing or obtaining it in perfect state, and distributing it at the cheapest possible price where it is most needed.

And because the production or obtaining of any commodity involves necessarily the agency of many lives and hands, the merchant becomes in the course of his business the master and governor of large masses of men in a more direct, though less confessed way, than a military officer or pastor; so that on him falls, in great part, the responsibility for the kind of life they lead: and it becomes his duty, not only to be always considering how to produce what he sells in the purest and cheapest forms, but how to make the various employments involved in the production, or transference of it, most beneficial to the men employed.

XXIII. And as into these two functions, requiring for their right exercise the highest intelligence, as well as patience, kindness, and tact, the merchant is bound to put all his energy, so for their just discharge he is bound as soldier or physician is bound, to give up if need be, his life, in such way as it may be demanded of him. Two main points he has in his providing function to maintain: first his engagements (faithfulness to engagements being the real root of all possibilities in commerce); and, secondly, the perfectness and purity of the thing provided; so that rather than fail in any engagement, or consent to any deterioration, adulteration, or unjust and exorbitant price of that which he provides, he is bound to meet fearlessly any form of distress, poverty, or labor, which may, through maintenance of these points, come upon him.

XXIV. Again: in his office as governor of the men employed by him, the merchant or manufacturer is invested with a distinctly paternal authority and responsibility. In most cases, a youth entering a commercial establishment is withdrawn altogether from home influence; his master must become his father, else he has, for practical and constant help, no father at hand: in all cases the master's authority, together with the general tone and atmosphere of his business, and the character of the men with whom the youth is compelled in the course of it to associate, have more immediate and pressing weight than the home influence, and will usually

neutralize it either for good or evil; so that the only means which the master has of doing justice to the men employed by him is to ask himself sternly whether he is dealing with such subordinate as he would with his own son, if compelled by circumstances to take such a position.

Supposing the captain of a frigate saw it right, or were by any chance obliged, to place his own son in the position of a common sailor; as he would then treat his son, he is bound always to treat every one of the men under him. So, also, supposing the master of a manufactory saw it right, or were by any chance obliged, to place his own son in the position of an ordinary workman; as he would then treat his son, he is bound always to treat every one of his men. This is the only effective, true, or practical RULE which can be given on this point of political economy.

And as the captain of a ship is bound to be the last man to leave his ship in case of wreck, and to share his last crust with the sailors in case of famine, so the manufacturer, in any commercial crisis or distress, is bound to take the suffering of it with his men, and even to take more of it for himself than he allows his men to feel; as a father would in a famine, shipwreck, or battle, sacrifice himself for his son.

XXV. All which sounds very strange: the only real strangeness in the matter being, nevertheless, that it should so sound. For all this is true, and that not partially nor theoretically, but everlastingly and practically: all other doctrine than this respecting matters political being false in premises, absurd in deduction, and impossible in practice, consistently with any progressive state of national life; all the life which we now possess as a nation showing itself in the resolute denial and scorn, by a few strong minds and faithful hearts, of the economic principles taught to our multitudes, which principles, so far as accepted, lead straight to national destruction. Respecting the modes and forms of destruction to which they lead, and, on the other hand, respecting the further practical working of true polity, I hope to reason further in a following paper.

## FORS CLAVIGERA

### 1871

In 1871 Ruskin began a series of letters under his title which he explains as Fors, that is, fate, Force, or Fortune bearing the Clavis, that is, a club, a key, or a nail, which stand for power, patience, law. In Letter V he expounds his plan for a working Utopia within the realm of Queen Victoria, the Guild of Saint George. This may be regarded as an effort to put into practice the teaching of Carlyle in regard to work, sacrifice, and obedience. The *Fors Clavigera* papers continued to appear at intervals to the number of ninety-six. They contain careful accounts of the expenses of the Guild, which Ruskin met in large part out of his own fortune. They are the most characteristic expression of Ruskin's views on a wide range of subjects, all of them in harmony with the principle of the real and intrinsic as opposed to a scale of relative and conventional values.

### LETTER 5

"For lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone,
The flowers appear on the earth,
The time of singing of birds is come.
Arise, O my fair one, my dove,
And come." [1]

DENMARK HILL, 1st May, 1871

MY FRIENDS:

I. It has been asked of me, very justly, why I have hitherto written to you of things you were likely little to care for, in words which it was difficult for you to understand.

I have no fear but that you will one day understand all my poor words, — the saddest of them, perhaps, too well. But I have great fear that you may never come to understand these written above, which are a part of a king's love-song, in one sweet May, of many long since gone.

I fear that for you the wild winter's rain may never pass, — the flowers never appear on the earth; — that for you no bird may ever sing; — for you no perfect Love arise and fulfil your life in peace.

"And why not for us as for others?" Will you answer me so and take my fear for you as an insult?

Nay, it is no insult; — nor am I happier than you. For me the birds do not sing, nor ever will. But they would for you, if you cared to have it so. When I told you that you would never understand that love-song, I meant only that you would not desire to understand it.

II. Are you again indignant with me? Do you think, though you should labor, and grieve, and be trodden down in dishonor all your days, at least you can keep that one joy of Love, and that one honor of Home? Had you, indeed, kept that, you had kept all. But no men yet, in the history of the race, have lost it so piteously. In many a country,

1 Song of Solomon, II, 11–13.

and many an age, women have been compelled to labor for their husbands' wealth, or bread; but never until now were they so homeless as to say, like the poor Samaritan, "I have no husband." Women of every country and people have sustained without complaint the labor of fellowship: for the women of the latter days in England it has been reserved to claim the privilege of isolation.

This, then, is the end of your universal education and civilization, and contempt of the ignorance of the Middle Ages and of their chivalry. Not only do you declare yourselves too indolent to labor for daughters and wives, and too poor to support them; but you have made the neglected and distracted creatures hold it for an honor to be independent of you, and shriek for some hold of the mattock for themselves. Believe it or not, as you may, there has not been so low a level of thought reached by any race since they grew to be male and female out of starfish, or chickweed, or whatever else they have been made from by natural selection, — according to modern science.

III. That modern science, also, economic and of other kinds, has reached its climax at last. For it seems to be the appointed function of the nineteenth century to exhibit in all things the elect pattern of perfect Folly, for a warning to the farthest future. Thus the statement of principle which I quoted to you in my last letter, from the circular of the Emigration Society, that it is over-production which is the cause of distress, is accurately the most foolish thing, not only hitherto ever said by men, but which it is possible for men ever to say, respecting their own business. It is a kind of opposite pole (or negative acme of mortal stupidity) to Newton's discovery of gravitation as an acme of mortal wisdom: — as no wise being on earth will ever be able to make such another wise discovery, so no foolish being on earth will ever be capable of saying such another foolish thing, through all the ages.

IV. And the same crisis has been exactly reached by our natural science and by our art. It has several times chanced to me, since I began these papers, to have the exact thing shown or brought to me that I wanted for illustration, just in time [1]; — and it happened that, on the very day on which I published my last letter, I had to go to the Kensington Museum, and there I saw the most perfectly and roundly ill-done thing which as yet in my whole life I ever saw produced by art. It had a tablet on front of it bearing this inscription:

> Statue in black and white marble, a Newfoundland Dog standing on a Serpent, which rests on a marble cushion, the pedestal ornamented with *pietra dura* fruits. — *English Present Century.* No. I.

It was so very right for me, the Kensington people having been good enough to number it "I," the thing itself being almost incredible in its one-ness; and, indeed, such a punctuate accent over the iota of Miscreation, — so absolutely and exquisitely miscreant, that I am not myself capable of conceiving Number two, or three, or any rivalship or association with it whatsoever. The extremity of its unvirtue consisted, observed mainly in the quantity of instruction which was abused in it. It showed that the person who produced it had seen everything, and practiced everything; and misunderstood everything they saw, and misapplied every thing they did. They had seen Roman work, and Florentine work, and Byzantine work, and Gothic work; and misunderstanding of everything had passed through them as the mud does through earthworms, and here at last was their worm-cast of a Production.

V. But the second chance that came to me that day was more significant still. From the Kensington Museum I went to an afternoon tea, at a house where I was sure to meet some nice people. And among the first I met was an old friend who had been hearing some lectures on botany at the Kensington Museum, and been delighted by them. She is the kind of person who gets good out of everything, and she was quite right in being delighted; besides that, as I found by her account of them, the lectures were really interesting, and pleasantly given. She had expected botany to be dull, and had not found it so, and "had learned so much." On hearing this, I proceeded naturally to inquire what; for my idea of her was that before she went to the lectures at all, she had known more botany than she was likely to learn from them. So she told me that she had learned first of all that "there were seven sorts

[1] Here is another curious instance, I have but a minute ago finished correcting these sheets, and take up the *Times* of this morning, April 21st, and find in it the suggestion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the removal or exemption from taxation of agricultural horses and carts, in the very nick of time to connect it, as a proposal for economic practice, with the statement of economic principle respecting production, quoted on last page. (Ruskin's note.)

leaves." Now I have always a great suspicion of the number Seven; because, when I wrote *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, it required all the ingenuity I was master of to prevent them from becoming Eight, or even Nine, on my hands. So I thought to myself that it would be very charming if there were only seven sorts of leaves; but that, perhaps, if one looked the woods and forests of the world carefully through, it was just possible that one might discover as many as eight sorts; and then where would my friend's new knowledge of Botany be? So I said, "That was very pretty; but what more?" Then my friend told me she had no idea, before, that petals were leaves. On which, I thought to myself that it would not have been any great harm to her if she had remained under her old impression that petals were petals. But I said, "That was very pretty, too; and what more?" So then my friend told me that the lecturer said, "the object of his lectures would be entirely accomplished if he could convince his hearers that there was no such thing as a flower."[1] Now, in that sentence you have the most perfect and admirable summary given you of the general temper and purposes of modern science. It gives lectures on Botany, of which the object is to show that there is no such thing as a flower; on Humanity, to show that there is no such thing as a Man; and on Theology, to show there is no such thing as a God. No such thing as a Man, but only a Mechanism; no such thing as a God, but only a series of forces. The two faiths are essentially one: if you feel yourself to be only a machine, constructed to be a Regulator of minor machinery, you will put your statue of such science on your Holborn Viaduct,[2] and necessarily recognize only major machinery as regulating *you*.

VI. I must explain the real meaning to you, however, of that saying of the Botanical lecturer, for it has a wide bearing. Some fifty years ago the poet Goethe discovered that all the parts of plants had a kind of common nature, and would change into each other. Now this was a true discovery, and a notable one; and you will find that, in fact, all plants are composed of essentially two parts — the leaf and root — one loving the light, the other darkness; one liking to be clean, the other to be dirty; one liking to grow for the most part up, the other for the most part down; and each having faculties and purposes of its own. But the pure one which loves the light has, above all things, the purpose of being married to another leaf, and having child-leaves and children's children of leaves, to make the earth fair forever. And when the leaves marry, they put on wedding-robes, and are more glorious than Solomon in all his glory, and they have feasts of honey; and we call them "Flowers."

VII. In a certain sense, therefore, you see the Botanical lecturer was quite right. There are no such things as Flowers — there are only — gladdened Leaves. Nay, farther than this, there may be a dignity in the less happy, but unwithering leaf, which is, in some sort, better than the brief lily in its bloom; — which the great poets always knew, — well; — Chaucer, before Goethe; and the writer of the first Psalm before Chaucer. The Botanical lecturer was, in a deeper sense than he knew, right.

But in the deepest sense of all, the Botanical lecturer was, to the extremity of wrongness, wrong; for leaf, and root, and fruit, exist, all of them, only — that there may be flowers. He disregarded the life and passion of the creature, which were its essence. Had he looked for these, he would have recognized that in the thought of Nature herself, there is, in a plant, nothing else but its flowers.

Now in exactly the sense that modern science declares there is no such thing as a Flower, it has declared there is no such thing as a Man, but only a transitional form of Ascidians and apes. It may, or may not be true — it is not of the smallest consequence whether it be or not. The real fact is, that, rightly seen with human eyes, there is nothing else but man; that all animals and beings beside him are only made that they may change into him; that the world truly exists only in the presence of Man, acts only in the passion of Man. The essence of Light is in his eyes, — the centre of Force in his soul, — the pertinence of action in his deeds.

And all true science — which my Savoyard guide rightly scorned me when he thought I had not — all true science is *savoir vivre*.[1]

1 In Letter 7 Ruskin said: "I find I did much injustice to the botanical lecturer, as well as to my friend; . . . but having some botanical notions myself, which I am vain of, I wanted the lecturer's to be wrong.

2 The statue of Science was erected when the Viaduct was opened, 1869.

1 In Letter 4 Ruskin had told of a Savoyard guide, who, when "I had fatigued and provoked him with less cheerful views of the world than his own, . . . would fall back to my servant behind me, and console himself with a shrug of the shoulders, and a whispered, 'Le pauvre enfant, il ne sait pas vivre'"! ("Poor child, he does not know how to live!")

But all your modern science is the contrary of that. It is *savoir mourir*.[1]

VIII. And of its very discoveries, such as they are, it cannot make use.

That telegraphic signalling was a discovery; and conceivably, some day, may be a useful one.

And there was some excuse for your being a little proud when, about last sixth of April (Cœur de Lion's death-day, and Albert Dürer's), you knotted a copper wire all the way to Bombay, and flashed a message along it, and back.

But what was the message, and what the answer? Is India the better for what you said to her? Are you the better for what she replied? If not, you have only wasted an all-round-the-world's length of copper wire, — which is, indeed, about the sum of your doing. If you had had, perchance, two words of common sense to say, though you had taken wearisome time and trouble to send them; — though you had written them slowly in gold, and sealed them with a hundred seals, and sent a squadron of ships of the line to carry the scroll, and the squadron had fought its way round the Cape of Good Hope, through a year of storms, with loss of all its ships but one, — the two words of common sense would have been worth the carriage, and more. But you have not anything like so much as that to say, either to India or to any other place.

IX. You think it a great triumph to make the sun draw brown landscapes for you. That was also a discovery, and some day may be useful. But the sun had drawn landscapes before for you, not in brown, but in green, and blue, and all imaginable colors, here in England. Not one of you ever looked at them then; not one of you cares for the loss of them now, when you have shut the sun out with smoke, so that he can draw nothing more, except brown blots through a hole in a box. There was a rocky valley between Buxton and Bakewell, once upon a time, divine as the Vale of Tempe; you might have seen the Gods there morning and evening — Apollo and all the sweet Muses of the light — walking in fair procession on the lawns of it and to and fro among the pinnacles of its crags. You cared neither for Gods nor grass, but for cash (which you did not know the way to get); you thought you could get it by what the *Times* calls "Railroad Enterprise." You Enterprised a Railroad through the valley — you blasted rocks away, heaped thousands of tons of shale into its lovely stream. The valley is gone, and the Gods with it; and now every fool in Buxton can be at Bakewell in half an hour, and every fool in Bakewell at Buxton; which you think a lucrative process of exchange — you Fools Everywhere.

To talk at a distance, when you have nothing to say, though you were ever so near, to go fast from this place to that, with nothing to do either at one or the other, these are powers certainly. Much more power of increased Production, if you, indeed, had got it, would be something to boast of. But are you so entirely sure that you *have* got it — that the mortal disease of plenty and afflictive affluence of good things, are all you have to dread?

X. Observe. A man and a woman, with their children, properly trained, are able easily to cultivate as much ground as will feed them; to build as much wall and roof as will lodge them, and to spin and weave as much cloth as will clothe them. They can all be perfectly happy and healthy in doing this. Supposing that they invent machinery which will build, plough, thresh, cook, and weave, and that they have none of these things any more to do, but may read, or play croquet, or cricket, all day long, I believe myself that they will neither be so good nor so happy as without the machines. But I waive my belief in this matter for the time. I will assume that they become more refined and moral persons, and that idleness is in future to be the mother of all good. But observe, I repeat, the power of your machine is only in enabling them to be idle. It will not enable them to live better than they did before, nor to live in greater numbers. Get your heads quite clear on this matter. Out of so much ground only so much living is to be got, with or without machinery. You may set a million of steam-ploughs to work on an acre, if you like — out of that acre only a given number of grains of corn will grow, scratch or scorch it as you will. So that the question is not at all whether, by having more machines, more of you can live. No machines will increase the possibilities of life. They only increase the possibilities of idleness. Suppose, for instance, you could get the oxen in your plough driven by a goblin, who would ask for no pay, not even a cream bowl, — (you have nearly managed to get it driven by an iron goblin, as it is); — well, your furrow will take no more seeds than if you had held the stilts yourself. But instead

[1] knowing how to die.

of holding them you sit, I presume, on a bank beside the field, under an eglantine; — watch the goblin at his work, and read poetry. Meantime, your wife in the house has also got a goblin to weave and wash for her. And she is lying on the sofa, reading poetry.

XI. Now, as I said, I don't believe you would be happier so, but I am willing to believe it; only, since you are already such brave mechanists, show me at least one or two places where you *are* happier. Let me see one small example of approach to this seraphic condition. *I* can show *you* examples, millions of them, of happy people made happy by their own industry. Farm after farm I can show you, in Bavaria, Switzerland, the Tyrol, and such other places, where men and women are perfectly happy and good, without any iron servants. Show me, therefore, some English family, with its fiery familiar, happier than these. Or bring me, — for I am not inconvincible by any kind of evidence, — bring me the testimony of an English family or two to their increased felicity. Or if you cannot do so much as that, can you convince even themselves of it? They *are* perhaps happy, if only they knew how happy they were; Virgil thought so, long ago, of simple rustics; but you hear at present your steam-propelled rustics are crying out that they are anything else than happy, and that they regard their boasted progress "in the light of a monstrous sham." I must tell you one little thing, however, which greatly perplexes my imagination of the relieved ploughman sitting under his rose-bower, reading poetry. I have told it you before indeed, but I forget where. There was really a great festivity, and expression of satisfaction in the new order of things, down in Cumberland, a little while ago; some first of May, I think it was, a country festival such as the old heathens, who had no iron servants, used to keep with piping and dancing. So I thought, from the liberated country people — their work all done for them by goblins — we should have some extraordinary piping and dancing. But there was no dancing at all, and they could not even provide their own piping. They had their goblin to pipe for them. They walked in procession after their steam-plough, and their steam-plough whistled to them occasionally in the most melodious manner it could. Which seemed to me, indeed, a return to more than Arcadian simplicity; for in old Arcadia plough-boys truly whistled as they went, for want of thought; whereas here was verily a large company walking without thought, but not having any more even the capacity of doing their own whistling.

XII. But next, as to the inside of the house. Before you got your power-looms, a woman could always make herself a chemise and petticoat of bright and pretty appearance. I have seen a Bavarian peasant-woman at church in Munich, looking a much grander creature, and more beautifully dressed, than any of the crossed and embroidered angels in Hess's [1] high-art frescoes; (which happened to be just above her, so that I could look from one to the other). Well, here you are, in England, served by household demons, with five hundred fingers at least, weaving, for one that used to weave in the days of Minerva. You ought to be able to show me five hundred dresses for one that used to be; tidiness ought to have become five-hundred-fold tidier; tapestry should be increased into *cinque-cento*-fold [2] iridescence of tapestry. Not only your peasant-girl ought to be lying on the sofa reading poetry, but she ought to have in her wardrobe five hundred petticoats instead of one. Is that, indeed, your issue? or are you only on a curiously crooked way to it?

XIII. It is just possible, indeed, that you may not have been allowed to get the use of the goblin's work — that other people may have got the use of it, and you none; because, perhaps, you have not been able to evoke goblins wholly for your own personal service: but have been borrowing goblins from the capitalist, and paying interest, in the "position of William," [3] on ghostly self-going planes; but suppose you had laid by capital enough, yourselves, to hire all the demons in the world — nay all that are inside of it; are you quite sure you know what you might best set them to work at? and what "useful things" you should command them to make for you? I told you, last month, that no economist going (whether by steam or ghost) knew what are useful things and what are

1 Heinrich Marie von Hess (1798–1863), who painted the frescoes in the Hofkirche at Munich.

2 Five-hundred-fold; perhaps with incidental allusion to the "cinque-cento" period of Italian art — the sixteenth century.

3 A reference to Letter 1: "James makes a plane, lends it to William on 1st January for a year. William gives him a plank for the loan of it, wears it out, and makes another for James which he gives him on 31st December. On 1st January he again borrows the new one; and the arrangement is repeated continuously. The position of William therefore is, that he makes a plane every 31st of December, lends it to James till the next day, and pays James a plank annually for the privilege of lending it to him on that evening."

not. Very few of you know, yourselves, except by bitter experience of the want of them. And no demons, either of iron or spirit, can ever make them.

XIV. There are three Material things, not only useful, but essential to Life. No one "knows how to live" till he has got them.

These are Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

There are three Immaterial things, not only useful, but essential to Life. No one knows how to live till he has got them also.

These are, Admiration, Hope, and Love.[1]

Admiration — the power of discerning and taking delight in what is beautiful in visible Form, and lovely in human Character; and, necessarily, striving to produce what is beautiful in form, and to become what is lovely in character.

Hope — the recognition, by true Foresight, of better things to be reached hereafter, whether by ourselves or others; necessarily issuing in the straightforward and undisappointable effort to advance, according to our proper power, the gaining of them.

Love, both of family and neighbor, faithful, and satisfied. These are the six chiefly useful things to be got by Political Economy, when it *has* become a science. I will briefly tell you what modern Political Economy — the great "*savoir mourir*" — is doing with them.

XV. The first three, I said, are Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

Heaven gives you the main elements of these. You can destroy them at your pleasure, or increase, almost without limit, the available quantities of them.

You can vitiate the air by your manner of life and of death, to any extent. You might easily vitiate it so as to bring such a pestilence on the globe as would end all of you. You, or your fellows, German and French, are at present vitiating it to the best of your power in every direction; chiefly at this moment with corpses, and animal and vegetable ruin in war, changing men, horses, and garden-stuff into noxious gas. But everywhere, and all day long, you are vitiating it with foul chemical exhalations; and the horrible nests, which you call towns, are little more than laboratories for the distillation into heaven of venomous smokes and smells, mixed wit effluvia from decaying animal matter, an infectious miasmata from purulent disease.

On the other hand, your power of purif ing the air, by dealing properly and swiftl with all substances in corruption; by abs lutely forbidding noxious manufactures; an by planting in all soils the trees which clean and invigorate earth and atmosphere, — literally infinite. You might make ever breath of air you draw, food.

XVI. Secondly, your power over the rai and river-waters of the earth is infinite. Yo can bring rain where you will, by plantin wisely and tending carefully; — drough where you will, by ravage of woods an neglect of the soil. You might have th rivers of England as pure as the crystal o the rock; beautiful in falls, in lakes, in livin pools; so full of fish that you might take the out with your hands instead of nets. Or yo may do always as you have done now, tur every river of England into a common sewe so that you cannot so much as baptize a English baby but with filth, unless you hol its face out in the rain; and even *that* fal dirty.

XVII. Then for the third, Earth, meant t be nourishing for you and blossoming. Yo have learned, about it, that there is no suc thing as a flower; and as far as your scientifi hands and scientific brains, inventive of ex plosive and deathful, instead of blossomin and life-giving, Dust, can contrive, you hav turned the Mother-Earth, Demeter,[1] into th Avenger Earth, Tisiphone — with the voic of your brother's blood crying out of it in on wild harmony round all its murderous spher

This is what you have done for the Thre Material Useful Things.

XVIII. Then for the Three Immateria Useful Things. For Admiration, you hav learned contempt and conceit. There is n lovely thing ever yet done by man that yo care for, or can understand; but you are pe suaded you are able to do much finer thing yourselves. You gather, and exhibit t gether, as if equally instructive, what is i finitely bad with what is infinitely goo You do not know which is which; you i stinctively prefer the Bad, and do more of i You instinctively hate the Good, and destro it.[2]

1 Wordsworth, *Excursion*, Book 4th; in Moxon's edition, 1857 (stupidly without numbers to lines) vol. VI, p. 135.

Love chief of the three spiritual needs, put last, as culminating, or crowning, because men must be capable of admiration and hope before they can be capable of love. Wordsworth's verse, "We live by admiration, hope, and love" is answered presently with the words in a reverse order — love, hope and admiration. (Ruskin's note.)

1 Ruskin quotes a letter to the *Times* giving an a count of the destruction of the gardens of Paris duri the siege, 1870–71.

2 Last night (I am writing this on the 18th of Apr I got a letter from Venice bringing me the, I believe, w grounded report the Venetians have requested permissi from the government of Italy to pull down their Duc

Then, secondly, for Hope. You have not so much spirit of it in you as to begin any plan which will not pay for ten years; nor so much intelligence of it in you (either politicians or workmen) as to be able to form one clear idea of what you would like your country to become.

Then, thirdly, for Love. You were ordered by the Founder of your religion to love your neighbor as yourselves.

You have founded an entire Science of Political Economy on what you have stated to be the constant instinct of man — the desire to defraud his neighbor.

And you have driven your women mad, so that they ask no more for Love, nor for fellowship with you; but stand against you, and ask for "justice."

XIX. Are there any of you who are tired of all this? Any of you, Landlords or Tenants? Employers or Workmen?

Are there any landlords, — any masters, — who would like better to be served by men than by iron devils?

Any tenants, any workmen, who can be true to their leaders and to each other? who can vow to work and to live faithfully, for the sake of the joy of their homes?

Will any such give the tenth of what they have, and of what they earn, — not to emigrate with, but to stay in England with; and do what is in their hands and hearts to make her a happy England?

XX. I am not rich (as people now estimate riches), and great part of what I have is already engaged in maintaining art-workmen, or for other objects more or less of public utility. The tenth of whatever is left to me, estimated as accurately as I can (you shall have the accounts), I will make over to you in perpetuity, with the best security that English law can give, on Christmas Day of this year, with engagement to add the tithe of whatever I earn afterwards. Who else will help, with little or much? the object of which fund being to begin, and gradually — no matter how slowly — to increase the buying and securing of land in England, which shall not be built upon, but cultivated by Englishmen, with their own hands, and such help of force as they can find in wind and wave.

XXI. I do not care with how many, or how few, this thing is begun, nor on what inconsiderable scale, — if it be but in two or three poor men's gardens. So much, at least, I can buy, myself, and give them. If no help come, I have done and said what I could, and there will be an end. If any help come to me, it is to be on the following conditions: We will try to make some small piece of English ground, beautiful, peaceful, and fruitful. We will have no steam-engines upon it, and no railroads; we will have no untended or unthought-of creatures on it; none wretched, but the sick; none idle but the dead. We will have no liberty upon it; but instant obedience to known law, and appointed persons; no equality upon it; but recognition of every betterness that we can find, and reprobation of every worseness. When we want to go anywhere, we will go there quietly and safely, not at forty miles an hour in the risk of our lives; when we want to carry anything anywhere, we will carry it either on the backs of beasts, or on our own, or in carts, or boats. We will have plenty of flowers and vegetables in our gardens, plenty of corn and grass in our fields, — and few bricks. We will have some music and poetry; the children shall learn to dance to it and sing it; — perhaps some of the old people, in time, may also. We will have some art, moreover; we will at least try if, like the Greeks, we can't make some pots. The Greeks used to paint pictures of gods on their pots; we, probably, cannot do as much, but we may put some pictures of insects on them, and reptiles; — butterflies, and frogs, if nothing better. There was an excellent old potter in France who used to put frogs and vipers into his dishes, to the admiration of mankind; we can surely put something nicer than that. Little by little, some higher art and imagination may manifest themselves among us; and feeble rays of science may dawn for us. Botany, though too dull to dispute the existence of flowers; and history, though too simple to question the nativity of men; — nay, — even perhaps an uncalculating and uncovetous wisdom, as of rude Magi, presenting, at such nativity, gifts of gold and frankincense.

Faithfully yours

JOHN RUSKIN

place and "rebuild it." Put up a horrible model of it, that is to say, for which their architects may charge a commission. Meantime, all their canals are choked with human dung, which they are too poor to cart away but throw out at their windows.

And all the great thirteenth-century cathedrals in France have been destroyed, within my own memory, by that architects might charge commission for putting false models of them in their place. (Ruskin's note.)

# MATTHEW ARNOLD (1822–1888)

Matthew Arnold, critic and poet, was born at Laleham, December 24, 1822, six years bef his father began his famous headmastership at Rugby. After private tutoring and a year Winchester, he entered Rugby in 1837, leaving in 1841 for Balliol College, Oxford, on a scholarsl Here he formed a strong friendship for Clough, won the Newdigate prize with a poem on Cromw and graduated in 1845 with a second class. Shortly after his graduation he was made a fellow Oriel College. In 1847 he became secretary to the Marquis of Lansdowne, who secured for h the position of inspector of schools in 1851. In the same year Arnold married Frances, daugh of Sir William Wightman.

Arnold had already published *The Strayed Reveller and Other Poems* in 1848. The year after marriage appeared *Empedocles on Etna*, and the next year, 1853, *Poems*, which contained the w known *Sohrab and Rustum*, *Requiescat*, and *The Scholar-Gipsy*. In 1855 he published *Poe Second Series*, and two years later accepted the professorship of Poetry at Oxford. During ten years here he wrote *On Translating Homer*, 1861, *Essays in Criticism*, 1865, and *On the Study Celtic Literature*, 1867. His later works include *Culture and Anarchy*, 1869, *Literature and Dogn* 1875, *Discourses in America*, 1885 (the result of two lecture tours in the United States), and *Ess in Criticism, Second Series*, published in 1888, the year of his death.

Arnold's reputation as a poet is steadily increasing. The very qualities that the majority the mid-Victorian public did not like, looking as they did for sentiment to cheer and comf them in their wavering faith, make Arnold more popular to-day, when many of these doubts ha either been removed or are being faced fairly. Sincerity, technical skill, honest lyrical reacti to his own joys and sorrows or those of his generation, a splendid balance of emotion and intelle producing restraint and serenity — these are Arnold's characteristics as a poet.

Arnold, like Carlyle and Ruskin, felt constrained by the needs of his age to turn from literatu to life. The *Function of Criticism at the Present Time* marks this change. His classical traini gave him the keynote to a social doctrine in the principle of *totality* — the pursuit of total perfecti which he described as culture. He reacted against the faith in sacrifice and work of Carly as he did against the trust in material progress of Macaulay. Sacrifice and activity, which identified as Hebraism, should be justified in the light of reason, which he identified with the Gre spirit or Hellenism. He protested against overemphasis upon any quality, however good in its He saw the beginning of the scientific movement, and realized that stress upon the values knowing threatened to turn men's attention from equally important values of conduct and feeli He therefore sought to defend Christianity and the traditional humanism embodied in classi education against the criticism of such exponents of the scientific spirit as Huxley.

Arnold's prose style is marked above all by urbanity, an ease and assurance which befits position as a master of civilization. His humor is directed against those who are zealous beyo reason, and especially against those who are satisfied with faith in the catchwords of patriotis and mechanical progress, who, like Macaulay, rest in complacent admiration of the achievemer of their own age. For them he adopted from Heine the term "Philistines," to which he ga popular currency.

Arnold's poems have been collected in the one volume Globe edition, published by Macmill Useful biographies are those by Paul, Saintsbury, and Garnett (in the *Dictionary of National B graphy*). For a critical appreciation, see especially L. E. Gates, *Three Studies in Literature*.

## QUIET WORK

One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee —
One lesson that in every wind is blown,
One lesson of two duties served in one,
Though the loud world proclaim their enmity —

Of toil unsevered from tranquillity:
Of labor, that in still advance outgrows
Far noisier schemes, accomplished in repose,
Too great for haste, too high for rivalry!

Yes, while on earth a thousand discords ring,
Man's senseless uproar mingling with his toil,
Still do thy sleepless ministers move on,
Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting;
Still working, blaming still our vain turm
Laborers that shall not fail, when man
gone.

**Pub. 1849.**

## SHAKESPEARE

Others abide our question. Thou art free
We ask and ask: thou smilest and art still
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest h
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,

Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelli
place,

Spares but the cloudy border of his base
To the foiled searching of mortality;

And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
Self-schooled, self-scanned, self-honored, self-secure,
Didst tread on earth unguessed at. — Better so!

All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,
Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

Pub. 1849.

## THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

Come, dear children, let us away;
Down and away below!
Now my brothers call from the bay,
Now the great winds shorewards blow,
Now the salt tides seawards flow,
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away!
This way, this way!

Call her once before you go —
Call once yet!
In a voice that she will know:
"Margaret! Margaret!"
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear;
Children's voices, wild with pain —
Surely she will come again!
Call her once and come away;
This way, this way!
"Mother dear, we cannot stay!
The wild white horses foam and fret."
Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down;
Call no more!
One last look at the white-walled town,
And the little grey church on the windy shore;
Then come down!
She will not come though you call all day;
Come away, come away!

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She combed its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
She sighed, she looked up through the clear green sea.
She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world — ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with thee."
I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the waves;
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves."
She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.

Children dear, was it yesterday?
Children dear, were we long alone?
"The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan.
Long prayers," I said, "in the world they say;
Come!" I said; and we rose through the surf in the bay.
We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-walled town;
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,
To the little grey church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climbed on the graves, on the stones worn with rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded panes.
She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:
"Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here!

Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone;
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But, ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were sealed to the holy book!
Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.
Come away, children, call no more!
Come away, come down, call no more!

Down, down, down!
Down to the depths of the sea!
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark, what she sings: "O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy!
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well;
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun!"
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,
Till the spindle falls from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
And over the sand at the sea;
And her eyes are set in a stare;
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh;
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away children;
Come children, come down!
The hoarse wind blows colder;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing, "Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she!
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starred with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanched sands a gloom;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town;
At the church on the hill-side —
And then come back down.
Singing, "There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she!
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

Pub. 1849.

## EMPEDOCLES ON ETNA

### EMPEDOCLES' SONG, ACT I, SCENE 2

*The music below ceases, and Empedocl speaks, accompanying himself in a solemn ma ner on his harp.*

The outspread world to span
A cord the Gods first slung,
And then the soul of man
There, like a mirror, hung,
And bade the winds through space impel t gusty toy.

Hither and thither spins
The wind-borne, mirroring soul,
A thousand glimpses wins,
And never sees a whole;
Looks once, and drives elsewhere, and leav its last employ.

The Gods laugh in their sleeve
To watch man doubt and fear,
Who knows not what to believe
Where he sees nothing clear,
And dares stamp nothing false where he fin nothing sure.

Is this, Pausanias,[1] so?
And can our souls not strive,
But with the winds must go,
And hurry where they drive?
Is Fate indeed so strong, man's strength i deed so poor?

I will not judge. That man,
Howbeit, I judge as lost,
Whose mind allows a plan,
Which would degrade it most;
And he treats doubt the best who tries to s least ill.

1 The physician in the play.

Be not, then, fear's blind slave!
Thou art my friend; to thee,
All knowledge that I have,
All skill I wield, are free.
Ask not the latest news of the last miracle;

Ask not what days and nights
In trance Pantheia lay,
But ask how thou such sights
Mayst see without dismay;
Ask what most helps when known, thou son of Anchitus!

What? hate, and awe, and shame
Fill thee to see our time;
Thou feelest thy soul's frame
Shaken and out of chime?
What? life and time go hard with thee too, as with us;

Thy citizens, 'tis said,
Envy thee and oppress,
Thy goodness no men aid,
All strive to make it less;
Tyranny, pride, and lust fill Sicily's abodes;

Heaven is with earth at strife,
Signs make thy soul afraid,
The dead return to life,
Rivers are dried, winds stayed:
Scarce can one think in calm, so threatening are the Gods;

And we feel, day and night,
The burden of ourselves —
Well, then, the wiser wight
In his own bosom delves,
And asks what ails him so, and gets what cure he can.

The Sophist sneers: Fool, take
Thy pleasure, right or wrong.
The pious wail: Forsake
A world these Sophists throng.
Be neither Saint nor Sophist led, but be a man!

These hundred doctors try
To preach thee to their school.
We have the truth! they cry;
And yet their oracle,
Trumpet it as they will, is but the same as thine.

Once read thy own breast right,
And thou hast done with fears;
Man gets no other light,
Search he a thousand years.
Sink in thyself! there ask what ails thee, at that shrine!

What makes thee struggle and rave?
Why are men ill at ease? —
'Tis that the lot they have
Fails their own will to please;
For man would make no murmuring, were his will obeyed.

And why is it that still
Man with his lot thus fights? —
'Tis that he makes this *will*
The measure of his *rights*,
And believes Nature outraged if his will's gainsaid.

Couldst thou, Pausanias, learn
How deep a fault is this;
Couldst thou but once discern
Thou hast no *right* to bliss,
No title from the Gods to welfare and repose;

Then thou wouldst look less mazed
Whene'er from bliss debarred,
Nor think the Gods were crazed
When thy own lot went hard.
But we are all the same — the fools of our own woes!

For, from the first faint morn
Of life, the thirst for bliss
Deep in man's heart is born;
And, sceptic as he is,
He fails not to judge clear if this is quenched or no.

Nor is that thirst to blame.
Man errs not that he deems
His welfare his true aim;
He errs because he dreams
The world does but exist that welfare to bestow.

We mortals are no kings
For each of whom to sway
A new-made world up-springs,
Meant merely for his play.
No, we are strangers here; the world is from of old.

In vain our pent wills fret
And would the world subdue.
Limits we did not set
Condition all we do.
Born into life we are, and life must be our mould.

Born into life! — man grows
Forth from his parents' stem,
And blends their bloods, as those
Of theirs are blent in them;
So each new man strikes root into a far fore-
time.

Born into life! — we bring
A bias with us here,
And, when here, each new thing
Affects us we come near;
To tunes we did not call our being must keep
chime.

Born into life! — in vain,
Opinions, those or these,
Unaltered to retain
The obstinate mind decrees;
Experience, like a sea, soaks all-effacing
in.

Born into life! — who lists
May what is false hold dear,
And for himself make mists
Through which to see less clear;
The world is what it is, for all our dust and
din.

Born into life! — 'tis we,
And not the world, are new;
Our cry for bliss, our plea,
Others have urged it too —
Our wants have all been felt, our errors made
before.

No eye could be too sound
To observe a world so vast,
No patience too profound
To sort what's here amassed;
How man may here best live no care too great
to explore.

But we — as some rude guest
Would change, where'er he roam,
The manners there professed
To those he brings from home —
We mark not the world's course, but would
have *it* take *ours*.

The world's course proves the terms
On which man wins content;
Reason the proof confirms —
We spurn it, and invent
A false course for the world, and for ourselves
false powers.

Riches we wish to get,
Yet remain spendthrifts still;
We would have health, and yet
Still use our bodies ill;
Bafflers of our own prayers, from youth
life's last scenes.

We would have inward peace,
Yet will not look within;
We would have misery cease,
Yet will not cease from sin;
We want all pleasant ends, but will use
harsh means;

We do not what we ought;
What we ought not, we do;
And lean upon the thought
That chance will bring us through;
But our own acts, for good or ill, are might
powers.

Yet, even when man forsakes
All sin, — is just, is pure,
Abandons all that makes
His welfare insecure, —
Other existences there are, which clash wi
ours.

Like us, the lightning-fires
Love to have scope and play;
The stream, like us, desires
An unimpeded way;
Like us, the Libyan wind delights to roam
large.

Streams will not curb their pride
The just man not to entomb,
Nor lightnings go aside
To leave his virtues room;
Nor is that wind less rough that blows a goo
man's barge.

Nature, with equal mind,
Sees all her sons at play,
Sees man control the wind,
The wind sweep man away;
Allows the proudly-riding and the founderin
bark.

And, lastly, though of ours
No weakness spoil our lot,
Though the non-human powers
Of Nature harm us not,
The ill deeds of other men make often *ou*
life dark.

What were the wise man's plan? —
Through this sharp, toil-set life,
To fight as best he can,

And win what's won by strife. —
ut we an easier way to cheat our pains have
found.

Scratched by a fall, with moans,
As children of weak age
Lend life to the dumb stones
Whereon to vent their rage,
nd bend their little fists, and rate the senseless ground;

So, loath to suffer mute,
We, peopling the void air,
Make Gods to whom to impute
The ills we ought to bear;
/ith God and Fate to rail at, suffering easily.

Yet grant — as sense long missed
Things that are now perceived,
And much may still exist
Which is not yet believed —
rant that the world were full of Gods we cannot see;

All things the world which fill
Of but one stuff are spun,
That we who rail are still,
With what we rail at, one:
ne with the o'er-labored Power that through the breadth and length

Of earth, and air, and sea,
In men, and plants, and stones,
Hath toil perpetually,
And travails, pants, and moans;
ain would do all things well, but sometimes fails in strength.

And patiently exact
This universal God
Alike to any act
Proceeds at any nod,
nd quietly declaims the cursings of himself.

This is not what man hates,
Yet he can curse but this.
Harsh Gods and hostile Fates
Are dreams! this only *is* —
everywhere; sustains the wise, the foolish elf.

Nor only, in the intent
To attach blame elsewhere,
Do we at will invent
Stern Powers who make their care
o embitter human life, malignant Deities;

But, next, we would reverse
The scheme ourselves have spun,
And what we made to curse
We now would lean upon,
And feign kind Gods who perfect what man vainly tries.

Look, the world tempts our eye,
And we would know it all!
We map the starry sky,
We mine this earthen ball,
We measure the sea-tides, we number the sea-sands;

We scrutinize the dates
Of long-past human things,
The bounds of effaced states,
The lines of deceased kings;
We search out dead men's words, and works of dead men's hands;

We shut our eyes, and muse
How our own minds are made,
What springs of thought they use,
How rightened, how betrayed —
And spend our wit to name what most employ unnamed.

But still, as we proceed,
The mass swells more and more
Of volumes yet to read,
Of secrets yet to explore.
Our hair grows grey, our eyes are dimmed, our heat is tamed;

We rest our faculties,
And thus address the Gods:
"True Science if there is,
It stays in your abodes!
Man's measures cannot mete the immeasurable All.

"You only can take in
The world's immense design;
Our desperate search was sin,
Which henceforth we resign,
Sure only that your mind sees all things which befall."

Fools! that in man's brief term
He cannot all things view,
Affords no ground to affirm
That there are Gods who do;
Nor does being weary prove that he has where to rest.

Again. — Our youthful blood
Claims rapture as its right;

The world, a rolling flood
Of newness and delight,
Draws in the enamored gazer to its shining breast;

Pleasure, to our hot grasp,
Gives flowers after flowers;
With passionate warmth we clasp
Hand after hand in ours;
Now do we soon perceive how fast our youth is spent.

At once our eyes grow clear!
We see in blank dismay
Year posting after year,
Sense after sense decay;
Our shivering heart is mined by secret discontent;

Yet still, in spite of truth,
In spite of hopes entombed,
That longing of our youth
Burns ever unconsumed,
Still hungrier for delight as delights grow more rare.

We pause; we hush our heart,
And then address the Gods:
"The world hath failed to impart
The joy our youth forbodes,
Failed to fill up the void which in our breasts we bear.

"Changeful till now, we still
Looked on to something new;
Let us, with changeless will,
Henceforth look on to you,
To find with you the joy we in vain here require."

Fools! that so often here
Happiness mocked our prayer,
I think, might make us fear
A like event elsewhere;
Make us not fly to dreams, but moderate desire.

And yet, for those who know
Themselves, who wisely take
Their way through life, and bow
To what they cannot break,
Why should I say that life need yield but *moderate* bliss?

Shall we, with tempers spoiled,
Health sapped by living ill,
And judgments all embroiled
By sadness and self-will,
Shall *we* judge what for man is not true bl
or is?

Is it so small a thing
To have enjoyed the sun,
To have lived light in the spring,
To have loved, to have thought, to ha
done;
To have advanced true friends, and b
down baffling foes —

That we must feign a bliss
Of doubtful future date,
And, while we dream on this,
Lose all our present state,
And relegate to worlds yet distant c
repose?

Not much, I know, you prize
What pleasures may be had,
Who look on life with eyes
Estranged, like mine, and sad;
And yet the village-churl feels the truth mo
than you,

Who's loath to leave this life
Which to him little yields —
His hard-tasked sunburnt wife,
His often-labored fields,
The boors with whom he talked, the countr
spots he knew.

But thou, because thou hear'st
Men scoff at Heaven and Fate,
Because the Gods thou fear'st
Fail to make blest thy state,
Tremblest, and wilt not dare to trust the jo
there are!

I say: Fear not! Life still
Leaves human effort scope.
But, since life teems with ill,
Nurse no extravagant hope;
Because thou must not dream, thou need
not then despair!

Pub. 1852.

## SELF-DEPENDENCE

Weary of myself, and sick of asking
What I am, and what I ought to be,
At this vessel's prow I stand, which bea
me
Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

And a look of passionate desire
O'er the sea and to the stars I send:

Ye who, from my childhood up, have calmed me,
Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!

Ah, once more," I cried, "ye stars, ye waters,
In my heart your mighty charm renew;
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you!"

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven,
Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
In the rustling night-air came the answer:
Wouldst thou *be* as these are? *Live* as they.

Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not that the things without them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

And with joy the stars perform their shining,
And the sea its long moon-silvered roll;
For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting
All the fever of some differing soul.

Bounded by themselves, and unregardful
In what state God's other works may be,
In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see."

O air-born voice! long since, severely clear,
A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear:
"Resolve to be thyself; and know, that he
Who finds himself, loses his misery!"

Pub. 1852.

## MORALITY

We cannot kindle when we will
The fire that in the heart resides;
The spirit bloweth and is still,
In mystery our soul abides.
But tasks in hours of insight willed,
Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.

With aching hands and bleeding feet
We dig and heap, lay stone on stone;
We bear the burden and the heat
Of the long day, and wish 'twere done.
Not till the hours of light return,
All we have built do we discern.

Then, when the clouds are off the soul,
When thou dost bask in Nature's eye,
Ah, how *she* viewed thy self-control,
Thy struggling, tasked morality —
Nature, whose free, light, cheerful air,
Oft made thee, in thy gloom, despair.

And she, whose censure thou dost dread,
Whose eyes thou wert afraid to seek,
See, on her face a glow is spread,
A strong emotion on her cheek!
"Ah, child," she cries, "that strife divine,
Whence was it, for it is not mine?

"There is no effort on *my* brow —
I do not strive, I do not weep;
I rush with the swift spheres and glow
In joy, and when I will, I sleep. —
Yet that severe, that earnest air,
I saw, I felt it once — but where?

"I knew not yet the gauge of time,
Nor wore the manacles of space;
I felt it in some other clime,
I saw it in some other place.
'Twas when the heavenly house I trod,
And lay upon the breast of God."

Pub. 1852.

## THE BURIED LIFE

Light flows our war of mocking words, and yet,
Behold, with tears my eyes are wet!
I feel a nameless sadness o'er me roll.
Yes, yes, we know that we can jest,
We know, we know that we can smile!
But there's a something in this breast,
To which thy light words bring no rest,
And thy gay smiles no anodyne.
Give me thy hand, and hush awhile,
And turn those limpid eyes on mine,
And let me read there, love, thy inmost soul.

Alas, is even love too weak
To unlock the heart, and let it speak?
Are even lovers powerless to reveal
To one another what indeed they feel?
I knew the mass of men concealed
Their thoughts, for fear that if revealed
They would by other men be met
With blank indifference, or with blame reproved;
I knew they lived and moved
Tricked in disguises, alien to the rest
Of men, and alien to themselves — and yet
The same heart beats in every human breast!

But we, my love! — does a like spell benumb
Our hearts, our voices? — must we too be dumb?

Ah, well for us, if even we,
Even for a moment, can get free
Our heart, and have our lips unchained;
For that which seals them hath been deep-ordained.

Fate, which foresaw
How frivolous a baby man would be —
By what distractions he would be possessed,
How he would pour himself in every strife,
And well-nigh change his own identity —
That it might keep from his capricious play
His genuine self, and force him to obey
Even in his own despite his being's law,
Bade through the deep recesses of our breast
The unregarded river of our life
Pursue with indiscernible flow its way;
And that we should not see
The buried stream, and seem to be
Eddying about in blind uncertainty,
Though driving on with it eternally.

But often, in the world's most crowded streets,
But often, in the din of strife,
There rises an unspeakable desire
After the knowledge of our buried life;
A thirst to spend our fire and restless force
In tracking out our true, original course;
A longing to inquire
Into the mystery of this heart that beats
So wild, so deep in us — to know
Whence our lives come, and where they go.
And many a man in his own breast then delves,
But deep enough, alas, none ever mines.
And we have been on many thousand lines,
And we have shown, on each, spirit and power;
But hardly have we, for one little hour,
Been on our own line, have we been ourselves —
Hardly had skill to utter one of all
The nameless feelings that course through our breast,
But they course on for ever unexpressed.
And long we try in vain to speak and act
Our hidden self, and what we say and do
Is eloquent, is well — but 'tis not true!
And then we will no more be racked
With inward striving, and demand
Of all the thousand nothings of the hour
Their stupefying power;
Ah yes, and they benumb us at our call!
Yet still, from time to time, vague and forlorn,
From the soul's subterranean depth upborne
As from an infinitely distant land,
Come airs, and floating echoes, and conv
A melancholy into all our day.

Only — but this is rare —
When a beloved hand is laid in ours,
When, jaded with the rush and glare
Of the interminable hours,
Our eyes can in another's eyes read clear
When our world-deafened ear
Is by the tones of a loved voice caressed
A bolt is shot back somewhere in our bre
And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again.
The eye sinks inward, and the heart lies pl
And what we mean, we say, and what would, we know.
A man becomes aware of his life's flow,
And hears its winding murmur; and he s
The meadows where it glides, the sun, breeze.

And there arrives a lull in the hot race
Wherein he doth for ever chase
That flying and elusive shadow, rest.
An air of coolness plays upon his face,
And an unwonted calm pervades his bre
And then he thinks he knows
The hills where his life rose,
And the sea where it goes.

Pub. 1852.

## LINES WRITTEN IN KENSIN TON GARDENS

In this lone, open glade I lie,
Screened by deep boughs on either hand;
And at its end, to stay the eye,
Those black-crowned, red-boled pine-tr stand!

Birds here make song, each bird has his,
Across the girdling city's hum.
How green under the boughs it is!
How thick the tremulous sheep-cries come

Sometimes a child will cross the glade
To take his nurse his broken toy;
Sometimes a thrush flit overhead
Deep in her unknown day's employ.

Here at my feet what wonders pass,
What endless, active life is here!
What blowing daisies, fragrant grass!
An air-stirred forest, fresh and clear.

Scarce fresher is the mountain-sod
Where the tired angler lies, stretched out,
And, eased of basket and of rod,
Counts his day's spoil, the spotted trout.

In the huge world, which roars hard by,
Be others happy if they can!
But in my helpless cradle I
Was breathed on by the rural Pan.

I, on men's impious uproar hurled,
Think often, as I hear them rave,
That peace has left the upper world
And now keeps only in the grave.

Yet here is peace for ever new!
When I who watch them am away,
Still all things in this glade go through
The changes of their quiet day.

Then to their happy rest they pass!
The flowers upclose, the birds are fed,
The night comes down upon the grass,
The child sleeps warmly in his bed.

Calm soul of all things! make it mine
To feel, amid the city's jar,
That there abides a peace of thine,
Man did not make, and cannot mar.

The will to neither strive nor cry,
The power to feel with others give!
Calm, calm me more! nor let me die
Before I have begun to live.

Pub. 1852.

## THE FUTURE

wanderer is man from his birth.
e was born in a ship
n the breast of the river of Time.
rimming with wonder and joy
e spreads out his arms to the light,
ivets his gaze on the banks of the stream.

s what he sees is, so have his thoughts been.
hether he wakes,
here the snowy mountainous pass,
choing the screams of the eagles,
ems in its gorges the bed
the new-born clear-flowing stream·
hether he first sees light
here the river in gleaming rings
uggishly winds through the plain;
hether in sound of the swallowing sea —
s is the world on the banks,
is the mind of the man.

inly does each, as he glides,
ble and dream
the lands which the River of Time
d left ere he woke on its breast,
Or shall reach when his eyes have been closed.
Only the tract where he sails
He wots of; only the thoughts,
Raised by the objects he passes, are his.

Who can see the green earth any more
As she was by the sources of Time?
Who imagines her fields as they lay
In the sunshine, unworn by the plough?
Who thinks as they thought,
The tribes who then lived on her breast,
Her vigorous, primitive sons?

What girl
Now reads in her bosom as clear
As Rebekah read, when she sate
At eve by the palm-shaded well?
Who guards in her breast
As deep, as pellucid a spring
Of feeling, as tranquil, as sure?

What bard,
At the height of his vision, can deem
Of God, of the world, of the soul,
With a plainness as near,
As flashing as Moses felt,
When he lay in the night by his flock
On the starlit Arabian waste?
Can rise and obey
The beck of the Spirit like him?

This tract which the river of Time
Now flows through with us, is the plain.
Gone is the calm of its earlier shore.
Bordered by cities, and hoarse
With a thousand cries is its stream.
And we on its breast, our minds
Are confused as the cries which we hear,
Changing and shot as the sights which we see.

And we say that repose has fled
For ever the course of the river of Time.
That cities will crowd to its edge
In a blacker, incessanter line;
That the din will be more on its banks,
Denser the trade on its stream,
Flatter the plain where it flows,
Fiercer the sun overhead.
That never will those on its breast
See an ennobling sight,
Drink of the feeling of quiet again.

But what was before us we know not,
And we know not what shall succeed.

Haply, the river of Time,
As it grows, as the towns on its marge

Fling their wavering lights
On a wider, statelier stream —
May acquire, if not the calm
Of its early mountainous shore,
Yet a solemn peace of its own.

And the width of the waters, the hush
Of the grey expanse where he floats,
Freshening its current and spotted with foam
As it draws to the Ocean, may strike
Peace to the soul of the man on its breast —
As the pale waste widens around him —
As the banks fade dimmer away,
As the stars come out, and the night-wind
Brings up the stream
Murmurs and scents of the infinite sea.

Pub. 1852.

## REQUIESCAT

Strew on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew!
In quiet she reposes;
Ah, would that I did too!

Her mirth the world required;
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound;
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabined, ample spirit,
It fluttered and failed for breath.
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty hall of death.

Pub. 1853.

## THE SCHOLAR-GIPSY

There was very lately a lad in the University of Oxford, who was by his poverty forced to leave his studies there, and at last to join himself to a company of vagabond gipsies. Among these extravagant people, by the insinuating subtilty of his carriage, he quickly got so much of their love and esteem as that they discovered to him their mystery. After he had been a pretty while exercised in the trade, there chanced to ride by a couple of scholars, who had formerly been of his acquaintance. They quickly spied out their old friend among the gipsies; and he gave them an account of the necessity which drove him to that kind of life, and told them that the people he went with were not such impostors as they were taken [illegible] but that they had a traditional kind of learn[illegible] among them, and could do wonders by [illegible] power of imagination, their fancy binding t[illegible] of others: that himself had learned much [illegible] their art, and when he had compassed the wh[illegible] secret, he intended, he said, to leave their co[illegible] pany, and give the world an account of what [illegible] had learned. — Glanvil's[1] *Vanity of Dogma[illegible] ing*, 1661. (Arnold's note.)

Go, for they call you, shepherd, from the h[illegible]
Go, shepherd, and untie the wattled cot[illegible]
No longer leave thy wistful flock unf[illegible]
Nor let thy bawling fellows rack th[illegible] throats,
Nor the cropped herbage shoot anot[illegible] head.
But when the fields are still,
And the tired men and dogs all gone rest,
And only the white sheep are sometin[illegible] seen
Cross and recross the strips of moo[illegible] blanched green,
Come, shepherd; and again begin t[illegible] quest!

Here, where the reaper was at work of lat[illegible]
In this high field's dark corner, where leaves
His coat, his basket, and his earth[illegible] cruse,
And in the sun, all morning, binds t[illegible] sheaves,
Then here, at noon, comes back stores to use —
Here will I sit and wait,
While to my ear from uplands far away[illegible]
The bleating of the folded flocks borne,
With distant cries of reapers in t[illegible] corn[2] —
All the live murmur of a summer's day.

Screened is this nook, o'er the high h[illegible] reaped field,
And here till sun-down, shepherd! wil[illegible] be.
Through the thick corn the scar[illegible] poppies peep,
And round green roots and yellowi[illegible] stalks, I see
Pale pink convolvulus in tendrils cre[illegible]
And air-swept lindens yield
Their scent, and rustle down their p[illegible] fumed showers

1 Joseph Glanvil, 1636–80, Oxford graduate, cler[illegible] man, and writer on philosophical subjects.
2 grain.

Of bloom on the bent grass where I am laid,
And bower me from the August sun with shade;
And the eye travels down to Oxford's towers.

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's book.
Come, let me read the oft-read tale again!
The story of the Oxford scholar poor,
Of shining parts and quick inventive brain,
Who, tired of knocking at preferment's door,
One summer morn forsook
His friends, and went to learn the gipsy-lore,
And roamed the world with that wild brotherhood,
And came, as most men deemed, to little good,
But came to Oxford and his friends no more.

But once, years after, in the country-lanes,
Two scholars, whom at college erst he knew,
Met him, and of his way of life enquired;
Whereat he answered that the gipsy-crew,
His mates, had arts to rule as they desired
The workings of men's brains,
And they can bind them to what thoughts they will.
"And I," he said, "the secret of their art,
When fully learned, will to the world impart;
But it needs Heaven-sent moments for this skill."

This said, he left them, and returned no more.
But rumors hung about the countryside,
That the lost scholar long was seen to stray,
Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-tied,
In hat of antique shape, and cloak of grey,
The same the gipsies wore.
Shepherds had met him on the Hurst[1] in spring;
At some lone alehouse in the Berkshire moors,
On the warm ingle-bench,[1] the smock-frocked boors
Had found him seated at their entering;

But, 'mid their drink and clatter, he would fly. —
And I myself seem half to know thy looks,
And put the shepherds, wanderer! on thy trace;
And boys who in lone wheatfields scare the rooks,
I ask if thou hast passed their quiet place;
Or in my boat I lie
Moored to the cool bank in the summer-heats,
'Mid wide grass meadows which the sunshine fills,
And watch the warm, green-muffled Cumner hills,
And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy retreats.

For most, I know, thou lov'st retired ground:
Thee, at the ferry, Oxford riders blithe,
Returning home on summer-nights, have met
Crossing the stripling Thames at Bablockhithe,[2]
Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers wet,
As the punt's rope chops round;
And leaning backward in a pensive dream,
And fostering in thy lap a heap of flowers
Plucked in shy fields and distant Wychwood[3] bowers;
And thine eyes resting on the moonlit stream.

And then they land, and thou art seen no more! —
Maidens who from the distant hamlets come
To dance around the Fyfield[4] elm in May,
Oft through the darkening fields have seen thee roam,
Or cross a stile into the public way.
Oft thou hast given them store
Of flowers: the frail-leafed white anemony,

1 Cumner Hurst, a wooded hill three miles south of Oxford.

1 A bench next to the fireside.
2 A village one mile beyond Cumner Hurst from Oxford.
3 A forest about ten miles north of Oxford.
4 About a mile south of Bablockhithe.

Dark bluebells drenched with dews of summer eves,
And purple orchises with spotted leaves;
But none hath words she can report of thee.

And, above Godstow Bridge,[1] when hay-time's here
In June, and many a scythe in sunshine flames,
Men who through those wide fields of breezy grass,
Where black-winged swallows haunt the glittering Thames,
To bathe in the abandoned lasher[2] pass,
Have often passed thee near,
Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown;
Marked thine outlandish garb, thy figure spare,
Thy dark vague eyes, and soft abstracted air:
But when they came from bathing, thou wast gone!

At some lone homestead in the Cumner hills,
Where at her open door the housewife darns,
Thou hast been seen; or hanging on a gate,
To watch the threshers in the mossy barns.
Children, who early range these slopes, and late,
For cresses from the rills,
Have known thee eying, all an April day,
The springing pastures and the feeding kine;
And marked thee, when the stars come out and shine,
Through the long dewy grass move slow away.

In autumn, on the skirts of Bagley Wood,
(Where most the gipsies by the turf-edged way
Pitch their smoked tents, and every bush you see
With scarlet patches tagged, and shreds of grey,
Above the forest-ground called Thessaly,)
The blackbird, picking food,
Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears at all;
So often has he known thee past him stray,
Rapt, twirling in thy hand a withe
spray,
And waiting for the spark from heaven
fall.

And once, in winter, on the causeway chi
Where home through flooded fields fo
travellers go,
Have I not passed thee on the wooc
bridge,
Wrapt in thy cloak and battling with t
snow,
Thy face toward Hinksey and its win
ridge?
And thou hast climbed the hill,
And gained the white brow of the Cu
ner range;
Turned once to watch, while thick t
snowflakes fall,
The line of festal light in Christ-Chur
hall;[1]
Then sought thy straw in some sequester
grange.

But what — I dream! Two hundred ye
are flown,
Since first thy story ran through Oxfo
halls,
And the grave Glanvil did the tale i
scribe
That thou wert wandered from the studic
walls
To learn strange arts, and join a gips
tribe;
And thou from earth art gone
Long since, and in some quiet churchya
laid:
Some country-nook, where o'er thy u
known grave
Tall grasses and white flowering nettl
wave,
Under a dark red-fruited yew-tre
shade.

No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of hour
For what wears out the life of mort
men?
'Tis that from change to change th
being rolls;
'Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,
Exhaust the energy of strongest souls,
And numb the elastic powers.
Till, having used our nerves with bliss ar
teen,[2]
And tired upon a thousand schemes o
wit,

1 This and other English places mentioned subsequently in the poem are all in the near vicinity of Oxford.
2 A pool below a runway or race.

1 The dining hall of Christ Church, Oxford.
2 sadness.

To the just-pausing Genius we remit
Our worn-out life, and are — what we have been.

Thou hast not lived, why shouldst thou perish, so?
Thou hadst *one* aim, *one* business, *one* desire;
Else wert thou long since numbered with the dead,
Else hadst thou spent, like other men, thy fire!
The generations of thy peers are fled,
And we ourselves shall go;
But thou possessest an immortal lot,
And we imagine thee exempt from age
And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's page,
Because thou hadst what we, alas! have not.

For early didst thou leave the world, with powers
Fresh, undiverted to the world without,
Firm to their mark, not spent on other things;
Free from the sick fatigue, the languid doubt,
Which much to have tried, in much been baffled, brings.
O life unlike to ours!
Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,
Of whom each strives, nor knows for what he strives,
And each half-lives a hundred different lives;
Who wait like thee, but not, like thee, in hope.

Thou waitest for the spark from heaven! and we,
Light half-believers of our casual creeds,
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly willed,
Whose insight never has borne fruit in deeds,
Whose vague resolves never have been fulfilled;
For whom each year we see
Breeds new beginnings, disappointments new;
Who hesitate and falter life away,
And lose to-morrow the ground won to-day:
Ah! do not we, wanderer! await it too?

Yes, we await it! but it still delays,
And then we suffer! and amongst us, one[1]
Who most has suffered, takes dejectedly
His seat upon the intellectual throne;
And all his store of sad experience he
Lays bare of wretched days;
Tells us his misery's birth and growth and signs,
And how the dying spark of hope was fed,
And how the breast was soothed, and how the head,
And all his hourly-varied anodynes.

This for our wisest: and we others pine,
And wish the long unhappy dream would end,
And waive all claim to bliss, and try to bear,
With close-lipped patience for our only friend,
Sad patience, too near neighbor to despair.
But none has hope like thine!
Thou through the fields and through the woods dost stray,
Roaming the country-side, a truant boy,
Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,
And every doubt long blown by time away.

O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames,
Before this strange disease of modern life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
Its heads o'ertaxed, its palsied hearts, was rife —
Fly hence, our contact fear!
Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering wood!
Averse, as Dido did, with gesture stern,
From her false friend's[1] approach in Hades turn,
Wave us away; and keep thy solitude!

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
Still clutching the inviolable shade,
With a free onward impulse brushing through,
By night, the silvered branches of the glade,
Far on the forest-skirts, where none pursue,
On some mild pastoral slope
Emerge; and resting on the moonlit pales,
Freshen thy flowers, as in former years,

1 The reference here can only be surmised.

1 Æneas, upon whose departure from Carthage Dido killed herself.

With dew, or listen with enchanted ears,
From the dark dingles, to the nightingales!

But fly our paths, our feverish contact fly!
For strong the infection of our mental strife,
Which, though it gives no bliss, yet spoils for rest;
And we should win thee from thy own fair life,
Like us distracted, and like us unblest.
Soon, soon thy cheer would die,
Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfixed thy powers,
And thy clear aims be cross and shifting made;
And then thy glad perennial youth would fade,
Fade, and grow old at last, and die like ours.

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and smiles!
As some grave Tyrian[1] trader, from the sea,
Descried at sunrise an emerging prow
Lifting the cool-haired creepers stealthily,
The fringes of a southward-facing brow
Among the Ægæan isles;
And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,
Freighted with amber grapes and Chian wine,
Green bursting figs, and tunnies[2] steeped in brine,
And knew the intruders on his ancient home,

The young light-hearted masters of the waves!
And snatched his rudder, and shook out more sail;
And day and night held on[3] indignantly
O'er the blue Midland waters with the gale,
Betwixt the Syrtes[4] and soft Sicily,
To where the Atlantic raves
Outside the western straits; and unbent sails
There, where down cloudy cliffs, through sheets of foam,
Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians[5] come;
And on the beach undid his corded bales.

Pub. 1853.

1 From Tyre, in Phœnicia. 2 large mackerel.
3 Kept on under full sail.
4 Shallow gulf on north coast of Africa.
5 From the Spanish peninsula.

## ISOLATION

TO MARGUERITE

This is the fourth in a series of seven poem published under the heading *Switzerland.*

We were apart; yet, day by day,
I bade my heart more constant be.
I bade it keep the world away,
And grow a home for only thee;
Nor feared but thy love likewise grew,
Like mine, each day, more tried, more true.

The fault was grave! I might have known,
What far too soon, alas! I learned —
The heart can bind itself alone,
And faith may oft be unreturned.
Self-swayed our feelings ebb and swell —
Thou lov'st no more; — Farewell! Farewell!

Farewell! — and thou, thou lonely heart,
Which never yet without remorse
Even for a moment didst depart
From thy remote and spheréd course
To haunt the place where passions reign —
Back to thy solitude again!

Back! with the conscious thrill of shame
Which Luna felt, that summer night,
Flash through her pure immortal frame,
When she forsook the starry height
To hang over Endymion's sleep
Upon the pine-grown Latmian steep.

Yet she, chaste queen, had never proved
How vain a thing is mortal love,
Wandering in heaven, far removed;
But thou hast long had place to prove
This truth — to prove, and make thine own:
"Thou hast been, shalt be, art, alone."

Or, if not quite alone, yet they
Which touch thee are unmating things —
Ocean and clouds and night and day;
Lorn autumns and triumphant springs;
And life, and others' joy and pain,
And love, if love, of happier men.

Of happier men — for they, at least,
Have *dreamed* two human hearts might blend
In one, and were through faith released
From isolation without end
Prolonged; nor knew, although not less
Alone than thou, their loneliness.

Pub. 1857.

## DOVER BEACH

The sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits; on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet as the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanched sand,
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease; and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow; and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles, long ago,
Heard it on the Ægæan, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled;
But now I only hear
Its melancholy long withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles[1] of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain,
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

Pub. 1867.

## RUGBY CHAPEL

NOVEMBER, 1857

Coldly, sadly descends
The autumn-evening. The field
Strewn with its dank yellow drifts
Of withered leaves, and the elms,
Fade into dimness apace,
Silent; — hardly a shout
From a few boys late at their play!
The lights come out in the street,
In the school-room windows; — but cold,
Solemn, unlighted, austere,
Through the gathering darkness, arise
The chapel-walls, in whose bound
Thou, my father![1] art laid.

There thou dost lie, in the gloom
Of the autumn evening. But ah!
That word, *gloom*, to my mind
Brings thee back, in the light
Of thy radiant vigor again;
In the gloom of November we passed
Days not dark at thy side;
Seasons impaired not the ray
Of thy buoyant cheerfulness clear.
Such thou wast! and I stand
In the autumn evening, and think
Of bygone autumns with thee.

Fifteen years have gone round
Since thou arosest to tread,
In the summer-morning, the road
Of death, at a call unforeseen,
Sudden. For fifteen years,
We who till then in thy shade
Rested as under the boughs
Of a mighty oak, have endured
Sunshine and rain as we might,
Bare, unshaded, alone,
Lacking the shelter of thee.

O strong soul, by what shore
Tarriest thou now? For that force,
Surely, has not been left in vain!
Somewhere, surely, afar,
In the sounding labor-house vast
Of being, is practised that strength,
Zealous, beneficent, firm!

Yes, in some far-shining sphere,
Conscious or not of the past,
Still thou performest the word
Of the Spirit in whom thou dost live —
Prompt, unwearied, as here!
Still thou upraisest with zeal
The humble good from the ground,
Sternly repressest the bad!
Still, like a trumpet, doth rouse
Those who with half-open eyes
Tread the border-land dim
'Twixt vice and virtue; reviv'st,

1 beaches.

1 Dr. Thomas Arnold, 1795–1842, famous headmaster of Rugby.

Succorest! — this was thy work,
This was thy life upon earth.

What is the course of the life
Of mortal men on the earth?
Most men eddy about
Here and there — eat and drink,
Chatter and love and hate,
Gather and squander, are raised
Aloft, are hurled in the dust,
Striving blindly, achieving
Nothing; and then they die —
Perish; — and no one asks
Who or what they have been,
More than he asks what waves,
In the moonlit solitudes mild
Of the midmost Ocean, have swelled,
Foamed for a moment, and gone.

And there are some, whom a thirst
Ardent, unquenchable, fires,
Not with the crowd to be spent,
Not without aim to go round
In an eddy of purposeless dust,
Effort unmeaning and vain.
Ah yes! some of us strive
Not without action to die
Fruitless, but something to snatch
From dull oblivion, nor all
Glut the devouring grave!
We, we have chosen our path —
Path to a clear-purposed goal,
Path of advance! — but it leads
A long, steep journey, through sunk
Gorges, o'er the mountains in snow.
Cheerful, with friends, we set forth —
Then, on the height, comes the storm.
Thunder crashes from rock
To rock, the cataracts reply,
Lightnings dazzle our eyes.
Roaring torrents have breached
The track, the stream-bed descends
In the place where the wayfarer once
Planted his footstep — the spray
Boils o'er its borders! aloft
The unseen snow-beds dislodge
Their hanging ruin; alas,
Havoc is made in our train!
Friends, who set forth at our side,
Falter, are lost in the storm.
We, we only are left!
With frowning foreheads, with lips
Sternly compressed, we strain on,
On — and at nightfall at last
Come to the end of our way,
To the lonely inn 'mid the rocks;
Where the gaunt and taciturn host
Stands on the threshold, the wind
Shaking his thin white hairs —
Holds his lantern to scan
Our storm-beat figures, and asks:
Whom in our party we bring?
Whom we have left in the snow?

Sadly we answer: We bring
Only ourselves! we lost
Sight of the rest in the storm.
Hardly ourselves we fought through,
Stripped, without friends, as we are.
Friends, companions, and train,
The avalanche swept from our side.

But thou would'st not *alone*
Be saved, my father! *alone*
Conquer and come to thy goal,
Leaving the rest in the wild.
We were weary, and we
Fearful, and we in our march
Fain to drop down and to die.
Still thou turnedst, and still
Beckonedst the trembler, and still
Gavest the weary thy hand.
If, in the paths of the world,
Stones might have wounded thy feet,
Toil or dejection have tried
Thy spirit, of that we saw
Nothing — to us thou wast still
Cheerful, and helpful and firm!
Therefore to thee it was given
Many to save with thyself;
And, at the end of thy day,
O faithful shepherd! to come,
Bringing thy sheep in thy hand.

And through thee I believe
In the noble and great who are gone;
Pure souls honored and blest
By former ages, who else —
Such, so soulless, so poor,
Is the race of men whom I see —
Seemed but a dream of the heart,
Seemed but a cry of desire.
Yes! I believe that there lived
Others like thee in the past,
Not like the men of the crowd
Who all round me to-day
Bluster or cringe, and make life
Hideous, and arid, and vile;
But souls tempered with fire,
Fervent, heroic, and good,
Helpers and friends of mankind.

Servants of God! — or sons
Shall I not call you? because
Not as servants ye knew
Your Father's innermost mind,
His, who unwillingly sees

One of his little ones lost —
Yours is the praise, if mankind
Hath not as yet in its march
Fainted, and fallen, and died!

See! In the rocks of the world
Marches the host of mankind,
A feeble, wavering line.
Where are they tending? — A God
Marshalled them, gave them their goal.
Ah, but the way is so long!
Years they have been in the wild!
Sore thirst plagues them, the rocks,
Rising all round, overawe;
Factions divide them, their host
Threatens to break, to dissolve.
— Ah, keep, keep them combined!
Else, of the myriads who fill
That army, not one shall arrive;
Sole they shall stray; in the rocks
Stagger for ever in vain,
Die one by one in the waste.

Then, in such hour of need
Of your fainting, dispirited race,
Ye, like angels, appear,
Radiant with ardor divine!
Beacons of hope, ye appear!
Languor is not in your heart,
Weakness is not in your word,
Weariness not on your brow.
Ye alight in our van! at your voice,
Panic, despair, flee away.
Ye move through the ranks, recall
The stragglers, refresh the outworn,
Praise, re-inspire the brave!
Order, courage, return.
Eyes rekindling, and prayers,
Follow your steps as ye go.
Ye fill up the gaps in our files,
Strengthen the wavering line,
Stablish, continue our march,
On, to the bound of the waste,
On, to the City of God.

Pub. 1867.

## PREFACE TO ESSAYS IN CRITICISM

(FIRST SERIES)

1865

Arnold's most famous piece of prose. It illustrates fully his urbanity and his playfulness; and has, moreover, a higher quality of eloquence than his reserve usually permitted.

Several of the Essays which are here collected and reprinted had the good or the bad fortune to be much criticized at the time of their first appearance. I am not now going to inflict upon the reader a reply to those criticisms; for one or two explanations which are desirable, I shall elsewhere, perhaps, be able some day to find an opportunity; but, indeed, it is not in my nature, — some of my critics would rather say, not in my power, — to dispute on behalf of any opinion, even my own, very obstinately. To try and approach truth on one side after another, not to strive or cry, nor to persist in pressing forward, on any one side, with violence and self-will, — it is only thus, it seems to me, that mortals may hope to gain any vision of the mysterious Goddess, whom we shall never see except in outline, but only thus even in outline. He who will do nothing but fight impetuously towards her on his own, one, favorite, particular line, is inevitably destined to run his head into the folds of the black robe in which she is wrapped.

So it is not to reply to my critics that I write this Preface, but to prevent a misunderstanding, of which certain phrases that some of them use make me apprehensive. Mr. Wright, one of the many translators of Homer, has published a letter to the Dean of Canterbury, complaining of some remarks of mine, uttered now a long while ago, on his version of the *Iliad*.[1] One cannot be always studying one's own works, and I was really under the impression, till I saw Mr. Wright's complaint, that I had spoken of him with all respect. The reader may judge of my astonishment, therefore, at finding, from Mr. Wright's pamphlet, that I had "declared with much solemnity that there is not any proper reason for his existing." That I never said; but, on looking back at my Lectures on Translating Homer, I find that I did say, not that Mr. Wright, but that Mr. Wright's version of the *Iliad*, repeating in the main the merits and defects of Cowper's version, as Mr. Sotheby's repeated those of Pope's version, had, if I might be pardoned for saying so, no proper reason for existing. Elsewhere I expressly spoke of the merit of his version; but I confess that the phrase, qualified as I have shown, about its want of a proper reason for existing, I used. Well, the phrase had, perhaps, too much vivacity; we have all of us a right to exist, we and our works; an unpopular author should be the last person to call in question this right. So I gladly withdraw the offending phrase, and I am sorry for having used it; Mr. Wright, however, would

1 In Arnold's Lectures *On Translating Homer.*

perhaps be more indulgent to my vivacity, if he considered that we are none of us likely to be lively much longer. My vivacity is but the last sparkle of flame before we are all in the dark, the last glimpse of color before we all go into drab, — the drab of the earnest, prosaic, practical, austerely literal future. Yes, the world will soon be the Philistines'! and then, with every voice, not of thunder, silenced, and the whole earth filled and ennobled every morning by the magnificent roaring of the young lions of the *Daily Telegraph*, we shall all yawn in one another's faces with the dismalest, the most unimpeachable gravity.

But I return to my design in writing this Preface. That design was, after apologizing to Mr. Wright for my vivacity of five years ago, to beg him and others to let me bear my own burdens, without saddling the great and famous University to which I have the honor to belong with any portion of them. What I mean to deprecate is such phrases as, "his professorial assault," "his assertions issued *ex cathedra*," [1] "the sanction of his name as the representative of poetry," and so on. Proud as I am of my connection with the University of Oxford,[2] I can truly say that, knowing how unpopular a task one is undertaking when one tries to pull out a few more stops in that powerful but at present somewhat narrow-toned organ, the modern Englishman, I have sought always to stand by myself, and to compromise others as little as possible. Besides this, my native modesty is such that I have always been shy of assuming the honorable style of Professor, because this is a title I share with so many distinguished men, — Professor Pepper, Professor Anderson, Professor Frickel, and others, — who adorn it, I feel, much more than I do.

However, it is not merely out of modesty that I prefer to stand alone, and to concentrate on myself, as a plain citizen of the republic of letters, and not as an office-bearer in a hierarchy, the whole responsibility for all I write; it is much more out of genuine devotion to the University of Oxford, for which I feel, and always must feel, the fondest, the most reverential attachment. In an epoch of dissolution and transformation, such as that on which we are now entered, habits, ties, and associations are inevitably broken up, the action of individuals becomes more distinct, the shortcomings, errors, heats, disputes, which necessarily attend individ action, are brought into greater prominen Who would not gladly keep clear, from these passing clouds, an august institut which was there before they arose, and wh will be there when they have blown over?

It is true, the *Saturday Review* mainta that our epoch of transformation is finish that we have found our philosophy; that t British nation has searched all anchora for the spirit, and has finally anchored its in the fulness of perfected knowledge, Benthamism.[1] This idea at first made great impression on me; not only because is so consoling in itself, but also because explained a phenomenon which in the su mer of last year had, I confess, a good de troubled me. At that time my avocatio led me to travel almost daily on one the Great Eastern Lines, — the Woodfo Branch. Every one knows that the murder Müller, perpetrated his detestable act on t North London Railway, close by. The En lish middle class, of which I am myself feeble unit, travel on the Woodford Bran in large numbers. Well, the demoralizati of our class, — the class which (the new papers are constantly saying it, so I may r peat it without vanity) has done all the gre things which have ever been done in Englan — the demoralization, I say, of our clas caused by the Bow tragedy, was somethi bewildering. Myself a transcendentalist ( the *Saturday Review* knows), I escaped t infection; and, day after day, I used to p my agitated fellow-travellers with all t consolations which my transcendentalis would naturally suggest to me. I remind them how Cæsar refused to take precautio against assassination, because life was n worth having at the price of an ignob solicitude for it. I reminded them what i significant atoms we all are in the life of t world. "Suppose the worst to happen," said, addressing a portly jeweller from Chea side; "suppose even yourself to be the victi *il n'y a pas d'homme nécessaire*.[2] We shou miss you for a day or two upon the Woodfo Branch; but the great mundane moveme would still go on, the gravel walks of yo villa would still be rolled, dividends wou still be paid at the Bank, omnibuses wou still run, there would still be the old crush the corner of Fenchurch Street." All was no avail. Nothing could moderate, in t bosom of the great English middle class, the

1 from his official seat.

2 When the above was written the author had still the Chair of Poetry at Oxford, which he has since vacated. (Arnold's note.)

1 The utilitarianism of the school of Jeremy Bentha

2 No man is necessary.

passionate, absorbing, almost bloodthirsty clinging to life. At the moment I thought this over-concern a little unworthy; but the *Saturday Review* suggests a touching explanation of it. What I took for the ignoble clinging to life of a comfortable worldling, was, perhaps, only the ardent longing of a faithful Benthamite, traversing an age still dimmed by the last mists of transcendentalism, to be spared long enough to see his religion in the full and final blaze of its triumph. This respectable man, whom I imagined to be going up to London to serve his shop, or to buy shares, or to attend an Exeter Hall meeting, or to assist at the deliberations of the Mary-lebone Vestry, was even, perhaps, in real truth, on a pious pilgrimage, to obtain from Mr. Bentham's executors a secret bone of his great, dissected master.[1]

And yet, after all, I cannot but think that the *Saturday Review* has here, for once, fallen a victim to an idea, — a beautiful but deluding idea, — and that the British nation has not yet, so entirely as the reviewer seems to imagine, found the last word of its philosophy. No, we are all seekers still! seekers often make mistakes, and I wish mine to redound to my own discredit only, and not to touch Oxford. Beautiful city! so venerable, so lovely, so unravaged, by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene!

"There are our young barbarians, all at play!"

And yet, steeped in sentiment as she lies, spreading her gardens to the moonlight, and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age, who will deny that Oxford, by her ineffable charm, keeps ever calling us nearer to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection, — to beauty, in a word, which is only truth seen from another side? — nearer, perhaps, than all the science of Tübingen. Adorable dreamer, whose heart has been so romantic! who hast given thyself so prodigally, given thyself to sides and to heroes not mine, only never to the Philistines! home of lost causes, and forsaken beliefs, and unpopular names, and impossible loyalties! what example could ever so inspire us to keep down the Philistine in ourselves, what teacher could ever so save us from that bondage to which we are all prone, that bondage which Goethe, in his incomparable lines on the death of Schiller, makes it his friend's highest praise (and nobly did Schiller deserve the praise) to have left miles out of sight behind him; — the bondage of "*was uns alle bändigt, das Gemeine!*"[1] She will forgive me, even if I have unwittingly drawn upon her a shot or two aimed at her unworthy son; for she is generous, and the cause in which I fight is, after all, hers. Apparitions of a day, what is our puny warfare against the Philistines, compared with the warfare which this queen of romance has been waging against them for centuries, and will wage after we are gone?

[1] Bentham's skeleton is preserved at University College, Oxford.

## THE FUNCTION OF CRITICISM AT THE PRESENT TIME

1865

The opening essay in *Essays in Criticism, First Series*. Here Arnold sets forth his principle of criticism, applied to life as well as literature. It will be seen that Arnold protests not only against the selfishness and complacent materialism of his countrymen, but against their sectarian narrowness. His remedy is a more intellectual one than Carlyle's — i.e., the application of ideas to life.

Many objections have been made to a proposition which, in some remarks of mine on translating Homer, I ventured to put forth; a proposition about criticism, and its importance at the present day. I said that "of the literature of France and Germany, as of the intellect of Europe in general, the main effort, for now many years, has been a critical effort; the endeavor, in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, science, to see the object as in itself it really is." I added, that owing to the operation in English literature of certain causes, "almost the last thing for which one would come to English literature is just that very thing which now Europe most desires, — criticism"; and that the power and value of English literature was thereby impaired. More than one rejoinder declared that the importance I here assigned to criticism was excessive, and asserted the inherent superiority of the creative effort of the human spirit over its critical effort. And the other day, having been led by an excellent notice of Wordsworth, published in the *North British Review*, to turn again to his biography, I found, in the words of this great man, whom I, for one, must always listen to with the profoundest respect, a sentence passed on the critic's business, which seems to justify every possible disparagement of it. Wordsworth says in one of his letters:

[1] That which constrains us all, the commonplace.

"The writers in these publications" (the Reviews), "while they prosecute their inglorious employment, cannot be supposed to be in a state of mind very favorable for being affected by the finer influences of a thing so pure as genuine poetry."

And a trustworthy reporter of his conversation quotes a more elaborate judgment to the same effect:

"Wordsworth holds the critical power very low, infinitely lower than the inventive; and he said to-day that if the quantity of time consumed in writing critiques on the works of others were given to original composition, of whatever kind it might be, it would be much better employed; it would make a man find out sooner his own level, and it would do infinitely less mischief. A false or malicious criticism may do much injury to the minds of others; a stupid invention, either in prose or verse, is quite harmless."

It is almost too much to expect of poor human nature, that a man capable of producing some effect in one line of literature, should, for the greater good of society, voluntarily doom himself to impotence and obscurity in another. Still less is this to be expected from men addicted to the composition of the "false or malicious criticism" of which Wordsworth speaks. However, everybody would admit that a false or malicious criticism had better never have been written. Everybody, too, would be willing to admit, as a general proposition, that the critical faculty is lower than the inventive. But is it true that criticism is really, in itself, a baneful and injurious employment? is it true that all time given to writing critiques on the works of others would be much better employed if it were given to original composition, of whatever kind this may be? Is it true that Johnson had better have gone on producing more *Irenes* instead of writing his *Lives of the Poets?* nay, is it certain that Wordsworth himself was better employed in making his Ecclesiastical Sonnets than when he made his celebrated Preface, so full of criticism, and criticism of the works of others? Wordsworth was himself a great critic, and it is to be sincerely regretted that he has not left us more criticism; Goethe was one of the greatest of critics, and we may sincerely congratulate ourselves that he has left us so much criticism. Without wasting time over the exaggeration which Wordsworth's judgment on criticism clearly contains, or over an attempt to trace the causes, — not difficult, I think, to be traced, — which may have led Wordsworth to this exaggeration, a critic r with advantage seize an occasion for try his own conscience, and for asking himsel what real service, at any given moment, practice of criticism either is, or may made, to his own mind and spirit, and to minds and spirits of others.

The critical power is of lower rank th the creative. True; but in assenting to t proposition, one or two things are to be k in mind. It is undeniable that the exer of a creative power, that a free creat activity, is the true function of man; it proved to be so by man's finding in it his t happiness. But it is undeniable, also, th men may have the sense of exercising t free creative activity in other ways than producing great works of literature or art it were not so, all but a very few men wo be shut out from the true happiness of men. They may have it in well-doing, th may have it in learning, they may have even in criticizing. This is one thing to kept in mind. Another is, that the exerc of the creative power in the production great works of literature or art, however hi this exercise of it may rank, is not at epochs and under all conditions possible; a that therefore labor may be vainly spent attempting it, which might with more fr be used in preparing for it, in rendering possible. This creative power works w elements, with materials; what if it has r those materials, those elements, ready for use? In that case it must surely wait they are ready. Now, in literature, — I w limit myself to literature, for it is about lit ature that the question arises, — the e ments with which the creative power wor are ideas; the best ideas on every mat which literature touches, current at the tim At any rate we may lay it down as certa that in modern literature no manifestation the creative power not working with the can be very important or fruitful. And I s *current* at the time, not merely accessible the time; for creative literary genius does n principally show itself in discovering ne ideas, that is rather the business of the pl losopher. The grand work of literary geni is a work of synthesis and exposition, not analysis and discovery; its gift lies in t faculty of being happily inspired by a certa intellectual and spiritual atmosphere, by certain order of ideas, when it finds itself them; of dealing divinely with these idea presenting them in the most effective an attractive combinations, making beautif

works with them, in short. But it must have the atmosphere, it must find itself amidst the order of ideas, in order to work freely; and these it is not so easy to command. This is why great creative epochs in literature are so rare; this is why there is so much that is unsatisfactory in the productions of many men of real genius; because, for the creation of a master-work of literature two powers must concur, the power of the man and the power of the moment, and the man is not enough without the moment; the creative power has, for its happy exercise, appointed elements, and those elements are not in its own control.

Nay, they are more within the control of the critical power. It is the business of the critical power, as I said in the words already quoted, "in all branches of knowledge, theology, philosophy, history, art, science, to see the object as in itself it really is." Thus it tends, at last, to make an intellectual situation of which the creative power can profitably avail itself. It tends to establish an order of ideas, if not absolutely true, yet true by comparison with that which it displaces; so to make the best ideas prevail. Presently these new ideas reach society, the touch of truth is the touch of life, and there is a stir and growth everywhere; out of this stir and growth come the creative epochs of literature.

Or, to narrow our range, and quit these considerations of the general march of genius and of society, — considerations which are apt to become too abstract and impalpable, — every one can see that a poet, for instance, ought to know life and the world before dealing with them in poetry; and life and the world being in modern times very complex things, the creation of a modern poet, to be worth much, implies a great critical effort behind it; else it would be a comparatively poor, barren, and short-lived affair. This is why Byron's poetry had so little endurance in it, and Goethe's so much; both Byron and Goethe had a great productive power, but Goethe's was nourished by a great critical effort providing the true materials for it, and Byron's was not; Goethe knew life and the world, the poet's necessary subjects, much more comprehensively and thoroughly than Byron. He knew a great deal more of them, and he knew them much more as they really are.

It has long seemed to me that the burst of creative activity in our literature, through the first quarter of this century, had about it in fact something premature; and that from this cause its productions are doomed, most of them, in spite of the sanguine hopes which accompanied and do still accompany them, to prove hardly more lasting than the productions of far less splendid epochs. And this prematureness comes from its having proceeded without having its proper data, without sufficient materials to work with. In other words, the English poetry of the first quarter of this century, with plenty of energy, plenty of creative force, did not know enough. This makes Byron so empty of matter, Shelley so incoherent, Wordsworth even, profound as he is, yet so wanting in completeness and variety. Wordsworth cared little for books, and disparaged Goethe. I admire Wordsworth, as he is, so much that I cannot wish him different; and it is vain, no doubt, to imagine such a man different from what he is, to suppose that he could have been different. But surely the one thing wanting to make Wordsworth an even greater poet than he is, — his thought richer, and his influence of wider application, — was that he should have read more books, among them, no doubt, those of that Goethe whom he disparaged without reading him.

But to speak of books and reading may easily lead to a misunderstanding here. It was not really books and reading that lacked to our poetry at this epoch; Shelley had plenty of reading, Coleridge had immense reading. Pindar and Sophocles — as we all say so glibly, and often with so little discernment of the real import of what we are saying — had not many books; Shakespeare was no deep reader. True; but in the Greece of Pindar and Sophocles, in the England of Shakespeare, the poet lived in a current of ideas in the highest degree animating and nourishing to the creative power; society was, in the fullest measure, permeated by fresh thought, intelligent and alive. And this state of things is the true basis for the creative power's exercise, in this it finds its data, its materials, truly ready for its hand; all the books and reading in the world are only valuable as they are helps to this. Even when this does not actually exist, books and reading may enable a man to construct a kind of semblance of it in his own mind, a world of knowledge and intelligence in which he may live and work. This is by no means an equivalent to the artist for the nationally diffused life and thought of the epochs of Sophocles or Shakespeare; but, besides that it may be a means of preparation for such epochs, it does really constitute, if many share in it, a quickening and sustaining atmosphere of great

value. Such an atmosphere the many-sided learning and the long and widely-combined critical effort of Germany formed for Goethe, when he lived and worked. There was no national glow of life and thought there, as in the Athens of Pericles or the England of Elizabeth. That was the poet's weakness. But there was a sort of equivalent for it in the complete culture and unfettered thinking of a large body of Germans. That was his strength. In the England of the first quarter of this century there was neither a national glow of life and thought, such as we had in the age of Elizabeth, nor yet a culture and a force of learning and criticism such as were to be found in Germany. Therefore the creative power of poetry wanted, for success in the highest sense, materials and a basis; a thorough interpretation of the world was necessarily denied to it.

At first sight it seems strange that out of the immense stir of the French Revolution and its age should not have come a crop of works of genius equal to that which came out of the stir of the great productive time of Greece, or out of that of the Renaissance, with its powerful episode the Reformation. But the truth is that the stir of the French Revolution took a character which essentially distinguished it from such movements as these. These were, in the main, disinterestedly intellectual and spiritual movements; movements in which the human spirit looked for its satisfaction in itself and in the increased play of its own activity. The French Revolution took a political, practical character. The movement which went on in France under the old régime, from 1700 to 1789, was far more really akin than that of the Revolution itself to the movement of the Renaissance; the France of Voltaire and Rousseau told far more powerfully upon the mind of Europe than the France of the Revolution. Goethe reproached this last expressly with having "thrown quiet culture back." Nay, and the true key to how much in our Byron, even in our Wordsworth, is this! — that they had their source in a great movement of feeling, not in a great movement of mind. The French Revolution, however, that object of so much blind love and so much blind hatred, — found undoubtedly its motive-power in the intelligence of men, and not in their practical sense; — this is what distinguishes it from the English Revolution of Charles the First's time. This is what makes it a more spiritual event than our Revolution, an event of much more powerful and world-wide interest, though practically less successful — it appeals to an order of ideas which are universal certain, permanent. 1789 asked of a thing Is it rational? 1642 asked of a thing, Is legal? or, when it went furthest, Is it according to conscience? This is the English fashion, a fashion to be treated, within its own sphere, with the highest respect; for its success, within its own sphere, has been prodigious. But what is law in one place is no law in another; what is law here to-day is no law even here to-morrow; and as for conscience, what is binding on one man's conscience is not binding on another's. The old woman[1] who threw her stool at the head of the surpliced minister in the Tron Church at Edinburgh obeyed an impulse to which millions of the human race may be permitted to remain strangers. But the prescriptions of reason are absolute, unchanging, of universal validity; *to count by tens is the easiest way of counting* — that is a proposition of which every one, from here to the Antipodes, feels the force; at least I should say so if we did not live in a country where it is not impossible that any morning we may find a letter in the *Times* declaring that a decimal coinage is a absurdity. That a whole nation should have been penetrated with an enthusiasm for pure reason, and with an ardent zeal for making its prescriptions triumph, is a very remarkable thing, when we consider how little of mind or anything so worthy and quickening a mind, comes into the motives which alone, in general, *impel* great masses of men. In spite of the extravagant direction given to this enthusiasm, in spite of the crimes and follies in which it lost itself, the French Revolution derives from the force, truth, and universality of the ideas which it took for its law, and from the passion with which it could inspire a multitude for these ideas, a unique and stirring power; it is — it will probably long remain — the greatest, the most animating event in history. And as no sincere passion for the things of the mind, even though it turn out in many respects an unfortunate passion is ever quite thrown away and quite barren of good, France has reaped from hers one fruit — the natural and legitimate fruit, though not precisely the grand fruit she expected — she is the country in Europe where *the people* is most alive.

But the mania for giving an immediate political and practical application to all these

1 Janet Geddes, who gave the signal for the resistance of the Scotch to the imposition of the English liturgy under Charles I, in 1637.

fine ideas of the reason was fatal. Here an Englishman is in his element: on this theme we can all go for hours. And all we are in the habit of saying on it has undoubtedly a great deal of truth. Ideas cannot be too much prized in and for themselves, cannot be too much lived with; but to transport them abruptly into the world of politics and practice, violently to revolutionize this world to their bidding, — that is quite another thing. There is the world of ideas and there is the world of practice; the French are often for suppressing the one and the English the other; but neither is to be suppressed. A member of the House of Commons said to me the other day: "That a thing is an anomaly, I consider to be no objection to it whatever." I venture to think he was wrong; that a thing is an anomaly *is* an objection to it, but absolutely and in the sphere of ideas: it is not necessarily, under such and such circumstances, or at such and such a moment, an objection to it in the sphere of politics and practice. Joubert[1] has said beautifully: "C'est la force et le droit qui règlent toutes choses dans le monde; la force en attendant le droit." Force and right are the governors of this world; force till right is ready. *Force till right is ready;* and till right is ready, force, the existing order of things, is justified, is the legitimate ruler. But right is something moral, and implies inward recognition, free assent of the will; we are not ready for right, — *right*, so far as we are concerned, *is not ready*, — until we have attained this sense of seeing it and willing it. The way in which for us it may change and transform force, the existing order of things, and become, in its turn, the legitimate ruler of the world, will depend on the way in which, when our time comes, we see it and will it. Therefore for other people enamored of their own newly discerned right, to attempt to impose it upon us as ours, and violently to substitute their right for our force, is an act of tyranny, and to be resisted. It sets at nought the second great half of our maxim, *force till right is ready*. This was the grand error of the French Revolution; and its movement of ideas, by quitting the intellectual sphere and rushing furiously into the political sphere, ran, indeed, a prodigious and memorable course, but produced no such intellectual fruit as the movement of ideas of the Renaissance, and created, in opposition to itself, what I may call an *epoch of concentration*.

The great force of that epoch of concentration was England; and the great voice of that epoch of concentration was Burke. It is the fashion to treat Burke's writings on the French Revolution as superannuated and conquered by the event; as the eloquent but unphilosophical tirades of bigotry and prejudice. I will not deny that they are often disfigured by the violence and passion of the moment, and that in some directions Burke's view was bounded, and his observation therefore at fault. But on the whole, and for those who can make the needful corrections, what distinguishes these writings is their profound, permanent, fruitful, philosophical truth. They contain the true philosophy of an epoch of concentration, dissipate the heavy atmosphere which its own nature is apt to engender round it, and make its resistance rational instead of mechanical.

But Burke is so great because, almost alone in England, he brings thought to bear upon politics, he saturates politics with thought. It is his accident that his ideas were at the service of an epoch of concentration, not of an epoch of expansion; it is his characteristic that he so lived by ideas, and had such a source of them welling up within him, that he could float even an epoch of concentration and English Tory politics with them. It does not hurt him that Dr. Price and the Liberals were displeased with him; it does not even hurt him that George the Third and the Tories were enchanted with him. His greatness is that he lived in a world which neither English Liberalism nor English Toryism is apt to enter; — the world of ideas, not the world of catchwords and party habits. So far is it from being really true of him that he "to party gave up what was meant for mankind," that at the very end of his fierce struggle with the French Revolution, after all his invectives against its false pretensions, hollowness, and madness, with his sincere conviction of its mischievousness, he can close a memorandum on the best means of combating it, some of the last pages he ever wrote, — the *Thoughts on French Affairs*, in December 1791, — with these striking words: —

"The evil is stated, in my opinion, as it exists. The remedy must be where power, wisdom, and information, I hope, are more united with good intentions than they can be with me. I have done with this subject, I believe, for ever. It has given me many anxious moments for the last two years. *If a great*

1 A French writer (1754–1824) of whom Arnold wrote one of the *Essays in Criticism*.

*change is to be made in human affairs, the minds of men will be fitted to it; the general opinions and feelings will draw that way. Every fear, every hope will forward it; and then they who persist in opposing this mighty current in human affairs, will appear rather to resist the decrees of Providence itself, than the mere designs of men. They will not be resolute and firm, but perverse and obstinate.*"

That return of Burke upon himself has always seemed to me one of the finest things in English literature, or indeed in any literature. That is what I call living by ideas: when one side of a question has long had your earnest support, when all your feelings are engaged, when you hear all round you no language but one, when your party talks this language like a steam-engine and can imagine no other, — still to be able to think, still to be irresistibly carried, if so it be, by the current of thought to the opposite side of the question, and, like Balaam, to be unable to speak anything *but what the Lord has put in your mouth.* I know nothing more striking, and I must add that I know nothing more un-English.

For the Englishman in general is like my friend the Member of Parliament, and believes, point-blank, that for a thing to be an anomaly is absolutely no objection to it whatever. He is like the Lord Auckland of Burke's day, who, in a memorandum on the French Revolution, talks, of "certain miscreants, assuming the name of philosophers, who have presumed themselves capable of establishing a new system of society." The Englishman has been called a political animal, and he values what is political and practical so much that ideas easily become objects of dislike in his eyes, and thinkers "miscreants," because ideas and thinkers have rashly meddled with politics and practice. This would be all very well if the dislike and neglect confined themselves to ideas transported out of their own sphere, and meddling rashly with practice; but they are inevitably extended to ideas as such, and to the whole life of intelligence; practice is everything, a free play of the mind is nothing. The notion of the free play of the mind upon all subjects being a pleasure in itself, being an object of desire, being an essential provider of elements without which a nation's spirit, whatever compensations it may have for them, must, in the long run, die of inanition, hardly enters into an Englishman's thoughts. It is noticeable that the word *curiosity*, which in other languages is used in a good sense, to mean, as a high and fine quality of man's nature, just this disinterest love of a free play of the mind on all su jects, for its own sake, — it is noticeable, say, that this word has in our language sense of the kind, no sense but a rather b and disparaging one. But criticism, re criticism, is essentially the exercise of th very quality. It obeys an instinct prompti it to try to know the best that is known a thought in the world, irrespectively of pra tice, politics, and everything of the kind; a to value knowledge and thought as they a proach this best, without the intrusion of a other considerations whatever. This is a instinct for which there is, I think, litt original sympathy in the practical Englis nature, and what there was of it has unde gone a long benumbing period of blight a suppression in the epoch of concentratio which followed the French Revolution.

But epochs of concentration cannot we endure for ever; epochs of expansion, in th due course of things, follow them. Such a epoch of expansion seems to be opening i this country. In the first place all danger o a hostile forcible pressure of foreign idea upon our practice has long disappeared; lik the traveller in the fable, therefore, we begi to wear our cloak a little more loosely. Then with a long peace, the ideas of Europe stea gradually and amicably in, and mingle though in infinitesimally small quantities a a time, with our own notions. Then, too, i spite of all that is said about the absorbin and brutalizing influence of our passionat material progress, it seems to me indispu table that this progress is likely, though no certain, to lead in the end to an apparitio of intellectual life; and that man, after h has made himself perfectly comfortable an has now to determine what to do with himsel next, may begin to remember that he has mind, and that the mind may be made th source of great pleasure. I grant it is mainl the privilege of faith, at present, to discer this end to our railways, our business, and ou fortune-making; but we shall see if, here a elsewhere, faith is not in the end the tru prophet. Our ease, our travelling, and ou unbounded liberty to hold just as hard an securely as we please to the practice to whic our notions have given birth, all tend to be get an inclination to deal a little more freely with these notions themselves, to canvass them a little, to penetrate a little into their real nature. Flutterings of curiosity, in the foreign sense of the word, appear amongst us, and it is in these that criticism must look

to find its account. Criticism first; a time of true creative activity, perhaps, — which, as I have said, must inevitably be preceded amongst us by a time of criticism, — hereafter, when criticism has done its work.

It is of the last importance that English criticism should clearly discern what rule for its course, in order to avail itself of the field now opening to it, and to produce fruit for the future, it ought to take. The rule may be summed up in one word, — disinterestedness. And how is criticism to show disinterestedness? By keeping aloof from what is called "the practical view of things;" by resolutely following the law of its own nature, which is to be a free play of the mind on all subjects which it touches. By steadily refusing to lend itself to any of those ulterior, political, practical considerations about ideas, which plenty of people will be sure to attach to them, which perhaps ought often to be attached to them, which in this country at any rate are certain to be attached to them quite sufficiently, but which criticism has really nothing to do with. Its business is, as I have said, simply to know the best that is known and thought in the world, and by in its turn making this known, to create a current of true and fresh ideas. Its business is to do this with inflexible honesty, with due ability; but its business is to do no more, and to leave alone all questions of practical consequences and applications, questions which will never fail to have due prominence given to them. Else criticism, besides being really false to its own nature, merely continues in the old rut which it has hitherto followed in this country, and will certainly miss the chance now given to it.

For what is at present the bane of criticism in this country? It is that practical considerations cling to it and stifle it. It subserves interests not its own. Our organs of criticism are organs of men and parties having practical ends to serve, and with them those practical ends are the first thing and the play of mind the second; so much play of mind as is compatible with the prosecution of those practical ends is all that is wanted. An organ like the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, having for its main function to understand and utter the best that is known and thought in the world, existing, it may be said, as just an organ for a free play of the mind, we have not. But we have the *Edinburgh Review*, existing as an organ of the old Whigs, and for as much play of the mind as may suit its being that; we have the *Quarterly Review*, existing as an organ of the Tories, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that; we have the *British Quarterly Review*, existing as an organ of the political Dissenters, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that; we have the *Times*, existing as an organ of the common, satisfied, well-to-do Englishman, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that. And so on through all the various fractions, political and religious, of our society; every fraction has, as such, its organ of criticism, but the notion of combining all fractions in the common pleasure of a free disinterested play of mind meets with no favor. Directly this play of mind wants to have more scope, and to forget the pressure of practical considerations a little, it is checked, it is made to feel the chain. We saw this the other day in the extinction, so much to be regretted, of the *Home and Foreign Review*. Perhaps in no organ of criticism in this country was there so much knowledge, so much play of mind; but these could not save it. The *Dublin Review* subordinates play of mind to the practical business of English and Irish Catholicism, and lives. It must needs be that men should act in sects and parties, that each of these sects and parties should have its organ, and should make this organ subserve the interests of its action; but it would be well, too, that there should be a criticism, not the minister of these interests, not their enemy, but absolutely and entirely independent of them. No other criticism will ever attain any real authority or make any real way towards its end, — the creating a current of true and fresh ideas.

It is because criticism has so little kept in the pure intellectual sphere, has so little detached itself from practice, has been so directly polemical and controversial, that it has so ill accomplished, in this country, its best spiritual work; which is to keep man from a self-satisfaction which is retarding and vulgarizing, to lead him towards perfection, by making his mind dwell upon what is excellent in itself, and the absolute beauty and fitness of things. A polemical practical criticism makes men blind even to the ideal imperfection of their practice, makes them willingly assert its ideal perfection, in order the better to secure it against attack; and clearly this is narrowing and baneful for them. If they were reassured on the practical side, speculative considerations of ideal perfection they might be brought to entertain, and their spiritual horizon would thus

gradually widen. Sir Charles Adderley[1] says to the Warwickshire farmers:

"Talk of the improvement of breed! Why, the race we ourselves represent, the men and women, the old Anglo-Saxon race, are the best breed in the whole world. . . . The absence of a too enervating climate, too unclouded skies, and a too luxurious nature, has produced so vigorous a race of people, and has rendered us so superior to all the world."

Mr. Roebuck[2] says to the Sheffield cutlers:

"I look around me and ask what is the state of England? Is not property safe? Is not every man able to say what he likes? Can you not walk from one end of England to the other in perfect security? I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it? Nothing. I pray that our unrivalled happiness may last."

Now obviously there is a peril for poor human nature in words and thoughts of such exuberant self-satisfaction, until we find ourselves safe in the streets of the Celestial City.

"Das wenige verschwindet leicht dem Blicke
Der vorwärts sieht, wie viel noch übrig bleibt —"

says Goethe; "the little that is done seems nothing when we look forward and see how much we have yet to do." Clearly this is a better line of reflection for weak humanity, so long as it remains on this earthly field of labor and trial.

But neither Sir Charles Adderley nor Mr. Roebuck is by nature inaccessible to considerations of this sort. They only lose sight of them owing to the controversial life we all lead, and the practical form which all speculation takes with us. They have in view opponents whose aim is not ideal, but practical; and in their zeal to uphold their own practice against these innovators, they go so far as even to attribute to this practice an ideal perfection. Somebody has been wanting to introduce a six-pound franchise, or to abolish church-rates, or to collect agricultural statistics by force, or to diminish local self-government. How natural, in reply to such proposals, very likely improper or ill-timed, to go a little beyond the mark and to say stoutly, "Such a race of people as we stand, so superior to all the world! The old Anglo-Saxon race, the best breed in the whole world! I pra that our unrivalled happiness may last! ask you whether, the world over or in pa history, there is anything like it?" And long as criticism answers this dithyramb insisting that the old Anglo-Saxon ra would be still more superior to all others if had no church-rates, or that our unrivalle happiness would last yet longer with a si pound franchise, so long will the strai "The best breed in the whole world!" swe louder and louder, everything ideal and r fining will be lost out of sight, and both th assailed and their critics will remain in sphere, to say the truth, perfectly unvita a sphere in which spiritual progression impossible. But let criticism leave churc rates and the franchise alone, and in the mo candid spirit, without a single lurking thoug of practical innovation, confront with ou dithyramb this paragraph on which stumbled in a newspaper immediately afte reading Mr. Roebuck:

"A shocking child murder has just bee committed at Nottingham. A girl name Wragg left the workhouse there on Saturda morning with her young illegitimate chil The child was soon afterwards found dead o Mapperly Hills, having been strangle Wragg is in custody."

Nothing but that; but, in juxtapositio with the absolute eulogies of Sir Charle Adderley and Mr. Roebuck, how eloquen how suggestive are those few lines! "Ou old Anglo-Saxon breed, the best in the whol world!" — how much that is harsh and ill favored there is in this best! *Wragg!* If w are to talk of ideal perfection, of "the bes in the whole world," has any one reflecte what a touch of grossness in our race, what a original shortcoming in the more delicat spiritual perceptions, is shown by the natura growth amongst us of such hideous names, — Higginbottom, Stiggins, Bugg! In Ionia and Attica they were luckier in this respect tha "the best race in the world;" by the Ilissus there was no Wragg, poor thing! And "our unrivalled happiness;" — what an element of grimness, bareness, and hideousness mixes with it and blurs it; the workhouse the dismal Mapperly Hills, — how dismal those who have seen them will remember; — the gloom, the smoke, the cold, the strangled illegitimate child! "I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it?" Perhaps not, one is inclined to answer; but at any rate, in that case, the world is very much to be pitied. And the

1 Sir Charles Bowyer Adderley, Baron Norton (1814–1905), a leading Tory politician.

2 John Arthur Roebuck (1802–79), Member of Parliament for Sheffield.

final touch, — short, bleak and inhuman: *Wragg is in custody.* The sex lost in the confusion of our unrivalled happiness; or (shall I say?) the superfluous Christian name lopped off by the straightforward vigor of our old Anglo-Saxon breed! There is profit for the spirit in such contrasts as this; criticism serves the cause of perfection by establishing them. By eluding sterile conflict, by refusing to remain in the sphere where alone narrow and relative conceptions have any worth and validity, criticism may diminish its momentary importance, but only in this way has it a chance of gaining admittance for those wider and more perfect conceptions to which all its duty is really owed. Mr. Roebuck will have a poor opinion of an adversary who replies to his defiant songs of triumph only by murmuring under his breath, *Wragg is in custody;* but in no other way will these songs of triumph be induced gradually to moderate themselves, to get rid of what in them is excessive and offensive, and to fall into a softer and truer key.

It will be said that it is a very subtle and indirect action which I am thus prescribing for criticism, and that, by embracing in this manner the Indian virtue of detachment and abandoning the sphere of practical life, it condemns itself to a slow and obscure work. Slow and obscure it may be, but it is the only proper work of criticism. The mass of mankind will never have any ardent zeal for seeing things as they are; very inadequate ideas will always satisfy them. On these inadequate ideas reposes, and must repose, the general practice of the world. That is as much as saying that whoever sets himself to see things as they are will find himself one of a very small circle; but it is only by this small circle resolutely doing its own work that adequate ideas will ever get current at all. The rush and roar of practical life will always have a dizzying and attracting effect upon the most collected spectator, and tend to draw him into its vortex; most of all will this be the case where that life is so powerful as it is in England. But it is only by remaining collected, and refusing to lend himself to the point of view of the practical man, that the critic can do the practical man any service; and it is only by the greatest sincerity in pursuing his own course, and by at last convincing even the practical man of his sincerity, that he can escape misunderstandings which perpetually threaten him.

For the practical man is not apt for fine distinctions, and yet in these distinctions truth and the highest culture greatly find their account. But it is not easy to lead a practical man, — unless you reassure him as to your practical intentions, you have no chance of leading him, — to see that a thing which he has always been used to look at from one side only, which he greatly values, and which, looked at from that side, quite deserves, perhaps, all the prizing and admiring which he bestows upon it, — that this thing, looked at from another side, may appear much less beneficent and beautiful, and yet retain all its claims to our practical allegiance. Where shall we find language innocent enough, how shall we make the spotless purity of our intentions evident enough, to enable us to say to the political Englishman that the British constitution itself, which, seen from the practical side, looks such a magnificent organ of progress and virtue, seen from the speculative side, — with its compromises, its love of facts, its horror of theory, its studied avoidance of clear thoughts, — that, seen from this side, our august constitution sometimes looks, — forgive me, shade of Lord Somers![1] — a colossal machine for the manufacture of Philistines? How is Cobbett[2] to say this and not be misunderstood, blackened as he is with the smoke of a lifelong conflict in the field of political practice? how is Mr. Carlyle to say it and not be misunderstood, after his furious raid into this field with his *Latter-day Pamphlets?* how is Mr. Ruskin, after his pugnacious political economy? I say, the critic must keep out of the region of immediate practice in the political, social, humanitarian sphere, if he wants to make a beginning for that more free speculative treatment of things, which may perhaps one day make its benefits felt even in this sphere, but in a natural and thence irresistible manner.

Do what he will, however, the critic will still remain exposed to frequent misunderstandings, and nowhere so much as in this country. For here people are particularly indisposed even to comprehend that without this free disinterested treatment of things, truth and the highest culture are out of the question. So immersed are they in practical life, so accustomed to take all their notions from this life and its processes, that they are apt to think that truth and culture themselves can be reached by the processes of this life, and that it is an impertinent singularity to

1 A leading statesman of the eighteenth century, noted as a defender of the constitution.
2 William Cobbett (1766–1835), a radical journalist.

think of reaching them in any other. "We are all *terræ filii*," [1] cries their eloquent advocate; "all Philistines together. Away with the notion of proceeding by any other way than the way dear to the Philistines; let us have a social movement, let us organize and combine a party to pursue truth and new thought, let us call it *the liberal party*, and let us all stick to each other, and back each other up. Let us have no nonsense about independent criticism, and intellectual delicacy, and the few and the many. Don't let us trouble ourselves about foreign thought; we shall invent the whole thing for ourselves as we go along. If one of us speaks well, applaud him; if one of us speaks ill, applaud him too; we are all in the same movement, we are all liberals, we are all in pursuit of truth." In this way the pursuit of truth becomes really a social, practical, pleasurable affair, almost requiring a chairman, a secretary, and advertisements; with the excitement of a little resistance, an occasional scandal, to give the happy sense of difficulty overcome; but, in general, plenty of bustle and very little thought. To act is so easy, as Goethe says; to think is so hard! It is true that the critic has many temptations to go with the stream, to make one of the party movement, one of these *terræ filii;* it seems ungracious to refuse to be a *terræ filius*, when so many excellent people are; but the critic's duty is to refuse, or, if resistance is vain, at least to cry with Obermann:[2] *Périssons en résistant.*[3]

How serious a matter it is to try and resist, I had ample opportunity of experiencing when I ventured some time ago to criticize the celebrated first volume of Bishop Colenso.[4] The echoes of the storm which was then raised I still, from time to time, hear grumbling round me. That storm arose out of a misunderstanding almost inevitable. It is a result of no little culture to attain to a clear perception that science and religion are two wholly different things; the multitude will for ever confuse them; but happily that is of no great real importance, for while it imagines itself to live by its false science, it does really live by its true religion. Dr. Colenso, however, in his first volume did all he could to strengthen the confusion, and to make it dangerous. He did this with the best intentions, I freely admit, and with the most candid ignorance that this was the natural effect of what he was doing; but, says Joubert, "Ignorance, which in matters of morals extenuates the crime, is itself, in intellectual matters, a crime of the first order. I criticized Bishop Colenso's speculative confusion. Immediately there was a cry raised "What is this? here is a liberal attacking a liberal. Do not you belong to the movement? are not you a friend of truth? Is not Bishop Colenso in pursuit of truth? then speak with proper respect of his book. Dr. Stanley is another friend of truth, and you speak with proper respect of his book; why make these invidious differences? both books are excellent, admirable, liberal; Bishop Colenso's perhaps the most so, because it is the boldest, and will have the best practical consequences for the liberal cause. Do you want to encourage to the attack of a brother liberal his, and your, and our implacable enemies, the *Church and State Review* or the *Record*, — the High Church rhinoceros and the Evangelical hyæna? Be silent, therefore; or rather speak, speak as loud as ever you can! and go into ecstasies over the eighty and odd pigeons."

But criticism cannot follow this coarse and indiscriminate method. It is unfortunately possible for a man in pursuit of truth to write a book which reposes upon a false conception. Even the practical consequences of a book are to genuine criticism no recommendation of it, if the book is, in the highest sense, blundering. I see that a lady who herself, too, is in pursuit of truth, and who writes with great ability, but a little too much, perhaps, under the influence of the practical spirit of the English liberal movement, classes Bishop Colenso's book and M. Renan's together, in her survey of the religious state of Europe, as facts of the same order, works, both of them, of "great importance;" "great ability, power, and skill;" Bishop Colenso's, perhaps, the most powerful; at least, Miss Cobbe[1] gives special expression to her gratitude that to Bishop Colenso "has been given the strength to grasp, and the courage to teach, truths of such deep import." In the same way, more than one popular writer has compared him to Luther. Now it is just this kind of false estimate which the critical spirit is, it seems to me, bound to resist. It is really the strongest possible proof of the low ebb at

1 sons of the earth.

2 The title of a book by the French romanticist Senancour (1770–1846) which Arnold greatly admired.

3 Let us perish in resisting.

4 John William Colenso (1814–83), Bishop of Natal, whose heresy on the subject of eternal punishment aroused a storm of ecclesiastical controversy.

1 Frances Power Cobbe, a popular writer on religious topics.

which, in England, the critical spirit is, that while the critical hit in the religious literature of Germany is Dr. Strauss's book,[1] in that of France M. Renan's book, the book of Bishop Colenso is the critical hit in the religious literature of England. Bishop Colenso's book reposes on a total misconception of the essential elements of the religious problem, as that problem is now presented for solution. To criticism therefore, which seeks to have the best that is known and thought on this problem, it is, however well meant, of no importance whatever. M. Renan's book attempts a new synthesis of the elements furnished to us by the Four Gospels. It attempts, in my opinion, a synthesis, perhaps premature, perhaps impossible, certainly not successful. Perhaps we shall always have to acquiesce in Fleury's sentence on such recastings of the Gospel-story: *Quiconque s'imagine la pouvoir mieux écrire, ne l'entend pas.*[2] M. Renan had himself passed by anticipation a like sentence on his own work, when he said: "If a new presentation of the character of Jesus were offered to me, I would not have it; its very clearness would be, in my opinion, the best proof of its insufficiency." His friends may with perfect truth rejoin that at the sight of the Holy Land, and of the actual scene of the Gospel-story, all the current of M. Renan's thoughts may have naturally changed, and a new casting of that story irresistibly suggested itself to him; and that this is just a case for applying Cicero's maxim: Change of mind is not inconsistency — *nemo doctus unquam mutationem consilii inconstantiam dixit esse.*[3] Nevertheless, for criticism, M. Renan's first thought must still be the truer one, as long as his new casting so fails more fully to commend itself, more fully (to use Coleridge's happy phrase about the Bible) to *find* us. Still M. Renan's attempt is, for criticism, of the most real interest and importance, since, with all its difficulty, a fresh synthesis of the New Testament *data*, — not a making war on them, in Voltaire's fashion, not a leaving them out of mind in the world's fashion, but the putting a new construction upon them, the taking them from under the old traditional, conventional point of view and placing them under a new one, — is the very essence of the religious problem, as now presented; and only by efforts in this direction can it receive a solution.

Again, in the same spirit in which she judges Bishop Colenso, Miss Cobbe, like so many earnest liberals of our practical race, both here and in America, herself sets vigorously about a positive re-construction of religion, about making a religion of the future out of hand, or at least setting about making it. We must not rest, she and they are always thinking and saying, in negative criticism, we must be creative and constructive; hence we have such works as her recent *Religious Duty*, and works still more considerable, perhaps, by others, which will be in every one's mind. These works often have much ability; they often spring out of sincere convictions, and a sincere wish to do good; and they sometimes, perhaps, do good. Their fault is (if I may be permitted to say so) one which they have in common with the British College of Health, in the New Road. Every one knows the British College of Health; it is that building with the lion and the statue of the Goddess Hygeia before it; at least I am sure about the lion, though I am not absolutely certain about the Goddess Hygeia. This building does credit, perhaps, to the resources of Dr. Morrison[1] and his disciples; but it falls a good deal short of one's idea of what a British College of Health ought to be. In England, where we hate public interference and love individual enterprise, we have a whole crop of places like the British College of Health; the grand name without the grand thing. Unluckily, creditable to individual enterprise as they are, they tend to impair our taste by making us forget what more grandiose, noble, or beautiful character properly belongs to a public institution. The same may be said of the religions of the future of Miss Cobbe and others. Creditable, like the British College of Health, to the resources of their authors, they yet tend to make us forget what more grandiose, noble, or beautiful character properly belongs to religious constructions. The historic religions, with all their faults, have had this; it certainly belongs to the religious sentiment, when it truly flowers, to have this; and we impoverish our spirit if we allow a religion of the future without it. What then is the duty of criticism here? To take the practical point of view, to applaud the liberal movement and all its works, — its New

1 Strauss and Renan both wrote lives of Jesus rationalizing the miraculous narrative of the Gospels.

2 Whoever imagines that he has power to write better does not understand it.

3 No wise man ever said that change of opinion was inconsistency.

1 James Morison (1770–1840), who discovered a "universal remedy" known as Morison's pills.

Road religions of the future into the bargain, — for their general utility's sake? By no means; but to be perpetually dissatisfied with these works, while they perpetually fall short of a high and perfect ideal.

For criticism, these are elementary laws; but they never can be popular, and in this country they have been very little followed, and one meets with immense obstacles in following them. That is a reason for asserting them again and again. Criticism must maintain its independence of the practical spirit and its aims. Even with well-meant efforts of the practical spirit it must express dissatisfaction, if in the sphere of the ideal they seem impoverishing and limiting. It must not hurry on to the goal because of its practical importance. It must be patient, and know how to wait; and flexible, and know how to attach itself to things and how to withdraw from them. It must be apt to study and praise elements that for the fulness of spiritual perfection are wanted, even though they belong to a power which in the practical sphere may be maleficent. It must be apt to discern the spiritual shortcomings or illusions of powers that in the practical sphere may be beneficent. And this without any notion of favoring or injuring, in the practical sphere, one power or the other; without any notion of playing off, in this sphere, one power against the other. When one looks, for instance, at the English Divorce Court, — an institution which perhaps has its practical conveniences, but which in the ideal sphere is so hideous; an institution which neither makes divorce impossible nor makes it decent, which allows a man to get rid of his wife, or a wife of her husband, but makes them drag one another first, for the public edification, through a mire of unutterable infamy, — when one looks at this charming institution, I say, with its crowded trials, its newspaper reports, and its money compensations, this institution in which the gross unregenerate British Philistine has indeed stamped an image of himself, — one may be permitted to find the marriage theory of Catholicism refreshing and elevating. Or when Protestantism, in virtue of its supposed rational and intellectual origin, gives the law to criticism too magisterially, criticism may and must remind it that its pretensions, in this respect, are illusive and do it harm; that the Reformation was a moral rather than an intellectual event; that Luther's theory of grace no more exactly reflects the mind of the spirit than Bossuet's philosophy of history reflects i and that there is no more antecedent pro ability of the Bishop of Durham's stock ideas being agreeable to perfect reason tha of Pope Pius the Ninth's. But criticism wi not on that account forget the achievemen of Protestantism in the practical and mor sphere; nor that, even in the intellectu sphere, Protestantism, though in a blind an stumbling manner, carried forward the R naissance, while Catholicism threw itse violently across its path.

I lately heard a man of thought and energ contrasting the want of ardor and movemer which he now found amongst young men i this country with what he remembered i his own youth, twenty years ago. "Wha reformers we were then!" he exclaimed "what a zeal we had! how we canvasse every institution in Church and State, an were prepared to remodel them all on firs principles!" He was inclined to regret, as spiritual flagging, the lull which he saw. am disposed rather to regard it as a pause i which the turn to a new mode of spiritua progress is being accomplished. Everythin was long seen, by the young and arden amongst us, in inseparable connection wit politics and practical life. We have pretty well exhausted the benefits of seeing thing in this connection, we have got all that ca be got by so seeing them. Let us try a mor disinterested mode of seeing them; let us be take ourselves more to the serener life of the mind and spirit. This life, too, may have its excesses and dangers; but they are not fo us at present. Let us think of quietly en larging our stock of true and fresh ideas, and not, as soon as we get an idea or half an idea be running out with it into the street, and trying to make it rule there. Our ideas will in the end, shape the world all the better for maturing a little. Perhaps in fifty years time it will in the English House of Commons be an objection to an institution that it is an anomaly, and my friend the Member of Parliament will shudder in his grave. But let us in the meanwhile rather endeavor that in twenty years' time it may, in English literature, be an objection to a proposition that it is absurd. That will be a change so vast, that the imagination almost fails to grasp it. *Ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo.*[1]

If I have insisted so much on the course which criticism must take where politics and religion are concerned, it is because, where these burning matters are in question, it is

1 From the renewal of the generations order is born..

most likely to go astray. I have wished, above all, to insist on the attitude which criticism should adopt toward things in general; on its right tone and temper of mind. But then comes another question as to the subject-matter which literary criticism should seek. Here in general, its course is determined for it by the idea which is the law of its being; the idea of a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world, and thus to establish a current of fresh and true ideas. By the very nature of things, as England is not all the world, much of the best that is known and thought in the world cannot be of English growth, must be foreign; by the nature of things, again, it is just this that we are least likely to know, while English thought is streaming in upon us from all sides, and takes excellent care that we shall not be ignorant of its existence. The English critic, therefore, must dwell much on foreign thought, and with particular heed on any part of it, which, while significant and fruitful in itself, is for any reason specially likely to escape him. Again, judging is often spoken of as the critic's one business, and so in some sense it is; but the judgment which almost insensibly forms itself in a fair and clear mind, along with fresh knowledge, is the valuable one; and thus knowledge, and ever fresh knowledge, must be the critic's great concern for himself. And it is by communicating fresh knowledge, and letting his own judgment pass along with it, — but insensibly, and in the second place, not the first, as a sort of companion and clue, not as an abstract lawgiver, — that he will generally do most good to his readers. Sometimes, no doubt, for the sake of establishing an author's place in literature, and his relation to a central standard (and if this is not done, how are we to get at our *best in the world?*) criticism may have to deal with a subject-matter so familiar that fresh knowledge is out of the question, and then it must be all judgment; an enunciation and detailed application of principles. Here the great safeguard is never to let oneself become abstract, always to retain an intimate and lively consciousness of the truth of what one is saying, and, the moment this fails us, to be sure that something is wrong. Still, under all circumstances, this mere judgment and application of principles is, in itself, not the most satisfactory work to the critic; like mathematics, it is tautological, and cannot well give us, like fresh learning, the sense of creative activity.

But stop, someone will say; all this talk is of no practical use to us whatever; this criticism of yours is not what we have in our minds when we speak of criticism; when we speak of critics and criticism, we mean critics and criticism of the current English literature of the day; when you offer to tell criticism of its function, it is to this criticism that we expect you to address yourself. I am sorry for it for I am afraid I must disappoint these expectations. I am bound by my own definition of criticism: *a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world.* How much of current English literature comes into this "best that is known and thought in the world"? Not very much, I fear; certainly less, at this moment, than of the current literature of France or Germany. Well, then, am I to alter my definition of criticism, in order to meet the requirements of a number of practising English critics, who, after all, are free in their choice of a business? that would be making criticism lend itself to one of those alien practical considerations, which, I have said, are so fatal to it. One may say, indeed, to those who have to deal with the mass — so much better disregarded — of current English literature, that they may at all events endeavor, in dealing with this, to try it, so far as they can, by the standard of the best that is known and thought in the world: one may say, that to get anywhere near this standard, every critic should try and possess one great literature, at least, besides his own; and the more unlike his own, the better. But, after all, the criticism I am really concerned with — the criticism which alone can much help us for the future, the criticism which, throughout Europe, is at the present moment meant, when so much stress is laid on the importance of criticism and the critical spirit — is a criticism which regards Europe as being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working to a common result; and whose members have, for their proper outfit, a knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity, and of one another. Special, local, and temporary advantages being put out of account, that modern nation will in the intellectual and spiritual sphere make most progress, which most thoroughly carries out this programme. And what is that but saying that we too, all of us, as individuals, the more thoroughly we carry it out, shall make the more progress?

There is so much inviting us! — what are

we to take? what will nourish us in growth towards perfection? That is the question which, with the immense field of life and literature lying before him, the critic has to answer: for himself first, afterwards for others. In this idea of the critic's business the essays brought together in the following pages have had their origin; in this idea, widely different as are their subjects, they have, perhaps, their unity.

I conclude with what I said at the beginning: to have the sense of creative activity is the great happiness and the great proof of being alive, and it is not denied to criticism to have it; but then criticism must be sincere, simple, flexible, ardent, ever widening its knowledge. Then it may have, in no contemptible measure, a joyful sense of creative activity; a sense which a man of insight and conscience will prefer to what he might derive from a poor, starved, fragmentary, inadequate creation. And at some epochs no other creation is possible.

Still, in full measure, the sense of creative activity belongs only to genuine creation; in literature we must never forget that. But what true man of letters ever can forget it? It is no such common matter for a gifted nature to come into possession of a current of true and living ideas, and to produce amidst the inspiration of them, that we are likely to underrate it. The epochs of Æschylus and Shakespeare make us feel their pre-eminence. In an epoch like those is, no doubt, the true life of literature; there is the promised land, towards which criticism can only beckon. That promised land it will not be ours to enter, and we shall die in the wilderness: but to have desired to enter it, to have saluted it from afar, is already, perhaps, the best distinction among contemporaries; it will certainly be the best title to esteem with posterity.

## SWEETNESS AND LIGHT

### 1867

The opening chapter of *Culture and Anarchy: an essay in Political and Social Criticism*, first published in the *Cornhill Magazine*, 1867–68, and in book form in 1869. The chapter-title is an expression taken from Swift meaning Beauty and Intelligence. Here Arnold continues the argument, advanced in the preceding essay, for the pursuit of perfection through intellectual progress.

The disparagers of culture make its motive curiosity; sometimes, indeed, they make its motive mere exclusiveness and vanity. Th culture which is supposed to plume itself a smattering of Greek and Latin is a cultu which is begotten by nothing so intellectu as curiosity; it is valued either out of she vanity and ignorance or else as an engine social and class distinction, separating i holder, like a badge or title, from other peop who have not got it. No serious man wou call this *culture*, or attach any value to it, culture, at all. To find the real ground fo the very different estimate which seriou people will set upon culture, we must fin some motive for culture in the terms of whic may lie a real ambiguity; and such a moti the word *curiosity* gives us.

I have before now pointed out that w English do not, like the foreigners, use th word in a good sense as well as in a bad sens With us the word is always used in a som what disapproving sense. A liberal and in telligent eagerness about the things of th mind may be meant by a foreigner when h speaks of curiosity, but with us the word a ways conveys a certain notion of frivolou and unedifying activity. In the *Quarter Review*, some little time ago, was an estimat of the celebrated French critic, M. Sainte Beuve, and a very inadequate estimate it i my judgment was. And its inadequacy co sisted chiefly in this: that in our English wa it left out of sight the double sense really in volved in the word *curiosity*, thinking enoug was said to stamp M. Sainte-Beuve wit blame if it was said that he was impelled i his operations as a critic by curiosity, an omitting either to perceive that M. Sainte Beuve himself, and many other people wit him, would consider that this was praise worthy and not blameworthy, or to poin out why it ought really to be accounte worthy of blame and not of praise. Fo as there is a curiosity about intellectua matters which is futile, and merely disease, so there is certainly a curiosity — a desire after the things of the mind sim ply for their own sakes and for the pleas ure of seeing them as they are, — whic is, in an intelligent being, natural and laud able. Nay, and the very desire to see thing as they are implies a balance and regulatio of mind which is not often attained withou fruitful effort, and which is the very opposit of the blind and diseased impulse of min which is what we mean to blame when w blame curiosity. Montesquieu says: "Th first motive which ought to impel us to stud is the desire to augment the excellence of ou

nature, and to render an intelligent being yet more intelligent." This is the true ground to assign for the genuine scientific passion, however manifested, and for culture, viewed simply as a fruit of this passion; and it is a worthy ground, even though we let the term *curiosity* stand to describe it.

But there is of culture another view, in which not solely the scientific passion, the sheer desire to see things as they are, natural and proper in an intelligent being, appears as the ground of it. There is a view in which all the love of our neighbor, the impulses towards action, help, and beneficence, the desire for removing human error, clearing human confusion, and diminishing human misery, the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it, — motives eminently such as are called social, — come in as part of the grounds of culture, and the main and preëminent part. Culture is then properly described not as having its origin in curiosity, but as having its origin in the love of perfection; it is *a study of perfection*. It moves by the force, not merely or primarily of the scientific passion for pure knowledge, but also of the moral and social passion for doing good. As, in the first view of it, we took for its worthy motto Montesquieu's words: "To render an intelligent being yet more intelligent!" so, in the second view of it, there is no better motto which it can have than these words of Bishop Wilson:[1] "To make reason and the will of God prevail!"

Only, whereas the passion for doing good is apt to be over-hasty in determining what reason and the will of God say, because its turn is for acting rather than thinking and it wants to be beginning to act; and whereas it is apt to take its own conceptions, which proceed from its own state of development and share in all the imperfections and immaturities of this, for a basis of action; what distinguishes culture is, that it is possessed by the scientific passion as well as by the passion of doing good; that it demands worthy notions of reason and the will of God, and does not readily suffer its own crude conceptions to substitute themselves for them. And knowing that no action or institution can be salutary and stable which is not based on reason and the will of God, it is not so bent on acting and instituting, even with the great aim of diminishing human error and misery ever before its thoughts, but that it can remember that acting and instituting are of little use, unless we know how and what we ought to act and to institute.

This culture is more interesting and more far-reaching than that other, which is founded solely on the scientific passion for knowing. But it needs times of faith and ardor, times when the intellectual horizon is opening and widening all around us, to flourish in. And is not the close and bounded intellectual horizon within which we have long lived and moved now lifting up, and are not new lights finding free passage to shine in upon us? For a long time there was no passage for them to make their way in upon us, and then it was of no use to think of adapting the world's action to them. Where was the hope of making reason and the will of God prevail among people who had a routine which they had christened reason and the will of God, in which they were inextricably bound, and beyond which they had no power of looking? But now the iron force of adhesion to the old routine — social, political, religious — has wonderfully yielded; the iron force of exclusion of all which is new has wonderfully yielded. The danger now is, not that people should obstinately refuse to allow anything but their old routine to pass for reason and the will of God, but either that they should allow some novelty or other to pass for these too easily, or else that they should underrate the importance of them altogether, and think it enough to follow action for its own sake, without troubling themselves to make reason and the will of God prevail therein. Now, then, is the moment for culture to be of service, culture which believes in making reason and the will of God prevail, believes in perfection, is the study and pursuit of perfection, and is no longer debarred, by a rigid invincible exclusion of whatever is new, from getting acceptance for its ideas, simply because they are new.

The moment this view of culture is seized, the moment it is regarded not solely as the endeavor to see things as they are, to draw towards a knowledge of the universal order which seems to be intended and aimed at in the world, and which it is a man's happiness to go along with or his misery to go counter to, — to learn, in short, the will of God, — the moment, I say, culture is considered not merely as the endeavor to *see* and *learn* this, but as the endeavor, also, to make it *prevail*, the moral, social, and beneficent character of culture becomes manifest. The mere

1 Thomas Wilson (died 1755), author of *Maxims*, frequently praised by Arnold.

endeavor to see and learn the truth for our own personal satisfaction is indeed a commencement for making it prevail, a preparing the way for this, which always serves this, and is wrongly, therefore, stamped with blame absolutely in itself and not only in its caricature and degeneration. But perhaps it has got stamped with blame, and disparaged with the dubious title of curiosity, because in comparison with this wider endeavor of such great and plain utility it looks selfish, petty, and unprofitable.

And religion, the greatest and most important of the efforts by which the human race has manifested its impulse to perfect itself, — religion, that voice of the deepest human experience, — does not only enjoin and sanction the aim which is the great aim of culture, the aim of setting ourselves to ascertain what perfection is and to make it prevail; but also, in determining generally in what human perfection consists, religion comes to a conclusion identical with that which culture — culture seeking the determination of this question through *all* the voices of human experience which have been heard upon it, of art, science, poetry, philosophy, history, as well as of religion, in order to give a greater fulness and certainty to its solution — likewise reaches. Religion says: *The kingdom of God is within you;* and culture, in like manner, places human perfection in an *internal* condition, in the growth and predominance of our humanity proper, as distinguished from our animality. It places it in the ever-increasing efficacy and in the general harmonious expansion of those gifts of thought and feeling, which make the peculiar dignity, wealth, and happiness of human nature. As I have said on a former occasion: "It is in making endless additions to itself, in the endless expansion of its powers, in endless growth in wisdom and beauty, that the spirit of the human race finds its ideal. To reach this ideal, culture is an indispensable aid, and that is the true value of culture." Not a having and a resting, but a growing and a becoming, is the character of perfection as culture conceives it; and here, too, it coincides with religion.

And because men are all members of one great whole, and the sympathy which is in human nature will not allow one member to be indifferent to the rest or to have a perfect welfare independent of the rest, the expansion of our humanity, to suit the idea of perfection which culture forms, must be a *general* expansion. Perfection, as culture conceives it, is not possible while the individual remains isolated. The individual is required, under pain of being stunted and enfeebled in his own development if he disobeys, to carry others along with him in his march towards perfection, to be continually doing all he can to enlarge and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping thitherward. And here, once more, culture lays on us the same obligation as religion, which says, as Bishop Wilson has admirably put it, that "to promote the kingdom of God is to increase and hasten one's own happiness."

But, finally, perfection — as culture from a thorough disinterested study of human nature and human experience learns to conceive it — is a harmonious expansion of *all* the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature, and is not consistent with the over-development of any one power at the expense of the rest. Here culture goes beyond religion, as religion is generally conceived by us.

If culture, then, is a study of perfection and of harmonious perfection, general perfection, and perfection which consists in becoming something rather than in having something, in an inward condition of the mind and spirit, not in an outward set of circumstances, — it is clear that culture, instead of being the frivolous and useless thing which Mr. Bright, and Mr. Frederic Harrison and many other Liberals are apt to call it, has a very important function to fulfil for mankind. And this function is particularly important in our modern world, of which the whole civilization is, to a much greater degree than the civilization of Greece and Rome, mechanical and external, and tends constantly to become more so. But above all in our own country has culture a weighty part to perform, because here that mechanical character, which civilization tends to take everywhere, is shown in the most eminent degree. Indeed nearly all the characters of perfection, as culture teaches us to fix them, meet in this country with some powerful tendency which thwarts them and sets them at defiance. The idea of perfection as an *inward* condition of the mind and spirit is at variance with the mechanical and material civilization in esteem with us, and nowhere, as I have said, so much in esteem as with us. The idea of perfection as a *general* expansion of the human family is at variance with our strong individualism, our hatred of all limits to the unrestrained swing of the individual's personality, our

maxim of "every man for himself." Above all, the idea of perfection as a *harmonious* expansion of human nature is at variance with our want of flexibility, with our inaptitude for seeing more than one side of a thing, with our intense energetic absorption in the particular pursuit we happen to be following. So culture has a rough task to achieve in this country. Its preachers have, and are likely long to have, a hard time of it, and they will much oftener be regarded, for a great while to come, as elegant or spurious Jeremiahs than as friends and benefactors. That, however, will not prevent their doing in the end good service if they persevere. And, meanwhile, the mode of action they have to pursue, and the sort of habits they must fight against, ought to be made quite clear for every one to see, who may be willing to look at the matter attentively and dispassionately.

Faith in machinery is, I said, our besetting danger; often in machinery most absurdly disproportioned to the end which this machinery, if it is to do any good at all, is to serve; but always in machinery, as if it had a value in and for itself. What is freedom but machinery? what is population but machinery? what is coal but machinery? what are railroads but machinery? what is wealth but machinery? what are, even, religious organizations but machinery? Now almost every voice in England is accustomed to speak of these things as if they were precious ends in themselves, and therefore had some of the characters of perfection indisputably joined to them. I have before now noticed Mr. Roebuck's stock argument for proving the greatness and happiness of England as she is, and for quite stopping the mouths of all gainsayers. Mr. Roebuck is never weary of reiterating this argument of his, so I do not know why I should be weary of noticing it. "May not every man in England say what he likes?" — Mr. Roebuck perpetually asks; and that, he thinks, is quite sufficient, and when every man may say what he likes, our aspirations ought to be satisfied. But the aspirations of culture, which is the study of perfection, are not satisfied, unless what men say, when they may say what they like, is worth saying, — has good in it, and more good than bad. In the same way the *Times*, replying to some foreign strictures on the Press, looks, and behavior of the English abroad, urges that the English ideal is that every one should be free to do and to look just as he likes. But culture indefatigably tries, not to make what each raw person may like the rule by which he fashions himself, but to draw ever nearer to a sense of what is indeed beautiful, graceful, and becoming, and to get the raw person to like that.

And in the same way with respect to railroads and coal. Every one must have observed the strange language current during the late discussions as to the possible failure of our supplies of coal. Our coal, thousands of people were saying, is the real basis of our national greatness; if our coal runs short, there is an end of the greatness of England. But what *is* greatness? — culture makes us ask. Greatness is a spiritual condition worthy to excite love, interest, and admiration; and the outward proof of possessing greatness is that we excite love, interest, and admiration. If England were swallowed up by the sea to-morrow, which of the two, a hundred years hence, would most excite the love, interest, and admiration of mankind, — would most, therefore, show the evidences of having possessed greatness, — the England of the last twenty years, or the England of Elizabeth, of a time of splendid spiritual effort, but when our coal, and our industrial operations depending on coal, were very little developed? Well, then, what an unsound habit of mind it must be which makes us talk of things like coal or iron as constituting the greatness of England, and how salutary a friend is culture, bent on seeing things as they are, and thus dissipating delusions of this kind and fixing standards of perfection that are real!

Wealth, again, that end to which our prodigious works for material advantage are directed, — the commonest of commonplaces tells us how men are always apt to regard wealth as a precious end in itself; and certainly they have never been so apt thus to regard it as they are in England at the present time. Never did people believe anything more firmly than nine Englishmen out of ten at the present day believe that our greatness and welfare are proved by our being so very rich. Now, the use of culture is that it helps us, by means of its spiritual standard of perfection, to regard wealth as but machinery, and not only to say as a matter of words that we regard wealth as but machinery, but really to perceive and feel that it is so. If it were not for this purging effect wrought upon our minds by culture, the whole world, the future as well as the present, would inevitably belong to the Philistines. The people who believe most that our greatness and welfare are proved

by our being very rich, and who most give their lives and thoughts to becoming rich, are just the very people whom we call Philistines. Culture says: "Consider these people, then, their way of life, their habits, their manners, the very tones of their voice; look at them attentively; observe the literature they read, the things which give them pleasure, the words which come forth out of their mouths, the thoughts which make the furniture of their minds; would any amount of wealth be worth having with the condition that one was to become just like these people by having it?" And thus culture begets a dissatisfaction which is of the highest possible value in stemming the common tide of men's thoughts in a wealthy and industrial community, and which saves the future, as one may hope, from being vulgarized, even if it cannot save the present.

Population, again, and bodily health and vigor, are things which are nowhere treated in such an unintelligent, misleading, exaggerated way as in England. Both are really machinery; yet how many people all around us do we see rest in them and fail to look beyond them! Why, one has heard people, fresh from reading certain articles of the *Times* on the Registrar-General's returns of marriages and births in this country, who would talk of our large English families in quite a solemn strain, as if they had something in itself beautiful, elevating, and meritorious in them; as if the British Philistine would have only to present himself before the Great Judge with his twelve children, in order to be received among the sheep as a matter of right!

But bodily health and vigor, it may be said, are not to be classed with wealth and population as mere machinery; they have a more real and essential value. True; but only as they are more intimately connected with a perfect spiritual condition than wealth or population are. The moment we disjoin them from the idea of a perfect spiritual condition, and pursue them, as we do pursue them, for their own sake and as ends in themselves, our worship of them becomes as mere worship of machinery, as our worship of wealth or population, and as unintelligent and vulgarizing a worship as that is. Every one with anything like an adequate idea of human perfection has distinctly marked this subordination to higher and spiritual ends of the cultivation of bodily vigor and activity. "Bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things," says the author of the Epistle to Timothy. And utilitarian Franklin says just as explicitly "Eat and drink such an exact quantity suits the constitution of thy body, *in reference to the services of the mind.*" But point of view of culture, keeping the mar human perfection simply and broadly view, and not assigning to this perfection religion or utilitarianism assigns to it special and limited character, this point view, I say, of culture is best given by th words of Epictetus: "It is a sign of ἀφυ says he, — that is, of a nature not fin tempered, — "to give yourselves up things which relate to the body; to make, instance, a great fuss about exercise, a gr fuss about eating, a great fuss about drinki a great fuss about walking, a great f about riding. All these things ought to done merely by the way: the formation the spirit and character must be our r concern." This is admirable; and, inde the Greek word εὐφυία, a finely tempered ture, gives exactly the notion of perfection culture brings us to conceive it: a harmonic perfection, a perfection in which the chara ters of beauty and intelligence are both p sent, which unites "the two noblest things," — as Swift, who of one of the two, any rate, had himself all too little, mc happily calls them in his *Battle of the Book* — "the two noblest of things, *sweetness a light.*" The εὐφυής is the man who ten towards sweetness and light; the ἀφυής, c the other hand, is our Philistine. The ir mense spiritual significance of the Greeks due to their having been inspired with th central and happy idea of the essential cha acter of human perfection; and Mr. Bright misconception of culture, as a smatterir of Greek and Latin, comes itself, after a from this wonderful significance of th Greeks having affected the very machiner of our education, and is in itself a kind homage to it.

In thus making sweetness and light to h characters of perfection, culture is of lik spirit with poetry, follows one law wit poetry. Far more than on our freedom, ou population, and our industrialism, man amongst us rely upon our religious organiza tions to save us. I have called religion a ye more important manifestation of huma nature than poetry, because it has worke on a broader scale for perfection, and wit greater masses of men. But the idea o beauty and of a human nature perfect o all its sides, which is the dominant ide

poetry, is a true and invaluable idea, ough it has not yet had the success that e idea of conquering the obvious faults of ur animality, and of a human nature perfect n the moral side, — which is the dominant ea of religion, — has been enabled to have; id it is destined, adding to itself the re- gious idea of a devout energy, to transform id govern the other.

The best art and poetry of the Greeks, in nich religion and poetry are one, in which e idea of beauty and of a human nature rfect on all sides adds to itself a religious id devout energy, and works in the strength that, is on this account of such surpassing terest and instructiveness for us, though it as — as, having regard to the human race general, and, indeed, having regard to the reeks themselves, we must own — a pre- ature attempt, an attempt which for suc- ss needed the moral and religious fibre in manity to be more braced and developed an it had yet been. But Greece did not r in having the idea of beauty, harmony, d complete human perfection, so present d paramount. It is impossible to have is idea too present and paramount; only, e moral fibre must be braced too. And we, cause we have braced the moral fibre, are t on that account in the right way, if at the me time the idea of beauty, harmony, and mplete human perfection, is wanting or isapprehended amongst us; and evidently *is* wanting or misapprehended at present. d when we rely as we do on our religious ganizations, which in themselves do not d cannot give us this idea, and think we ve done enough if we make them spread d prevail, then, I say, we fall into our com- on fault of overvaluing machinery.

Nothing is more common than for people confound the inward peace and satisfac- on which follows the subduing of the ob- us faults of our animality with what I ay call absolute inward peace and satis- ction, — the peace and satisfaction which e reached as we draw near to complete iritual perfection, and not merely to moral rfection, or rather to relative moral per- tion. No people in the world have done bre and struggled more to attain this rela- e moral perfection than our English race s. For no people in the world has the com- and to *resist the devil*, to *overcome the wicked e*, in the nearest and most obvious sense of ose words, had such a pressing force and ality. And we have had our reward, not ly in the great worldly prosperity which our obedience to this command has brought us, but also, and far more, in great inward peace and satisfaction. But to me few things are more pathetic than to see people, on the strength of the inward peace and satisfaction which their rudimentary efforts towards perfection have brought them, employ, concerning their incomplete perfection and the religious organizations within which they have found it, language which properly applies only to complete perfection, and is a far-off echo of the human soul's prophecy of it. Religion itself, I need hardly say, supplies them in abundance with this grand language. And very freely do they use it; yet it is really the severest possible criticism of such an incomplete perfection as alone we have yet reached through our religious organizations.

The impulse of the English race towards moral development and self-conquest has nowhere so powerfully manifested itself as in Puritanism. Nowhere has Puritanism found so adequate an expression as in the religious organization of the Independents. The modern Independents have a newspaper, the *Nonconformist*, written with great sincerity and ability. The motto, the standard, the profession of faith which this organ of theirs carries aloft, is: "The Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion." There is sweetness and light, and an ideal of complete harmonious human perfection! One need not go to culture and poetry to find language to judge it. Religion, with its instinct for perfection, supplies language to judge it, — language, too, which is in our mouths every day. "Finally, be of one mind, united in feeling," says St. Peter. There is an ideal which judges the Puritan ideal: "The Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion!" And religious organizations like this are what people believe in, rest in, would give their lives for! Such, I say, is the wonderful virtue of even the beginnings of perfection, of having conquered even the plain faults of our animality, that the religious organization which has helped us to do it can seem to us something precious, salutary, and to be propagated, even when it wears such a brand of imperfection on its forehead as this. And men have got such a habit of giving to the language of religion a special application, of making it a mere jargon, that for the condemnation which religion itself passes on the shortcomings of their religious organizations they have no ear; they

are sure to cheat themselves and to explain this condemnation away. They can only be reached by the criticism which culture, like poetry, speaking a language not to be sophisticated, and resolutely testing these organizations by the ideal of a human perfection complete on all sides, applies to them.

But men of culture and poetry, it will be said, are again and again failing, and failing conspicuously, in the necessary first stage to a harmonious perfection, in the subduing of the great obvious faults of our animality, which it is the glory of these religious organizations to have helped us to subdue. True, they do often so fail. They have often been without the virtues as well as the faults of the Puritan; it has been one of their dangers that they so felt the Puritan's faults that they too much neglected the practice of his virtues. I will not, however, exculpate them at the Puritan's expense. They have often failed in morality, and morality is indispensable. And they have been punished for their failure, as the Puritan has been rewarded for his performance. They have been punished wherein they erred; but their ideal of beauty, of sweetness and light, and a human nature complete on all its sides, remains the true ideal of perfection still; just as the Puritan's ideal of perfection remains narrow and inadequate, although for what he did well he has been richly rewarded. Notwithstanding the mighty results of the Pilgrim Fathers' voyage, they and their standard of perfection are rightly judged when we figure to ourselves Shakespeare or Virgil — souls in whom sweetness and light, and all that in human nature is most humane, were eminent — accompanying them on their voyage, and think what intolerable company Shakespeare and Virgil would have found them! In the same way let us judge the religious organizations which we see all around us. Do not let us deny the good and the happiness which they have accomplished; but do not let us fail to see clearly that their idea of human perfection is narrow and inadequate, and that the Dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion will never bring humanity to its true goal. As I said with regard to wealth: Let us look at the life of those who live in and for it, — so I say with regard to the religious organizations. Look at the life imaged in such a newspaper as the *Nonconformist*, — a life of jealousy of the Establishment, disputes, tea-meetings, openings of chapels, sermons; and then think of it as an ideal of a human life completing itself on all sides, aspiring with all its organs after sweetn light, and perfection!

Another newspaper, representing, like *Nonconformist*, one of the religious organ tions of this country, was a short time giving an account of the crowd at Epsom the Derby day, and of all the vice and h ousness which was to be seen in that cro and then the writer turned suddenly ro upon Professor Huxley, and asked him he proposed to cure all this vice and hide ness without religion. I confess I felt posed to ask the asker this question: and do you propose to cure it with such a relig as yours? How is the ideal of a life so lovely, so unattractive, so incomplete, narrow, so far removed from a true and sa fying ideal of human perfection, as is the of your religious organization as you yo self reflect it, to conquer and transform all vice and hideousness? Indeed, the stro est plea for the study of perfection as p sued by culture, the clearest proof of actual inadequacy of the idea of perfect held by the religious organizations, — pressing, as I have said, the most widespr effort which the human race has yet m after perfection, — is to be found in state of our life and society with these possession of it, and having been in pos sion of it I know not how many hund years. We are all of us included in sc religious organization or other; we all ourselves, in the sublime and aspiring l guage of religion which I have before notic *children of God*. Children of God; — it an immense pretension! — and how are to justify it? By the works which we and the words which we speak. And work which we collective children of God our grand centre of life, our *city* which we h builded for us to dwell in, is London! L don, with its unutterable external hideo ness, and with its internal canker of *pub egestas, privatim opulentia*,[1] — to use the wo which Sallust puts into Cato's mouth ab Rome, — unequalled in the world! The wo again, which we children of God speak, voice which most hits our collective thoug the newspaper with the largest circulation England, nay, with the largest circulation the whole world, is the *Daily Telegraph!* I s that when our religious organizations — wh I admit to express the most considerable eff after perfection that our race has yet made

[1] "Poverty widespread, opulence among individua (*Catiline*, 52.)

nd us in no better result than this, it is high me to examine carefully their idea of perction, to see whether it does not leave out account sides and forces of human nature nich we might turn to great use; whether it ould not be more operative if it were more mplete. And I say that the English rence on our religious organizations and on eir ideas of human perfection just as they nd, is like our reliance on freedom, on uscular Christianity, on population, on coal, wealth, — mere belief in machinery, and fruitful; and that it is wholesomely unteracted by culture, bent on seeing ings as they are, and on drawing the hun race onwards to a more complete, a rmonious perfection. . . .

The pursuit of perfection, then, is the purit of sweetness and light. He who works sweetness and light, works to make reason d the will of God prevail. He who works machinery, he who works for hatred, rks only for confusion. Culture looks yond machinery, culture hates hatred; lture has one great passion, the passion for eetness and light. It has one even yet eater! — the passion for making them *preal.* It is not satisfied till we *all* come to a rfect man; it knows that the sweetness and ht of the few must be imperfect until the w and unkindled masses of humanity are iched with sweetness and light. If I have t shrunk from saying that we must work sweetness and light, so neither have I unk from saying that we must have a ad basis, must have sweetness and light as many as possible. Again and again I e insisted how those are the happy ments of humanity, how those are the rking epochs of a people's life, how those the flowering times for literature and art l all the creative power of genius, when re is a *national* glow of life and thought, en the whole of society is in the fullest isure permeated by thought, sensible to uty, intelligent and alive. Only it must *real* thought and *real* beauty; *real* sweetss and *real* light. Plenty of people will to give the masses, as they call them, an ellectual food prepared and adapted in the y they think proper for the actual condin of the masses. The ordinary popular rature is an example of this way of work- on the masses. Plenty of people will try indoctrinate the masses with the set of as and judgments constituting the creed their own profession or party. Our religious and political organizations give an example of this way of working on the masses. I condemn neither way: but culture works differently. It does not try to teach down to the level of inferior classes; it does not try to win them for this or that sect of its own, with ready-made judgments and watchwords. It seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas, as it uses them itself, freely, — nourished, and not bound by them.

This is the *social idea;* and the men of culture are the true apostles of equality. The great men of culture are those who have had a passion for diffusing, for making prevail, for carrying from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas of their time; who have labored to divest knowledge of all that was harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive; to humanize it, to make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and learned, yet still remaining the *best* knowledge and thought of the time, and a true source, therefore, of sweetness and light. Such a man was Abelard in the Middle Ages, in spite of all his imperfections; and thence the boundless emotion and enthusiasm which Abelard excited. Such were Lessing and Herder in Germany, at the end of the last century; and their services to Germany were in this way inestimably precious. Generations will pass, and literary monuments will accumulate, and works far more perfect than the works of Lessing and Herder will be produced in Germany; and yet the names of these two men will fill a German with a reverence and enthusiasm such as the names of the most gifted masters will hardly awaken. And why? Because they *humanized* knowledge; because they broadened the basis of life and intelligence; because they worked powerfully to diffuse sweetness and light, to make reason and the will of God prevail. With Saint Augustine they said: "Let us not leave thee alone to make in the secret of thy knowledge, as thou didst before the creation of the firmament, the division of light from darkness; let the children of thy spirit, placed in their firmament, make their light shine upon the earth, mark the division of night and day, and announce the revolution of the times; for the old order is passed, and the new arises; the night is spent, the day is come forth; and thou shalt crown the year

with thy blessing, when thou shalt send forth laborers into thy harvest sown by other hands than theirs; when thou shalt send forth new laborers to new seed-times, whereof the harvest shall be not yet."

## ESSAY ON WORDSWORTH

1879

Arnold was of all the Victorian poets most distinctly in the tradition of Wordsworth. During his boyhood his family spent their summers at Fox How, in the Lake Country, where he had some association with the older poet. When he was asked to prepare a selection of Wordsworth's poems for *The Golden Treasury Series*, he gave himself to the task with enthusiasm. The present essay is his introduction to that volume.

I remember hearing Lord Macaulay say, after Wordsworth's death, when subscriptions were being collected to found a memorial of him, that ten years earlier more money could have been raised in Cambridge alone, to do honor to Wordsworth, than was now raised all through the country. Lord Macaulay had, as we know, his own heightened and telling way of putting things, and we must always make allowance for it. But probably it is true that Wordsworth has never, either before or since, been so accepted and popular, so established in possession of the minds of all who profess to care for poetry, as he was between the years 1830 and 1840, and at Cambridge. From the very first, no doubt, he had his believers and witnesses. But I have myself heard him declare that, for he knew not how many years, his poetry had never brought him in enough to buy his shoe-strings. The poetry-reading public was very slow to recognize him, and was very easily drawn away from him. Scott effaced him with this public. Byron effaced him.

The death of Byron seemed, however, to make an opening for Wordsworth. Scott, who had for some time ceased to produce poetry himself, and stood before the public as a great novelist; Scott, too genuine himself not to feel the profound genuineness of Wordsworth, and with an instinctive recognition of his firm hold on nature and of his local truth, always admired him sincerely, and praised him generously. The influence of Coleridge upon young men of ability was then powerful, and was still gathering strength; this influence told entirely in favor of Wordsworth's poetry. Cambridge was a place where Coleridge's influence had g action, and where Wordsworth's poe therefore, flourished especially. But e amongst the general public its sale g large, the eminence of its author was wi recognized, and Rydal Mount became object of pilgrimage. I remember Wo worth relating how one of the pilgrim clergyman, asked him if he had ever wri anything besides *The Guide to the La* Yes, he answered modestly, he had wri verses. Not every pilgrim was a reader, the vogue was established, and the strea pilgrims came.

Mr. Tennyson's decisive appearance da from 1842. One cannot say that he effa Wordsworth as Scott and Byron had effa him. The poetry of Wordsworth had b so long before the public, the suffrage of g judges was so steady and so strong in favor, that by 1842 the verdict of poster one may almost say, had been already p nounced, and Wordsworth's English fa was secure. But the vogue, the ear and plause of the great body of poetry-read never quite thoroughly perhaps his, gradually lost more and more, and Tennyson gained them. Mr. Tennyson d to himself, and away from Wordsworth, poetry-reading public, and the new gene tions. Even in 1850, when Wordswo died, this diminution of popularity visible, and occasioned the remark of L Macaulay which I quoted at starting.

The diminution has continued. The fluence of Coleridge has waned, and Wor worth's poetry can no longer draw suc from this ally. The poetry has not, howe wanted eulogists; and it may be said to h brought its eulogists luck, for almost ev one who has praised Wordsworth's poe has praised it well. But the public remained cold, or, at least, undetermi Even the abundance of Mr. Palgrave's and skilfully chosen specimens of Wor worth, in *The Golden Treasury*, surpri many readers, and gave offense to not a f To tenth-rate critics and compilers, for wh any violent shock to the public taste wo be a temerity not to be risked, it is still qu permissible to speak of Wordsworth's poe not only with ignorance, but with impe nence. On the Continent he is almost known.

I cannot think, then, that Wordswo has, up to this time, at all obtained deserts. "Glory," said M. Renan the ot day, "glory after all is the thing which

the best chance of not being altogether vanity." Wordsworth was a homely man, and himself would certainly never have thought of talking of glory as that which, after all, has the best chance of not being altogether vanity. Yet we may well allow that few things are less vain than *real* glory. Let us conceive of the whole group of civilized nations as being, for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to joint action and working towards a common result; a confederation whose members have a due knowledge both of the past, out of which they all proceed, and of one another. This was the ideal of Goethe, and it is an ideal which will impose itself upon the thoughts of our modern societies more and more. Then to be recognized by the verdict of such a confederation as a master, or even as a seriously and eminently worthy workman, in one's own line of intellectual or spiritual activity, is indeed glory; a glory which it would be difficult to rate too highly. For what could be more beneficent, more salutary? The world is forwarded by having its attention fixed on the best things; and here is a tribunal, free from all suspicion of national and provincial partiality, putting a stamp on the best things, and recommending them for general honor and acceptance. A nation, again, is furthered by recognition of its real gifts and successes; it is encouraged to develop them further. And here is an honest verdict, telling us which of our supposed successes are really, in the judgment of the great impartial world, and not in our private judgment only, successes, and which are not.

It is so easy to feel pride and satisfaction in one's own things, so hard to make sure that one is right in feeling it! We have a great empire. But so had Nebuchadnezzar. We extol the "unrivalled happiness" of our national civilization. But then comes a candid friend,[1] and remarks that our upper class is materialized, our middle class vulgarized, and our lower class brutalized. We are proud of our painting, our music. But we find that in the judgment of other people our painting is questionable, and our music non-existent. We are proud of our men of science. And here it turns out that the world is with us; we find that in the judgment of other people, too, Newton among the dead, and Mr. Darwin among the living, hold as high a place as they hold in our national opinion.

Finally, we are proud of our poets and poetry. Now poetry is nothing less than the most perfect speech of man, that in which he comes nearest to being able to utter the truth. It is no small thing, therefore, to succeed eminently in poetry. And so much is required for duly estimating success here, that about poetry it is perhaps hardest to arrive at a sure general verdict, and takes longest. Meanwhile, our own conviction of the superiority of our national poets is not decisive, is almost certain to be mingled, as we see constantly in English eulogy of Shakespeare, with much of provincial infatuation. And we know what was the opinion current amongst our neighbors the French — people of taste, acuteness, and quick literary tact — not a hundred years ago, about our great poets. The old *Biographie Universelle*[1] notices the pretension of the English to a place for their poets among the chief poets of the world, and says that this is a pretension which to no one but an Englishman can ever seem admissible. And the scornful, disparaging things said by foreigners about Shakespeare and Milton, and about our national over-estimate of them, have been often quoted, and will be in every one's remembrance.

A great change has taken place, and Shakespeare is now generally recognized, even in France, as one of the greatest of poets. Yes, some anti-Gallican cynic will say, the French rank him with Corneille and with Victor Hugo! But let me have the pleasure of quoting a sentence about Shakespeare, which I met with by accident not long ago in the *Correspondant*, a French review which not a dozen English people, I suppose, look at. The writer is praising Shakespeare's prose. With Shakespeare, he says, "prose comes in whenever the subject, being more familiar, is unsuited to the majestic English iambic." And he goes on: "Shakespeare is the king of poetic rhythm and style, as well as the king of the realm of thought; along with his dazzling prose, Shakespeare has succeeded in giving us the most varied, the most harmonious verse which has ever sounded upon the human ear since the verse of the Greeks." M. Henry Cochin,[2] the writer of this sentence, deserves our gratitude for it; it would not be easy to praise Shakespeare, in a single sentence, more justly. And when a foreigner and a Frenchman writes thus of Shakespeare, and

[1] Arnold's own views

1 The work of F. X. de Feller, published in 1781.
2 A French lawyer and critic.

when Goethe says of Milton, in whom there was so much to repel Goethe rather than to attract him, that "nothing has been ever done so entirely in the sense of the Greeks as *Samson Agonistes*," and that "Milton is in very truth a poet whom we must treat with all reverence," then we understand what constitutes a European recognition of poets and poetry as contradistinguished from a merely national recognition, and that in favor both of Milton and of Shakespeare the judgment of the high court of appeal has finally gone.

I come back to M. Renan's praise of glory, from which I started. Yes, real glory is a most serious thing, glory authenticated by the Amphictyonic Court[1] of final appeal, definite glory. And even for poets and poetry, long and difficult as may be the process of arriving at the right award, the right award comes at last, the definitive glory rests where it is deserved. Every establishment of such a real glory is good and wholesome for mankind at large, good and wholesome for a nation which produced the poet crowned with it. To the poet himself it can seldom do harm; for he, poor man, is in his grave, probably, long before his glory crowns him.

Wordsworth has been in his grave for some thirty years, and certainly his lovers and admirers cannot flatter themselves that this great and steady light of glory as yet shines over him. He is not fully recognized at home; he is not recognized at all abroad. Yet I firmly believe that the poetical performance of Wordsworth is, after that of Shakespeare and Milton, of which all the world now recognizes the worth, undoubtedly the most considerable in our language from the Elizabethan age to the present time. Chaucer is anterior; and on other grounds, too, he cannot well be brought into the comparison. But taking the roll of our chief poetical names, besides Shakespeare and Milton, from the age of Elizabeth downwards, and going through it, — Spenser, Dryden, Pope, Gray, Goldsmith, Cowper, Burns, Coleridge, Scott, Campbell, Moore, Byron, Shelley, Keats (I mention those only who are dead), — I think it certain that Wordsworth's name deserves to stand, and will finally stand, above them all. Several of the poets named have gifts and excellences which Wordsworth has not. But taking the performance of each as a whole, I say that Wordsworth seems to me to have left a body of poetical work superior in power, in interest, in the qualities which give endu freshness, to that which any one of others has left.

But this is not enough to say. I thir certain, further, that if we take the poetical names of the Continent since death of Molière, and, omitting Goe confront the remaining names with tha Wordsworth, the result is the same. Le take Klopstock, Lessing, Schiller, Uhl Rückert, and Heine for Germany; Filic Alfieri, Manzoni, and Leopardi for It Racine, Boileau, Voltaire, André Chér Béranger, Lamartine, Musset, M. Vic Hugo (he has been so long celebrated t although he still lives I may be permitte name him) for France. Several of th again, have evidently gifts and excelle to which Wordsworth can make no pret sion. But in real poetical achievement seems to me indubitable that to Wor worth, here again, belongs the palm. seems to me that Wordsworth has left hind him a body of poetical work wh wears, and will wear, better on the wh than the performance of any one of th personages, so far more brilliant and ce brated, most of them, than the homely p of Rydal. Wordsworth's performance poetry is on the whole, in power, in intere in the qualities which give enduring fre ness, superior to theirs.

This is a high claim to make for Wor worth. But if it is a just claim, if Wor worth's place among the poets who have a peared in the last two or three centuries after Shakespeare, Molière, Milton, Goeth indeed, but before all the rest, then in tim Wordsworth will have his due. We sh recognize him in his place, as we recogn Shakespeare and Milton; and not only ourselves shall recognize him, but he will recognized by Europe also. Meanwhi those who recognize him already may well, perhaps, to ask themselves whet there are not in the case of Wordsworth c tain special obstacles which hinder or del his due recognition by others, and wheth these obstacles are not in some measu removable.

*The Excursion* and *The Prelude*, his poe of greatest bulk, are by no means Word worth's best work. His best work is in h shorter pieces, and many indeed are there these which are of first-rate excellence. B in his seven volumes the pieces of high me are mingled with a mass of pieces very i ferior to them; so inferior to them that

1 The Great Council of Greek cities.

lems wonderful how the same poet should ave produced both. Shakespeare fre- ently has lines and passages in a strain ite false, and which are entirely unworthy him. But one can imagine him smiling if e could meet him in the Elysian Fields and ll him so; smiling and replying that he new it perfectly well himself, and what did matter? But with Wordsworth the case different. Work altogether inferior, work ite uninspired, flat and dull, is produced him with evident unconsciousness of its fects, and he presents it to us with the me faith and seriousness as his best work. ow a drama or an epic fill the mind, and e does not look beyond them; but in a col- tion of short pieces the impression made one piece requires to be continued and stained by the piece following. In read- g Wordsworth the impression made by one his fine pieces is too often dulled and oiled by a very inferior piece coming after

Wordsworth composed verses during a ace of some sixty years; and it is no exag- ration to say that within one single decade those years, between 1798 and 1808, most all his really first-rate work was pro- ced. A mass of inferior work remains, rk done before and after this golden ime, imbedding the first-rate work and gging it, obstructing our approach to it, illing, not unfrequently, the high-wrought od with which we leave it. To be recog- ed far and wide as a great poet, to be pos- le and receivable as a classic, Wordsworth eds to be relieved of a great deal of the tical baggage which now encumbers him. o administer this relief is indispensable, less he is to continue to be a poet for the w only, — a poet valued far below his real rth by the world.

There is another thing. Wordsworth ssified his poems not according to any mmonly received plan of arrangement, but cording to a scheme of mental physiology. has poems of the fancy, poems of the im- ination, poems of sentiment and reflection, d so on. His categories are ingenious but -fetched, and the result of his employment them is unsatisfactory. Poems are sep- ated one from another which possess a nship of subject or of treatment far more al and deep than the supposed unity of ntal origin, which was Wordsworth's ason for joining them with others.

The tact of the Greeks in matters of this nd was infallible. We may rely upon it that we shall not improve upon the classification adopted by the Greeks for kinds of poetry; that their categories of epic, dramatic, lyric, and so forth, have a natural propriety, and should be adhered to. It may sometimes seem doubtful to which of two categories a poem belongs; whether this or that poem is to be called, for instance, narrative or lyric, lyric or elegiac. But there is to be found in every good poem a strain, a predominant note, which determines the poem as belonging to one of these kinds rather than the other; and here is the best proof of the value of the classification, and of the advantage of adhering to it. Wordsworth's poems will never produce their due effect until they are freed from their present artificial arrangement, and grouped more naturally.

Disengaged from the quantity of inferior work which now obscures them, the best poems of Wordsworth, I hear many people say, would indeed stand out in great beauty, but they would prove to be very few in number, scarcely more than a half a dozen. I maintain, on the other hand, that what strikes me with admiration, what establishes in my opinion Wordsworth's superiority, is the great and ample body of powerful work which remains to him, even after all his inferior work has been cleared away. He gives us so much to rest upon, so much which communicates his spirit and engages ours!

This is of very great importance. If it were a comparison of single pieces, or of three or four pieces, by each poet, I do not say that Wordsworth would stand decisively above Gray, or Burns, or Coleridge, or Keats, or Manzoni, or Heine. It is in his ampler body of powerful work that I find his superiority. His good work itself, his work which counts, is not all of it, of course, of equal value. Some kinds of poetry are in themselves lower kinds than others. The ballad kind is a lower kind; the didactic kind, still more, is a lower kind. Poetry of this latter sort counts, too, sometimes, by its biographical interest partly, not by its poetical interest pure and simple; but then this can only be when the poet producing it has the power and importance of Wordsworth, a power and importance which he assuredly did not establish by such didactic poetry alone. Altogether, it is, I say, by the great body of powerful and significant work which remains to him, after every reduction and deduction has been made, that Wordsworth's superiority is proved.

To exhibit this body of Wordsworth's best work, to clear away obstructions from around it, and to let it speak for itself, is what every lover of Wordsworth should desire. Until this has been done, Wordsworth, whom we, to whom he is dear, all of us know and feel to be so great a poet, has not had a fair chance before the world. When once it has been done, he will make his way best, not by our advocacy of him, but by his own worth and power. We may safely leave him to make his way thus, we who believe that a superior worth and power in poetry finds in mankind a sense responsive to it and disposed at last to recognize it. Yet at the outset, before he has been duly known and recognized, we may do Wordsworth a service, perhaps, by indicating in what his superior power and worth will be found to consist, and in what it will not.

Long ago, in speaking of Homer, I said that the noble and profound application of ideas to life is the most essential part of poetic greatness. I said that a great poet receives his distinctive character of superiority from his application, under the conditions immutably fixed by the laws of poetic beauty and poetic truth, from his application, I say, to his subject, whatever it may be, of the ideas

"On man, on nature, and on human life," [1]

which he has acquired for himself. The line quoted is Wordsworth's own; and his superiority arises from his powerful use, in his best pieces, his powerful application to his subject, of ideas "on man, on nature, and on human life."

Voltaire, with his signal acuteness, most truly remarked that "no nation has treated in poetry moral ideas with more energy and depth than the English nation." And he adds; "There, it seems to me, is the great merit of the English poets." Voltaire does not mean, by "treating in poetry moral ideas," the composing moral and didactic poems; — that brings us but a very little way in poetry. He means just the same thing as was meant when I spoke above "of the noble and profound application of ideas to life"; and he means the application of these ideas under the conditions fixed for us by the laws of poetic beauty and poetic truth. If it is said that to call these ideas *moral* ideas is to introduce a strong and injurious limitation, I answer that it is to do nothing of the kind, because moral ideas are really so main a part of human life. The question, *ho live*, is itself a moral idea; and it is the q tion which most interests every man, with which, in some way or other, he is petually occupied. A large sense is of co to be given to the term *moral*. What bears upon the question, "how to li comes under it.

"Nor love thy life, nor hate; but, what t liv'st,
Live well; how long or short, permit heaven."

In those fine lines Milton utters, as every at once perceives, a moral idea. Yes, bu too, when Keats consoles the forw bending lover on the Grecian Urn, the lo arrested and presented in immortal relief the sculptor's hand before he can kiss, w the line,

"Forever wilt thou love, and she be fair-

he utters a moral idea. When Shakespe says, that

"We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little lif Is rounded with a sleep,"

he utters a moral idea.

Voltaire was right in thinking that the ergetic and profound treatment of mo ideas, in this large sense, is what distinguis the English poetry. He sincerely me praise, not dispraise or hint of limitation; a they err who suppose that poetic limitat is a necessary consequence of the fact, fact being granted as Voltaire states it. what distinguishes the greatest poets is th powerful and profound application of id to life, which surely no good critic will de then to prefix to the term ideas here term moral makes hardly any differer because human life itself is in so preponc ating a degree moral.

It is important, therefore, to hold fast this: that poetry is at bottom a criticism life; that the greatness of a poet lies in powerful and beautiful application of id to life, — to the question: How to li Morals are often treated in a narrow a false fashion; they are bound up with s tems of thought and belief which have b their day; they are fallen into the hands pedants and professional dealers; they gr tiresome to some of us. We find attracti at times, even in a poetry of revolt agai them; in a poetry which might take for motto Omar Khayyám's words: "Let

[1] From *The Recluse*, I, 754.

nake up in the tavern for the time which we ave wasted in the mosque." Or we find ttractions in a poetry indifferent to them; a poetry where the contents may be what hey will, but where the form is studied and xquisite. We delude ourselves in either ase; and the best cure for our delusion is to et our minds rest upon that great and inxhaustible word *life*, until we learn to enter nto its meaning. A poetry of revolt against noral ideas is a poetry of revolt against *ife;* a poetry of indifference towards deas is a poetry of indifference towards *ife.*

Epictetus had a happy figure for things ke the play of the senses, or literary form nd finish, or argumentative ingenuity, in omparison with "the best and master hing" for us, as he called it, the concern, ow to live. Some people were afraid of hem, he said, or they disliked and underalued them. Such people were wrong; they ere unthankful or cowardly. But the hings might also be over-prized, and treated s final when they are not. They bear to fe the relation which inns bear to home. As if a man, journeying home, and finding nice inn on the road, and liking it, were to tay forever at the inn! Man, thou hast forotten thine object; thy journey was not *to* his, but *through* this. 'But this inn is aking.' And how many other inns, too, are aking, and how many fields and meadows! ut as places of passage merely. You have n object, which is this: to get home, to do our duty to your family, friends, and ellow-countrymen, to attain inward freeom, serenity, happiness, contentment. tyle takes your fancy, arguing takes your ancy, and you forget your home and want o make your abode with them and to stay vith them, on the plea that they are taking. Who denies that they are taking? but as laces of passage, as inns. And when I say his, you suppose me to be attacking the care or style, the care for argument. I am not; attack the resting in them, the not looking o the end which is beyond them."

Now, when we come across a poet like Théophile Gautier, we have a poet who has aken up his abode at an inn, and never got arther. There may be inducements to this r that one of us, at this or that moment, to nd delight in him, to cleave to him; but fter all, we do not change the truth about im, — we only stay ourselves in his inn long with him. And when we come across poet like Wordsworth, who sings

"Of truth, of grandeur, beauty, love and hope,
And melancholy fear subdued by faith,
Of blessed consolations in distress,
Of moral strength and intellectual power,
Of joy in widest commonalty spread —"[1]

then we have a poet intent on "the best and master thing," and who prosecutes his journey home. We say, for brevity's sake, that he deals with *life*, because he deals with that in which life really consists. This is what Voltaire means to praise in the English poets, — this dealing with what is really life. But always it is the mark of the greatest poets that they deal with it; and to say that the English poets are remarkable for dealing with it, is only another way of saying, what is true, that in poetry the English genius has especially shown its power.

Wordsworth deals with it, and his greatness lies in his dealing with it so powerfully. I have named a number of celebrated poets above all of whom he, in my opinion, deserves to be placed. He is to be placed above poets like Voltaire, Dryden, Pope, Lessing, Schiller, because these famous personages, with a thousand gifts and merits, never, or scarcely ever, attain the distinctive accent and utterance of the high and genuine poets —

"Quique pii vates et Phœbo digna locuti,"[2]

at all. Burns, Keats, Heine, not to speak of others in our list, have this accent; — who can doubt it? And at the same time they have treasures of humor, felicity, passion, for which in Wordsworth we shall look in vain. Where, then, is Wordsworth's superiority? It is here; he deals with more of *life* than they do; he deals with *life*, as a whole, more powerfully.

No Wordsworthian will doubt this. Nay, the fervent Wordsworthian will add, as Mr. Leslie Stephen does, that Wordsworth's poetry is precious because his philosophy is sound; that his "ethical system is as distinctive and capable of exposition as Bishop Butler's"; that his poetry is informed by ideas which "fall spontaneously into a scientific system of thought." But we must be on our guard against the Wordsworthians, if we want to secure for Wordsworth his due rank as a poet. The Wordsworthians are apt to praise him for the wrong things, and to lay far too much stress upon what they call his philosophy. His poetry is the reality, his philosophy — so far, at least, as it

1 *The Recluse*, II, 767–71.
2 Blessed poets named worthy of Apollo. *Æneid*, VI, 662.

may put on the form and habit of "a scientific system of thought," and the more that it puts them on — is the illusion. Perhaps we shall one day learn to make this proposition general, and to say: Poetry is the reality, philosophy the illusion. But in Wordsworth's case, at any rate, we cannot do him justice until we dismiss his formal philosophy.

*The Excursion* abounds with philosophy and therefore *The Excursion* is to the Wordsworthian what it never can be to the disinterested lover of poetry, — a satisfactory work. "Duty exists," says Wordsworth, in *The Excursion;* and then he proceeds thus —

> "... Immutably survive,
> For our support, the measures and the forms,
> Which an abstract Intelligence supplies,
> Whose kingdom is, where time and space are not." [1]

And the Wordsworthian is delighted, and thinks that here is a sweet union of philosophy and poetry. But the disinterested lover of poetry will feel that the lines carry us really not a step farther than the proposition which they would interpret; that they are a tissue of elevated but abstract verbiage, alien to the very nature of poetry.

Or let us come direct to the centre of Wordsworth's philosophy, as "an ethical system, as distinctive and capable of systematical exposition as Bishop Butler's" —

> "... One adequate support
> For the calamities of mortal life
> Exists, one only; — an assured belief
> That the procession of our fate, howe'er
> Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
> Of infinite benevolence and power;
> Whose everlasting purposes embrace
> All accidents, converting them to good." [2]

That is doctrine such as we hear in church too, religious and philosophic doctrine; and the attached Wordsworthian loves passages of such doctrine, and brings them forward in proof of his poet's excellence. But however true the doctrine may be, it has, as here presented, none of the characters of *poetic* truth, the kind of truth which we require from a poet, and in which Wordsworth is really strong.

Even the "intimations" of the famous Ode, those corner-stones of the supposed philosophic system of Wordsworth, — the idea of the high instincts and affections coming out in childhood, testifying of a divine home recently left, and fading away as our life proceeds, — this idea, of undeniable beauty as a play of fancy, has itself not t character of poetic truth of the best kind; has no real solidity. The instinct of delig in Nature and her beauty had no doubt e traordinary strength in Wordsworth hims as a child. But to say that universally t instinct is mighty in childhood, and tends die away afterwards, is to say what is e tremely doubtful. In many people, perha with the majority of educated persons, t love of nature is nearly imperceptible at t years old, but strong and operative at thirt In general we may say of these high instinc of early childhood, the base of the alleged sy tematic philosophy of Wordsworth, wh Thucydides says of the early achievemer of the Greek race: "It is impossible to spe with certainty of what is so remote; but fr all that we can really investigate, I shou say that they were no very great things."

Finally, the "scientific system of though in Wordsworth gives us at least such poet as this, which the devout Wordsworthia accepts —

> "O for the coming of that glorious time
> When, prizing knowledge as her noble wealth
> And best protection, this Imperial Realm,
> While she exacts allegiance, shall admit
> An obligation, on her part, to *teach*
> Them who are born to serve her and obey;
> Binding herself by statute to secure,
> For all the children whom her soil maintain
> The rudiments of letters, and inform
> The mind with moral and religious truth."

Wordsworth calls Voltaire dull, and sure the production of these un-Voltairian lin must have been imposed on him as a jud ment! One can hear them being quoted a Social Science Congress; one can call up t whole scene. A great room in one of o dismal provincial towns; dusty air and jad afternoon daylight; benches full of men wi bald heads and women in spectacles; a orator lifting up his face from a manuscri written within and without to declaim the lines of Wordsworth; and in the soul of a poor child of nature who may have wandere in thither, an unutterable sense of lament tion, and mourning, and woe!

"But turn we," as Wordsworth say "from these bold, bad men," the haunters Social Science Congresses. And let us be o our guard, too, against the exhibitors a extollers of a "scientific system of thought in Wordsworth's poetry. The poetry w never be seen aright while they thus exhib

1 *The Excursion*, IV, 73–76.
2 *Ibid.*, VI, 10–17.

1 *The Excursion*, IX, 293–302.

t. The cause of its greatness is simple, and nay be told quite simply. Wordsworth's oetry is great because of the extraordinary ower with which Wordsworth feels the joy ffered to us in nature, the joy offered to us n the simple primary affections and duties; nd because of the extraordinary power with hich, in case after case, he shows us this oy, and renders it so as to make us share it. The source of joy from which he thus raws is the truest and most unfailing source f joy accessible to man. It is also accessible niversally. Wordsworth brings us word, herefore, according to his own strong and haracteristic line, he brings us word

"Of joy in widest commonalty spread."

Here is an immense advantage for a poet. Wordsworth tells of what all seek, and tells If it at its truest and best source, and yet a ource where all may go and draw for it.

Nevertheless, we are not to suppose that verything is precious which Wordsworth, tanding even at this perennial and beautiful ource, may give us. Wordsworthians are pt to talk as if it must be. They will speak ith the same reverence of *The Sailor's Mother*, for example, as of *Lucy Gray*. They o their master harm by such lack of dis- rimination. *Lucy Gray* is a beautiful suc- ess; *The Sailor's Mother* is a failure. To ve aright what he wishes to give, to inter- ret and render successfully, is not always ithin Wordsworth's own command. It is ithin no poet's command; here is the part the Muse, the inspiration, the God, the not ourselves." [1] In Wordsworth's case, he accident, for so it may almost be called, inspiration, is of peculiar importance. o poet, perhaps, is so evidently filled with a ew and sacred energy when the inspiration upon him; no poet, when it fails him, is so ft "weak as is a breaking wave." I re- ember hearing him say that "Goethe's oetry was not inevitable enough." The re- ark is striking and true; no line in Goethe, Goethe said himself, but its maker knew ell how it came there. Wordsworth is ght, Goethe's poetry is not inevitable; t inevitable enough. But Wordsworth's oetry, when he is at his best, is inevitable, inevitable as Nature herself. It might em that Nature not only gave him the atter for his poem, but wrote his poem for m. He has no style. He was too conversant with Milton not to catch at times his master's manner, and he has fine Miltonic lines; but he has no assured poetic style of his own, like Milton. When he seeks to have a style he falls into ponderosity and pomposity. In *The Excursion* we have his style, as an artistic product of his own creation; and although Jeffrey completely failed to recognize Wordsworth's real greatness, he was yet not wrong in saying of *The Excursion*, as a work of poetic style: "This will never do." [1] And yet magical as is that power, which Wordsworth has not, of assured and possessed poetic style, he has something which is an equivalent for it.

Every one who has any sense for these things feels the subtle turn, the heightening, which is given to a poet's verse by his genius for style. We can feel it in the

"After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well" —

of Shakespeare; in the

"... though fall'n on evil days,
On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues" —

of Milton. It is the incomparable charm of Milton's power of poetic style which gives such worth to *Paradise Regained*, and makes a great poem of a work in which Milton's imagination does not soar high. Wordsworth has in constant possession, and at command, no style of this kind; but he had too poetic a nature, and had read the great poets too well, not to catch, as I have already remarked, something of it occasionally. We find it not only in his Miltonic lines; we find it in such a phrase as this, where the manner is his own, not Milton's —

"the fierce confederate storm
Of sorrow barricadoed evermore
Within the walls of cities;" [2]

although even here, perhaps, the power of style which is undeniable, is more properly that of eloquent prose than the subtle heightening and change wrought by genuine poetic style. It is style, again, and the elevation given by style, which chiefly makes the effectiveness of *Laodameia*. Still the right sort of verse to choose from Wordsworth, if we are to seize his true and most characteristic form of expression, is a line like this from *Michael* —

"And never lifted up a single stone."

[1] Arnold's definition of God was "the enduring power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." *Literature and Dogma*, chap. I.

[1] In his famous criticism of *The Excursion*, in the *Edinburgh Review*, November, 1814.

[2] *The Recluse*, I, 831.

There is nothing subtle in it, no heightening, no study of poetic style, strictly so called, at all; yet it is expression of the highest and most truly expressive kind.

Wordsworth owed much to Burns, and a style of perfect plainness, relying for effect solely on the weight and force of that which with entire fidelity it utters, Burns could show him.

"The poor inhabitant below
Was quick to learn and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow
And softer flame;
But thoughtless follies laid him low
And stained his name."

Every one will be conscious of a likeness here to Wordsworth; and if Wordsworth did great things with this nobly plain manner, we must remember, what indeed he himself would always have been forward to acknowledge, that Burns used it before him.

Still Wordsworth's use of it has something unique and unmatchable. Nature herself seems, I say, to take the pen out of his hand, and to write for him with her own bare, sheer, penetrating power. This arises from two causes; from the profound sincereness with which Wordsworth feels his subject, and also from the profoundly sincere and natural character of his subject itself. He can and will treat such a subject with nothing but the most plain, first-hand, almost austere naturalness. His expression may often be called bald, as, for instance, in the poem of *Resolution and Independence;* but it is bald as the bare mountain tops are bald, with a baldness which is full of grandeur.

Wherever we meet with the successful balance, in Wordsworth, of profound truth of subject with profound truth of execution, he is unique. His best poems are those which most perfectly exhibit this balance. I have a warm admiration for *Laodameia* and for the great *Ode;* but if I am to tell the very truth, I find *Laodameia* not wholly free from something artificial, and the great *Ode* not wholly free from something declamatory. If I had to pick out poems of a kind most perfectly to show Wordsworth's unique power, I should rather choose poems such as *Michael, The Fountain, The Highland Reaper.* And poems with the peculiar and unique beauty which distinguishes these, Wordsworth produced in considerable number; besides very many other poems of which the worth, although not so rare as the worth of these, is still exceedingly high.

On the whole, then, as I said at the begi ning, not only is Wordsworth eminent b reason of the goodness of his best work, bu he is eminent also by reason of the gre body of good work which he has left to u With the ancients I will not compare hir In many respects the ancients are far abo us, and yet there is something that we d mand which they can never give. Leavin the ancients, let us come to the poets an poetry of Christendom. Dante, Shakespear Molière, Milton, Goethe, are altogeth larger and more splendid luminaries in th poetical heaven than Wordsworth. But know not where else, among the modern we are to find his superiors.

To disengage the poems which show h power, and to present them to the Englis speaking public and to the world, is the ob ject of this volume. I by no means say tha it contains all which in Wordsworth's poem is interesting. Except in the case of *Ma garet*, a story composed separately from th rest of *The Excursion*, and which belongs t a different part of England, I have not ver tured on detaching portions of poems, or o giving any piece otherwise than as Words worth himself gave it. But under the cond tions imposed by this reserve, the volum contains, I think, everything, or nearl everything, which may best serve him wit the majority of lovers of poetry, nothin which may disserve him.

I have spoken lightly of Wordsworthians and if we are to get Wordsworth recognize by the public and by the world, we mus recommend him not in the spirit of a cliqu but in the spirit of disinterested lovers c poetry. But I am a Wordsworthian mysel I can read with pleasure and edificatio *Peter Bell*, and the whole series of *Eccles astical Sonnets*, and the address to Mr. Wi kinson's spade, and even the *Thanksgivin Ode;* — everything of Wordsworth, I think except *Vaudracour and Julia*. It is not fo nothing that one has been brought up in th veneration of a man so truly worthy c homage; that one has seen him and hear him, lived in his neighborhood, and bee familiar with his country. No Wordsworth ian has a tenderer affection for this pure an sage master than I, or is less really offende by his defects. But Wordsworth is some thing more than the pure and sage maste of a small band of devoted followers, and w ought not to rest satisfied until he is seen t be what he is. He is one of the very chie glories of English Poetry; and by nothing i

ngland so glorious as by her poetry. Let
; lay aside every weight which hinders our
:tting him recognized as this, and let our
ie study be to bring to pass, as widely as
)ssible and as truly as possible, his own word concerning his poems: "They will coöperate with the benign tendencies in human nature and society, and will, in their degree, be efficacious in making men wiser, better, and happier."

see p 1222

# THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY (1825–1895)

Thomas Henry Huxley was born at Ealing, May 4, 1825. His education was distinctly scientific. e took a degree in medicine at London University in 1845, and was appointed assistant surgeon the Royal Navy. He was for four years attached to a scientific expedition to the South Seas in e *Rattlesnake*. On his return he was appointed lecturer in natural history at the School of ines. In 1859 Darwin published his *Origin of Species*, and Huxley at once became an ardent fender of the doctrine of evolution. He wrote in his Autobiography: "I am afraid there is very tle of the genuine naturalist in me . . . what I cared for was the architectural and engineering rt of the business." It was as a general that he developed the campaign to give his generation idea of the importance of science in human life, and particularly to make the theory of evolun a part of current thought. He filled many positions and received many honors. In 1876 visited the United States to deliver the inaugural address at the opening of Johns Hopkins iiversity. He died in 1895.

Huxley is the best representative in English literature of the importance of science and the ientific habit of mind as it affects style. As lecturer and essayist he was a missionary, fighting r a cause not yet won, and a brilliant controversialist. He touched on many aspects of the ientific revolution, the influence of scientific concepts on ethics, education, government, and ligion. His essays are published in nine volumes (1893–94). Convenient selections are found in veryman's Library, under the headings, *Man's Place in Nature* and *Lay Sermons*. His *Life and tters*, by Leonard H. Huxley, appeared in 1900. There are criticisms in Leslie Stephen's *Studies a Biographer*, and J. G. Schurman's *Agnosticism and Religion*.

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### 1889

And when I consider, in one view, the many things . . . ich I have upon my hands, I feel the burlesque of being ployed in this manner at my time of life. But, in anr view, and taking in all circumstances, these things, trifling as they may appear, no less than things of eater importance, seem to be put upon me to do.

BISHOP BUTLER *to the* DUCHESS OF SOMERSET

The "many things" to which the Duch-'s correspondent here refers are the re- irs and improvements of the episcopal it at Auckland. I doubt if the great iologist, greater in nothing than in the nple dignity of his character, would have nsidered the writing an account of himself a thing which could be put upon him to whatever circumstances might be taken

But the good bishop lived in an age en a man might write books and yet be rmitted to keep his private existence to nself; in the pre-Boswellian epoch, when germ of the photographer lay concealed the distant future, and the interviewer o pervades our age was an unforeseen, ceed unimaginable, birth of time.

At present, the most convinced believer the aphorism "*Bene qui latuit, bene vixit*," [1] not always able to act up to it. An im-

[1] "He who has well concealed himself has well lived."

portunate person informs him that his portrait is about to be published and will be accompanied by a biography which the importunate person proposes to write. The sufferer knows what that means; either he undertakes to revise the "biography" or he does not. In the former case, he makes himself responsible; in the latter, he allows the publication of a mass of more or less fulsome inaccuracies for which he will be held responsible by those who are familiar with the prevalent art of self-advertisement. On the whole, it may be better to get over the "burlesque of being employed in this manner" and do the thing himself.

It was by reflections of this kind that, some years ago, I was led to write and permit the publication of the subjoined sketch.

I was born about eight o'clock in the morning on the 4th of May, 1825, at Ealing, which was, at that time, as quiet a little country village as could be found within half-a-dozen miles of Hyde Park Corner. Now it is a suburb of London with, I believe, 30,000 inhabitants. My father was one of the masters in a large semi-public school which at one time had a high reputation. I am not aware that any portents preceded my

arrival in this world, but, in my childhood, I remember hearing a traditional account of the manner in which I lost the chance of an endowment of great practical value. The windows of my mother's room were open, in consequence of the unusual warmth of the weather. For the same reason, probably, a neighboring beehive had swarmed, and the new colony, pitching on the window-sill, was making its way into the room when the horrified nurse shut down the sash. If that well-meaning woman had only abstained from her ill-timed interference, the swarm might have settled on my lips, and I should have been endowed with that mellifluous eloquence which, in this country, leads far more surely than worth, capacity, or honest work, to the highest places in Church and State. But the opportunity was lost, and I have been obliged to content myself through life with saying what I mean in the plainest of plain language, than which, I suppose, there is no habit more ruinous to a man's prospects of advancement.

Why I was christened Thomas Henry I do not know; but it is a curious chance that my parents should have fixed for my usual denomination upon the name of that particular Apostle with whom I have always felt most sympathy.[1] Physically and mentally I am the son of my mother so completely — even down to peculiar movements of the hands, which made their appearance in me as I reached the age she had when I noticed them — that I can hardly find any trace of my father in myself, except an inborn faculty for drawing, which unfortunately, in my case, has never been cultivated, a hot temper, and that amount of tenacity of purpose which unfriendly observers sometimes call obstinacy.

My mother was a slender brunette, of an emotional and energetic temperament, and possessed of the most piercing black eyes I ever saw in a woman's head. With no more education than other women of the middle classes in her day, she had an excellent mental capacity. Her most distinguishing characteristic, however, was rapidity of thought. If one ventured to suggest she had not taken much time to arrive at any conclusion, she would say, "I cannot help it, things flash across me." That peculiarity has been passed on to me in full strength; it has often stood me in good stead; it has sometimes played me sad tricks, and it has always been a danger. But, after all, if my time were to come over again, there is nothin would less willingly part with than my heritance of mother wit.

I have next to nothing to say about childhood. In later years my mother, lo ing at me almost reproachfully, would sor times say, "Ah! you were such a pretty boy whence I had no difficulty in conclud that I had not fulfilled my early promise the matter of looks. In fact, I have a c tinct recollection of certain curls of whic was vain, and of a conviction that I clos resembled that handsome, courtly gent man, Sir Herbert Oakley, who was vicar our parish, and who was as a god to country folk, because he was occasiona visited by the then Prince George of Ca bridge. I remember turning my pinaf wrong side forwards in order to repres a surplice, and preaching to my mothe maids in the kitchen as nearly as possi in Sir Herbert's manner, one Sunday mo ing when the rest of the family were church. That is the earliest indication can call to mind of the strong clerical affi ties which my friend Mr. Herbert Spen has always ascribed to me, though I fan they have for the most part remained i latent state.

My regular school training was of t briefest, perhaps fortunately, for though r way of life has made me acquainted with sorts and conditions of men, from the high to the lowest, I deliberately affirm that t society I fell into at school was the wo I have ever known. We boys were avera lads, with much the same inherent capaci for good and evil as any others; but t people who were set over us cared about much for our intellectual and moral welfa as if they were baby-farmers. We we left to the operation of the struggle for e istence among ourselves, and bullying w the least of the ill practices current amo us. Almost the only cheerful reminiscen in connection with the place which arises my mind is that of a battle I had with o of my classmates who had bullied me un I could stand it no longer. I was a ve slight lad, but there was a wild-cat eleme in me which, when roused, made up for la of weight, and I licked my adversary effec ually. However, one of my first experienc of the extremely rough-and-ready nature justice, as exhibited by the course of thin in general, arose out of the fact that I — t victor — had a black eye, while he — t vanquished — had none, so that I got into di

1 See John xx, 24–25.

grace and he did not. We made it up, and thereafter I was unmolested. One of the greatest shocks I ever received in my life was to be told a dozen years afterwards by the groom who brought me my horse in a stable-yard in Sydney that he was my quondam antagonist. He had a long story of family misfortune to account for his position, but at that time it was necessary to deal very cautiously with mysterious strangers in New South Wales, and on inquiry I found that the unfortunate young man had not only been "sent out," [1] but had undergone more than one colonial conviction.

As I grew older, my great desire was to be a mechanical engineer, but the fates were against this and, while very young, I commenced the study of medicine under a medical brother-in-law. But, though the Institute of Mechanical Engineers would certainly not own me, I am not sure that I have not all along been a sort of mechanical engineer *in partibus infidelium*.[2] I am now occasionally horrified to think how very little I ever knew or cared about medicine as the art of healing. The only part of my professional course which really and deeply interested me was physiology, which is the mechanical engineering of living machines; and, notwithstanding that natural science has been my proper business, I am afraid there is very little of the genuine naturalist in me. I never collected anything, and species work was always a burden to me; what I cared for was the architectural and engineering part of the business, the working out of the wonderful unity of plan in the thousands and thousands of diverse living constructions, and the modifications of similar apparatuses to serve diverse ends. The extraordinary attraction I felt towards the study of the intricacies of living structure nearly proved fatal to me at the outset. I was a mere boy — I think between thirteen and fourteen years of age — when I was taken by some older student friends of mine to the first *post mortem* examination I ever attended. All my life I have been most unfortunately sensitive to the disagreeables which attend anatomical pursuits, but on this occasion my curiosity overpowered all other feelings, and I spent two or three hours in gratifying it. I did not cut myself, and none of the ordinary symptoms of dissection-poison supervened, but poisoned I was somehow, and I remember sinking into a strange state of apathy.

1 exiled (under criminal sentence).
2 in the land of the heathen.

By way of a last chance, I was sent to the care of some good, kind people, friends of my father's, who lived in a farmhouse in the heart of Warwickshire. I remember staggering from my bed to the window on the bright spring morning after my arrival, and throwing open the casement. Life seemed to come back on the wings of the breeze, and to this day the faint odor of wood-smoke, like that which floated across the farm-yard in the early morning, is as good to me as the "sweet south upon a bed of violets." I soon recovered, but for years I suffered from occasional paroxysms of internal pain, and from that time my constant friend, hypochondriacal dyspepsia, commenced his half century of co-tenancy of my fleshly tabernacle.

Looking back on my *Lehrjahre*,[1] I am sorry to say that I do not think that any account of my doings as a student would tend to edification. In fact, I should distinctly warn ingenuous youth to avoid imitating my example. I worked extremely hard when it pleased me, and when it did not — which was a very frequent case — I was extremely idle (unless making caricatures of one's pastors and masters is to be called a branch of industry) — or else wasted my energies in wrong directions. I read everything I could lay hands upon, including novels, and took up all sorts of pursuits to drop them again quite as speedily. No doubt it was very largely my own fault, but the only instruction from which I ever obtained the proper effect of education was that which I received from Mr. Wharton Jones, who was the lecturer on physiology at the Charing Cross School of Medicine. The extent and precision of his knowledge impressed me greatly, and the severe exactness of his method of lecturing was quite to my taste. I do not know that I have ever felt so much respect for anybody as a teacher before or since. I worked hard to obtain his approbation, and he was extremely kind and helpful to the youngster who, I am afraid, took up more of his time than he had any right to do. It was he who suggested the publication of my first scientific paper — a very little one — in the *Medical Gazette* of 1845, and most kindly corrected the literary faults which abounded in it, short as it was; for at that time, and for many years afterwards, I detested the trouble of writing, and would take no pains over it.

It was in the early spring of 1846 that, having finished my obligatory medical

1 student-years.

studies and passed the first M.D. examination at the London University, — though I was still too young to qualify at the College of Surgeons, — I was talking to a fellow-student (the present eminent physician, Sir Joseph Fayrer), and wondering what I should do to meet the imperative necessity for earning my own bread, when my friend suggested that I should write to Sir William Burnett, at that time Director-General for the Medical Service of the Navy, for an appointment. I thought this rather a strong thing to do, as Sir William was personally unknown to me, but my cheery friend would not listen to my scruples, so I went to my lodgings and wrote the best letter I could devise. A few days afterwards I received the usual official circular acknowledgment, but at the bottom there was written an instruction to call at Somerset House on such a day. I thought that looked like business, so at the appointed time I called and sent in my card, while I waited in Sir William's ante-room. He was a tall, shrewd-looking old gentleman, with a broad Scotch accent — and I think I see him now as he entered with my card in his hand. The first thing he did was to return it, with the frugal reminder that I should probably find it useful on some other occasion. The second was to ask whether I was an Irishman. I suppose the air of modesty about my appeal must have struck him. I satisfied the Director-General that I was English to the backbone, and he made some inquiries as to my student career, finally desiring me to hold myself ready for examination. Having passed this, I was in Her Majesty's Service, and entered on the books of Nelson's old ship, the *Victory*, for duty at Haslar Hospital, about a couple of months after I made my application.

My official chief at Haslar was a very remarkable person, the late Sir John Richardson, an excellent naturalist, and far-famed as an indomitable Arctic traveller. He was a silent, reserved man, outside the circle of his family and intimates; and, having a full share of youthful vanity, I was extremely disgusted to find that "Old John," as we irreverent youngsters called him, took not the slightest notice of my worshipful self either the first time I attended him, as it was my duty to do, or for some weeks afterwards. I am afraid to think of the lengths to which my tongue may have run on the subject of the churlishness of the chief, who was, in truth, one of the kindest-hearted and most considerate of men. But one day, as I was crossing the hospital square, Sir J stopped me, and heaped coals of fire on head by telling me that he had tried to me one of the resident appointments, m coveted by the assistant surgeons, but t the Admiralty had put in another m "However," said he, "I mean to keep y here till I can get you something you like," and turned upon his heel without wa ing for the thanks I stammered out. T explained how it was I had not been pack off to the West Coast of Africa, like some my juniors, and why, eventually, I mained altogether seven months at Hasla

After a long interval, during which "C John" ignored my existence almost as co pletely as before, he stopped me again as met in a casual way, and, describing t service on which the *Rattlesnake* was lik to be employed, said that Captain Ow Stanley, who was to command the ship, h asked him to recommend an assistant s geon who knew something of science; wo I like that? Of course I jumped at the off "Very well, I give you leave; go to Lond at once and see Captain Stanley." I we saw my future commander, who was ve civil to me, and promised to ask that I shou be appointed to his ship, as in due time I w It is a singular thing that, during the f months of my stay at Haslar, I had amo my messmates two future Directors-Gene of the Medical Service of the Navy (S Alexander Armstrong and Sir John Wa Reid), with the present President of t College of Physicians and my kindest doctors, Sir Andrew Clark.

Life on board Her Majesty's ship in the days was a very different affair from what is now, and ours was exceptionally rough, we were often many months without recei ing letters or seeing any civilized people b ourselves. In exchange, we had the intere of being about the last voyagers, I suppo to whom it could be possible to meet wi people who knew nothing of fire-arms — we did on the south coast of New Guinea and of making acquaintance with a varie of interesting savage and semi-civiliz people. But, apart from experience of th kind and the opportunities offered for scie tific work, to me, personally, the cruise w extremely valuable. It was good for me live under sharp discipline; to be down o the realities of existence by living on ba necessaries; to find out how extremely w worth living life seemed to be when one wo up from a night's rest on a soft plank, wi

the sky for canopy and cocoa and weevilly biscuit the sole prospect for breakfast; and, more especially, to learn to work for the sake of what I got for myself out of it, even if it all went to the bottom and I along with it. My brother officers were as good fellows as sailors ought to be and generally are, but, naturally, they neither knew nor cared anything about my pursuits, nor understood why I should be so zealous in pursuit of the objects which my friends, the middies, christened "Buffons," after the title conspicuous on a volume of the *Suites à Buffon*,[1] which stood on my shelf in the chart room.

During the four years of our absence, I sent home communication after communication to the "Linnean Society," with the same result as that obtained by Noah when he sent the raven out of his ark. Tired at last of hearing nothing about them, I determined to do or die, and in 1849 I drew up a more elaborate paper and forwarded it to the Royal Society. This was my dove, if I had only known it. But owing to the movements of the ship, I heard nothing of that either until my return to England in the latter end of the year 1850, when I found that it was printed and published, and that a huge packet of separate copies awaited me. When I hear some of my young friends complain of want of sympathy and encouragement, I am inclined to think that my naval life was not the least valuable part of my education.

Three years after my return were occupied by a battle between my scientific friends on the one hand and the Admiralty on the other, as to whether the latter ought, or ought not, to act up to the spirit of a pledge they had given to encourage officers who had done scientific work by contributing to the expense of publishing mine. At last the Admiralty, getting tired, I suppose, cut short the discussion by ordering me to join a ship, which thing I declined to do, and as Rastignac, in the *Père Goriot* says to Paris, I said to London, "*à nous deux*."[2] I desired to obtain a Professorship of either Physiology or Comparative Anatomy, and as vacancies occurred I applied, but in vain. My friend, Professor Tyndall, and I were candidates at the same time, he for the Chair of Physics, and I for that of Natural History in the University of Toronto, which, fortunately, as it turned out, would not look at either of us. I say fortunately, not from any lack of respect for Toronto, but because I soon made up my mind that London was the place for me, and hence I have steadily declined the inducements to leave it, which have at various times been offered. At last, in 1854, on the translation of my warm friend Edward Forbes, to Edinburgh, Sir Henry de la Beche, the Director-General of the Geological Survey, offered me the post Forbes vacated of Paleontologist and Lecturer on Natural History. I refused the former point blank, and accepted the latter only provisionally, telling Sir Henry that I did not care for fossils, and that I should give up Natural History as soon as I could get a physiological post. But I held the office for thirty-one years, and a large part of my work has been paleontological.

At that time I disliked public speaking, and had a firm conviction that I should break down every time I opened my mouth. I believe I had every fault a speaker could have (except talking at random or indulging in rhetoric), when I spoke to the first important audience I ever addressed, on a Friday evening at the Royal Institution, in 1852. Yet, I must confess to having been guilty, *malgré moi*,[1] of as much public speaking as most of my contemporaries, and for the last ten years it ceased to be so much of a bugbear to me. I used to pity myself for having to go through this training, but I am now more disposed to compassionate the unfortunate audiences, especially my ever friendly hearers at the Royal Institution, who were the subjects of my oratorical experiments.

The last thing that it would be proper for me to do would be to speak of the work of my life, or to say at the end of the day whether I think I have earned my wages or not. Men are said to be partial judges of themselves. Young men may be, I doubt if old men are. Life seems terribly foreshortened as they look back, and the mountain they set themselves to climb in youth turns out to be a mere spur of immeasurably higher ranges when, by failing breath, they reach the top. But if I may speak of the objects I have had more or less definitely in view since I began the ascent of my hillock, they are briefly these: To promote the increase of natural knowledge and to forward the application of scientific methods of investigation to all the problems of life to the best of my ability, in the conviction which has grown with my growth and strengthened with my strength, that there is no alleviation

1 Supplements to Buffon (the naturalist).
2 "We have a score to settle."

1 in spite of myself.

for the sufferings of mankind except veracity of thought and of action, and the resolute facing of the world as it is when the garment of make-believe by which pious hands have hidden its uglier features is stripped off.

It is with this intent that I have subordinated any reasonable, or unreasonable, ambition for scientific fame which I may have permitted myself to entertain to other ends; to the popularization of science; to the development and organization of scientific education; to the endless series of battles and skirmishes over evolution; and to untiring opposition to that ecclesiastical spirit, that clericalism, which in England, as everywhere else, and to whatever denomination it may belong, is the deadly enemy of science.

In striving for the attainment of these objects, I have been but one among many, and I shall be well content to be remembered, or even not remembered, as such. Circumstances, among which I am proud to reckon the devoted kindness of many friends, have led to my occupation of various prominent positions, among which the Presidency of the Royal Society is the highest. It would be mock modesty on my part, with these and other scientific honors which have been bestowed upon me, to pretend that I have not succeeded in the career which I have followed, rather because I was driven into it than of my own free will; but I am afraid I should not count even these things as marks of success if I could not hope that I had somewhat helped that movement of opinion which has been called the New Reformation.

## ON THE ADVISABLENESS OF IMPROVING NATURAL KNOWLEDGE

1866

A lay sermon, delivered at St. Martin's Hall, on Sunday, January 7, 1866. Published in *Lay Sermons*, 1871. Huxley's view of the importance of "Natural Knowledge" may be compared with Macaulay's in his *Essay on Bacon*.

This time two hundred years ago — in the beginning of January, 1666 — those of our forefathers who inhabited this great and ancient city, took breath between the shocks of two fearful calamities, one not quite past, although its fury had abated; the other to come.

Within a few yards of the very spot on which we are assembled, so the tradition runs, that painful and deadly malady, the plague, appeared in the latter months of 1664; and, though no new visitor, smote the people of England, and especially of her capital, with a violence unknown before, the course of the following year. The hand of a master has pictured what happened in those dismal months; and in that truest of fictions, *The History of the Plague Year*, Defoe shows death, with every accompaniment of pain and terror, stalking through the narrow streets of old London, and changing their busy hum into a silence broken only by the wailing of the mourners of fifty thousand dead; by the woeful denunciations and mad prayers of fanatics; and by the madder yells of despairing profligates.

But, about this time in 1666, the death rate had sunk to nearly its ordinary amount, a case of plague occurred only here and there, and the richer citizens who had flown from the pest had returned to their dwellings. The remnant of the people began to toil at their accustomed round of duty, or of pleasure, and the stream of city life bid fair to flow back along its old bed, with renewed and uninterrupted vigor.

The newly kindled hope was deceitful. The great plague, indeed, returned no more; but what it had done for the Londoners, the great fire, which broke out in the autumn of 1666, did for London; and, in September of that year, a heap of ashes and the indestructible energy of the people were all that remained of the glory of five sixths of the city within the walls.

Our forefathers had their own ways of accounting for each of these calamities. They submitted to the plague in humility and in penitence, for they believed it to be the judgment of God. But towards the fire they were furiously indignant, interpreting it as the effect of the malice of man — as the work of the Republicans, or of the Papists, according as their prepossessions ran in favor of loyalty or of Puritanism.

It would, I fancy, have fared but ill with one who, standing where I now stand, in what was then a thickly-peopled and fashionable part of London, should have broached to our ancestors the doctrine which I now propound to you — that all their hypotheses were alike wrong; that the plague was no more, in their sense, a Divine judgment, than the fire was the work of any political, or of any religious, sect; but that they were themselves the authors of both plague and fire, and that they must look to themselves

to prevent the recurrence of calamities, to all appearance so peculiarly beyond the reach of human control — so evidently the result of the wrath of God, or of the craft and subtlety of an enemy.

And one may picture to oneself how harmoniously the holy cursing of the Puritan of that day would have chimed in with the unholy cursing and the crackling wit of the Rochesters and Sedleys, and with the revilings of the political fanatics, if my imaginary plain dealer had gone on to say that, if the return of such misfortunes were ever rendered impossible, it would not be in virtue of the victory of the faith of Laud, or of that of Milton; and, as little, by the triumph of republicanism, as by that of monarchy. But that the one thing needful for compassing this end was, that the people of England should second the efforts of an insignificant corporation, the establishment of which, a few years before the epoch of the great plague and the great fire, had been as little noticed, as they were conspicuous.

Some twenty years before the outbreak of the plague a few calm and thoughtful students banded themselves together for the purpose, as they phrased it, of "improving natural knowledge." The ends they proposed to attain cannot be stated more clearly than in the words of one of the founders of the organization:

"Our business was (precluding matters of theology and state affairs) to discourse and consider of philosophical enquiries, and such as related thereunto: as Physick, Anatomy, Geometry, Astronomy, Navigation, Staticks, Magneticks, Chymicks, Mechanicks, and Natural Experiments; with the state of these studies and their cultivation at home and abroad. We then discoursed of the circulation of the blood, the valves in the veins, the venæ lacteæ, the lymphatic vessels, the Copernican hypothesis, the nature of comets and new stars, the satellites of Jupiter, the oval shape (as it then appeared) of Saturn, the spots on the sun and its turning on its own axis, the inequalities and selenography of the moon, the several phases of Venus and Mercury, the improvement of telescopes and grinding of glasses for that purpose, the weight of air, the possibility or impossibility of vacuities and nature's abhorrence thereof, the Torricellian[1] experiment in quicksilver, the descent of heavy bodies and the degree of acceleration therein, with divers other things of like nature, some of which were then but new discoveries, and others not so generally known and embraced as now they are; with other things appertaining to what hath been called the New Philosophy, which from the times of Galileo at Florence, and Sir Francis Bacon (Lord Verulam) in England, hath been much cultivated in Italy, France, Germany, and other parts abroad, as well as with us in England."

The learned Dr. Wallis,[1] writing in 1696, narrates in these words, what happened half a century before, or about 1645. The associates met at Oxford, in the rooms of Dr. Wilkins, who was destined to become a bishop; and subsequently coming together in London, they attracted the notice of the king. And it is a strange evidence of the taste for knowledge which the most obviously worthless of the Stuarts shared with his father and grandfather, that Charles the Second was not content with saying witty things about his philosophers, but did wise things with regard to them. For he not only bestowed upon them such attention as he could spare from his poodles and his mistresses, but, being in his usual state of impecuniosity, begged for them of the Duke of Ormond; and, that step being without effect, gave them Chelsea College, a charter, and a mace: crowning his favors in the best way they could be crowned, by burdening them no further with royal patronage or state interference.

Thus it was that the half-dozen young men, studious of the "New Philosophy," who met in one another's lodgings in Oxford or in London, in the middle of the seventeenth century, grew in numerical and in real strength, until, in its latter part, the "Royal Society for the Improvement of Natural Knowledge" had already become famous, and had acquired a claim upon the veneration of Englishmen, which it has ever since retained, as the principal focus of scientific activity in our islands, and the chief champion of the cause it was formed to support.

It was by the aid of the Royal Society that Newton published his *Principia*. If all the books in the world, except the *Philosophical Transactions*, were destroyed, it is safe to say that the foundations of physical science would remain unshaken, and that the vast intellectual progress of the last two centuries

1 The experiment of Torricelli (1608–1647) in which he produced a vacuum by the contraction of mercury in a sealed tube.

1 John Wallis (1616–1703), Professor of Mathematics at Oxford.

would be largely, though incompletely, recorded. Nor have any signs of halting or of decrepitude manifested themselves in our own times. As in Dr. Wallis's days, so in these, "our business is, precluding theology and state affairs, to discourse and consider of philosophical enquiries." But our "Mathematick" is one which Newton would have to go to school to learn; our "Staticks, Mechanicks, Magneticks, Chymicks, and Natural Experiments" constitute a mass of physical and chemical knowledge, a glimpse at which would compensate Galileo for the doings of a score of inquisitorial cardinals; our "Physick" and "Anatomy" have embraced such infinite varieties of being, have laid open such new worlds in time and space, have grappled, not unsuccessfully, with such complex problems, that the eyes of Vesalius and of Harvey might be dazzled by the sight of the tree that has grown out of their grain of mustard seed.

The fact is perhaps rather too much, than too little, forced upon one's notice, nowadays, that all this marvellous intellectual growth has a no less wonderful expression in practical life; and that, in this respect, if in no other, the movement symbolized by the progress of the Royal Society stands without a parallel in the history of mankind.

A series of volumes as bulky as the *Transactions* of the Royal Society might possibly be filled with the subtle speculations of the schoolmen; not improbably, the obtaining a mastery over the products of mediæval thought might necessitate an even greater expenditure of time and of energy than the acquirement of the "New Philosophy"; but though such work engrossed the best intellects of Europe for a longer time than has elapsed since the great fire, its effects were "writ in water," so far as our social state is concerned.

On the other hand, if the noble first President of the Royal Society could revisit the upper air and once more gladden his eyes with a sight of the familiar mace, he would find himself in the midst of a material civilization more different from that of his day, than that of the seventeenth, was from that of the first, century. And if Lord Brouncker's[1] native sagacity had not deserted his ghost, he would need no long reflection to discover that all these ships, these railways, these telegraphs, these factories, these printing presses, without which the whole fabric of modern English society would collapse into a mass of stagnant and starving pauperism — that all these pillars of our State are but the ripples and the bubbles upon the surface of that great spiritual stream, the spring of which, only, he and his fellows were privileged to see; and seeing, to recognize as that which it behoved them above all things to keep pure and undefiled.

It may not be too great a flight of imagination to conceive our noble *revenant*[1] not forgetful of the great troubles of his own day, and anxious to know how often London has been burned down since his time, and how often the plague had carried off its thousands. He would have to learn that, although London contains tenfold the inflammable matter that it did in 1666; though not content with filling our rooms with wood work and light draperies, we must need lead inflammable and explosive gases into every corner of our streets and houses, we never allow even a street to burn down. And if he asked how this had come about, we should have to explain that the improvement of natural knowledge has furnished us with dozens of machines for throwing water upon fires, any one of which would have furnished the ingenious Mr. Hooke, the first "curator and experimenter" of the Royal Society, with ample materials for discourse before half a dozen meetings of that body; and that, to say truth, except for the progress of natural knowledge, we should not have been able to make even the tools by which these machines are constructed. And further, it would be necessary to add, that although severe fires sometimes occur and inflict great damage, the loss is very generally compensated by societies, the operations of which have been rendered possible only by the progress of natural knowledge in the direction of mathematics, and the accumulation of wealth in virtue of other natural knowledge.

But the plague? My Lord Brouncker's observation would not, I fear, lead him to think that Englishmen of the nineteenth century are purer in life, or more fervent in religious faith, than the generation which could produce a Boyle, an Evelyn, and a Milton. He might find the mud of society at the bottom instead of at the top, but I fear that the sum total would be as deserving of swift judgment as at the time of the Restoration. And it would be our duty to explain

[1] William Viscount Brouncker, first president of the Royal Society.

[1] ghost.

nce more, and this time not without shame, nat we have no reason to believe that it is ne improvement of our faith, nor that of ur morals, which keeps the plague from our ity; but, again, that it is the improvement f our natural knowledge.

We have learned that pestilences will only ake up their abode among those who have repared unswept and ungarnished residences r them. Their cities must have narrow, nwatered streets, foul with accumulated arbage. Their houses must be ill-drained, l-lighted, ill-ventilated. Their subjects nust be ill-washed, ill-fed, ill-clothed. The ondon of 1665 was such a city. The cities f the East, where plague has an enduring welling, are such cities. We, in later times, ave learned somewhat of nature, and partly bey her. Because of this partial improvement of our natural knowledge and of that ractional obedience, we have no plague; beause that knowledge is still very imperfect nd that obedience yet incomplete, typhus our companion and cholera our visitor; but is not presumptuous to express the belief hat, when our knowledge is more complete nd our obedience the expression of our nowledge, London will count her centuries f freedom from typhus and cholera, as she ow gratefully reckons her two hundred ears of ignorance of that plague, which wooped upon her thrice in the first half of he seventeenth century.

Surely, there is nothing in these explanaions which is not fully borne out by the acts? Surely, the principles involved in hem are now admitted among the fixed beefs of all thinking men? Surely, it is true hat our countrymen are less subject to fire, amine, pestilence, and all the evils which esult from a want of command over and due nticipation of the course of nature, than vere the countrymen of Milton; and health, realth, and well-being are more abundant vith us than with them? But no less cerainly is the difference due to the improvement of our knowledge of nature, and the xtent to which that improved knowledge as been incorporated with the household vords of men, and has supplied the springs f their daily actions.

Granting for a moment, then, the truth of hat which the depreciators of natural knowedge are so fond of urging, that its improvement can only add to the resources of our naterial civilization; admitting it to be posible that the founders of the Royal Society hemselves looked for no other reward than this, I cannot confess that I was guilty of exaggeration when I hinted, that to him who had the gift of distinguishing between prominent events and important events, the origin of a combined effort on the part of mankind to improve natural knowledge might have loomed larger than the Plague and have outshone the glare of the Fire; as a something fraught with a wealth of beneficence to mankind, in comparison with which the damage done by those ghastly evils would shrink into insignificance.

It is very certain that for every victim slain by the plague, hundreds of mankind exist and find a fair share of happiness in the world by the aid of the spinning jenny. And the great fire, at its worst, could not have burned the supply of coal, the daily working of which, in the bowels of the earth, made possible by the steam pump, gives rise to an amount of wealth to which the millions lost in old London are but as an old song.

But spinning jenny and steam pump are, after all, but toys, possessing an accidental value; and natural knowledge creates multitudes of more subtle contrivances, the praises of which do not happen to be sung because they are not directly convertible into instruments for creating wealth. When I contemplate natural knowledge squandering such gifts among men, the only appropriate comparison I can find for her is, to liken her to such a peasant woman as one sees in the Alps, striding ever upward, heavily burdened, and with mind bent only on her home; but yet, without effort and without thought, knitting for her children. Now stockings are good and comfortable things, and the children will undoubtedly be much the better for them; but surely it would be shortsighted, to say the least of it, to depreciate this toiling mother as a mere stocking-machine — a mere provider of physical comforts?

However, there are blind leaders of the blind, and not a few of them, who take this view of natural knowledge, and can see nothing in the bountiful mother of humanity but a sort of comfort-grinding machine. According to them, the improvement of natural knowledge always has been, and always must be, synonymous with no more than the improvement of the material resources and the increase of the gratifications of men.

Natural knowledge is, in their eyes, no real mother of mankind, bringing them up

with kindness, and, if need be, with sternness, in the way they should go, and instructing them in all things needful for their welfare; but a sort of fairy god-mother, ready to furnish her pets with shoes of swiftness, swords of sharpness, and omnipotent Aladdin's lamps, so that they may have telegraphs to Saturn, and see the other side of the moon, and thank God they are better than their benighted ancestors.

If this talk were true, I, for one, should not greatly care to toil in the service of natural knowledge. I think I would just as soon be quietly chipping my own flint axe, after the manner of my forefathers a few thousand years back, as be troubled with the endless malady of thought which now infests us all, for such reward. But I venture to say that such views are contrary alike to reason and to fact. Those who discourse in such fashion seem to me to be so intent upon trying to see what is above nature, or what is behind her, that they are blind to what stares them in the face, in her.

I should not venture to speak thus strongly if my justification were not to be found in the simplest and most obvious facts — if it needed more than an appeal to the most notorious truths to justify my assertion, that the improvement of natural knowledge, whatever direction it has taken, and however low the aims of those who may have commenced it — has not only conferred practical benefits on men, but, in so doing, has effected a revolution in their conceptions of the universe and of themselves, and has profoundly altered their modes of thinking and their views of right and wrong. I say that natural knowledge, seeking to satisfy natural wants, has found the ideas which can alone still spiritual cravings. I say that natural knowledge, in desiring to ascertain the laws of comfort, has been driven to discover those of conduct, and to lay the foundations of a new morality.

Let us take these points separately; and, first, what great ideas has natural knowledge introduced into men's minds?

I cannot but think that the foundations of all natural knowledge were laid when the reason of man first came face to face with the facts of nature; when the savage first learned that the fingers of one hand are fewer than those of both; that it is shorter to cross a stream than to head it; that a stone stops where it is unless it be moved, and that it drops from the hand which lets it go; that light and heat come and go with the sun; that sticks burn away in a fire; that plants and animals grow and die; that if he struck his fellow savage a blow he would make him angry, and perhaps get a blow in return; while if he offered him a fruit he would please him, and perhaps receive a fish in exchange. When men had acquired this much knowledge, the outlines, rude though they were, of mathematics, of physics, of chemistry, of biology, of moral, economical and political science, were sketched. Nor did the germ of religion fail when science began to bud. Listen to words which, though new, are yet three thousand years old:

"... When in heaven the stars about the moon
Look beautiful, when all the winds are laid,
And every height comes out, and jutting peak
And valley, and the immeasurable heavens
Break open to their highest, and all the stars
Shine, and the shepherd gladdens in his heart."

But if the half-savage Greek could share our feelings thus far, it is irrational to doubt that he went further, to find, as we do, that upon that brief gladness there follows a certain sorrow — the little light of awakened human intelligence shines so mere a spark amidst the abyss of the unknown and unknowable; seems so insufficient to do more than illuminate the imperfections that cannot be remedied, the aspirations that cannot be realized, of man's own nature. But in this sadness, this consciousness of the limitation of man, this sense of an open secret which he cannot penetrate, lies the essence of all religion; and the attempt to embody it in the forms furnished by the intellect is the origin of the higher theologies.

Thus it seems impossible to imagine but that the foundations of all knowledge — secular or sacred — were laid when intelligence dawned, though the superstructure remained for long ages so slight and feeble as to be compatible with the existence of almost any general view respecting the mode of governance of the universe. No doubt, from the first, there were certain phenomena which, to the rudest mind, presented a constancy of occurrence, and suggested that a fixed order ruled, among them at any rate I doubt if the grossest of Fetish worshipers ever imagined that a stone must have a god within it to make it fall, or that a fruit had a god within it to make it taste sweet. With regard to such matters as these, it is hardly

1 Need it be said that this is Tennyson's English for Homer's Greek? (Huxley's note.)

uestionable that mankind from the first ook strictly positive and scientific views.

But, with respect to all the less familiar ccurrences which present themselves, unultured man, no doubt, has always taken imself as the standard of comparison, as the entre and measure of the world; nor could e well avoid doing so. And finding that his pparently uncaused will has a powerful ffect in giving rise to many occurrences, he aturally enough ascribed other and greater vents to other and greater volitions, and me to look upon the world and all that herein is, as the product of the volitions of ersons like himself, but stronger, and capale of being appeased or angered, as he himelf might be soothed or irritated. Through ich conceptions of the plan and working of ne universe all mankind have passed, or are assing. And we may now consider what as been the effect of the improvement of atural knowledge on the views of men who ave reached this stage, and who have begun cultivate natural knowledge with no deire but that of "increasing God's honor and ettering man's estate."

For example: what could seem wiser, from mere material point of view, more innocent om a theological one, to an ancient people, an that they should learn the exact succession of the seasons, as warnings for their usbandmen; or the position of the stars, as uides to their rude navigators? But what as grown out of this search for natural nowledge of so merely useful a character? ou all know the reply. Astronomy — hich of all sciences has filled men's minds ith general ideas of a character most foreign their daily experience, and has, more than y other, rendered it impossible for them accept the beliefs of their fathers. Asonomy — which tells them that this so st and seemingly solid earth is but an om among atoms, whirling, no man knows hither, through illimitable space; which monstrates that what we call the peaceful aven above us, is but that space, filled by infinitely subtle matter whose particles e seething and surging, like the waves of angry sea; which opens up to us infinite gions where nothing is known, or ever ems to have been known, but matter and rce, operating according to rigid rules; hich leads us to contemplate phenomena e very nature of which demonstrates that ey must have had a beginning, and that ey must have an end, but the very nature which also proves that the beginning was, to our conceptions of time, infinitely remote, and that the end is as immeasurably distant.

But it is not alone those who pursue astronomy who ask for bread and receive ideas. What more harmless than the attempt to lift and distribute water by pumping it; what more absolutely and grossly utilitarian? But out of pumps grew the discussions about nature's abhorrence of a vacuum; and then it was discovered that nature does not abhor a vacuum, but that air has weight; and that notion paved the way for the doctrine that all matter has weight, and that the force which produces weight is co-extensive with the universe — in short, to the theory of universal gravitation and endless force. And learning how to handle gases led to the discovery of oxygen and to modern chemistry, and to the notion of the indestructibility of matter.

Again, what simpler, or more absolutely practical, than the attempt to keep the axle of a wheel from heating when the wheel turns round very fast? How useful for carters and gig drivers to know something about this; and how good were it, if any ingenious person would find out the cause of such phænomena, and thence educe a general remedy for them. Such an ingenious person was Count Rumford; and he and his successors have landed us in the theory of the persistence or indestructibility of force. And in the infinitely minute, as in the infinitely great, the seekers after natural knowledge of the kinds called physical and chemical, have everywhere found a definite order and succession of events which seem never to be infringed.

And how has it fared with "Physick" and Anatomy? Have the anatomist, the physiologist, or the physician, whose business it has been to devote themselves assiduously to that eminently practical and direct end, the alleviation of the sufferings of mankind — have they been able to confine their vision more absolutely to the strictly useful? I fear they are the worst offenders of all. For if the astronomer has set before us the infinite magnitude of space, and the practical eternity of the duration of the universe: if the physical and chemical philosophers have demonstrated the infinite minuteness of its constituent parts, and the practical eternity of matter and of force; and if both have alike proclaimed the universality of a definite and predicable order and succession of events, the workers in biology have not only accepted all these, but have added more

startling theses of their own. For, as the astronomers discover in the earth no centre of the universe, but an eccentric speck, so the naturalists find man to be no centre of the living world, but one amidst endless modifications of life; and as the astronomer observes the mark of practically endless time set upon the arrangements of the solar system, so the student of life finds the records of ancient forms of existence peopling the world for ages, which, in relation to human experience, are infinite.

Furthermore, the physiologist finds life to be as dependent for its manifestation on particular molecular arrangements as any physical or chemical phenomenon; and, wherever he extends his researches, fixed order and unchanging causation reveal themselves, as plainly as in the rest of nature.

Nor can I find that any other fate has awaited the germ of Religion. Arising, like all other kinds of knowledge, out of the action and interaction of man's mind, with that which is not man's mind, it has taken the intellectual coverings of Fetishism or Polytheism; of Theism or Atheism; of Superstition or Rationalism. With these, and their relative merits and demerits, I have nothing to do; but this it is needful for my purpose to say, that if the religion of the present differs from that of the past, it is because the theology of the present has become more scientific than that of the past; because it has not only renounced idols of wood and idols of stone, but begins to see the necessity of breaking in pieces the idols built up of books and traditions and finespun ecclesiastical cobwebs: and of cherishing the noblest and most human of man's emotions, by worship "for the most part of the silent sort" at the altar of the Unknown and Unknowable.

Such are a few of the new conceptions implanted in our minds by the improvement of natural knowledge. Men have acquired the ideas of the practically infinite extent of the universe and of its practical eternity; they are familiar with the conception that our earth is but an infinitesimal fragment of that part of the universe which can be seen; and that, nevertheless, its duration is, as compared with our standards of time, infinite. They have further acquired the idea that man is but one of innumerable forms of life now existing on the globe, and that the present existences are but the last of an immeasurable series of predecessors. Furthermore, every step they have made in natural knowledge has tended to extend and rivet in their minds the conception of a definite or of the universe — which is embodied in w are called, by an unhappy metaphor, laws of nature — and to narrow the ra and loosen the force of men's belief in sp taneity, or in changes other than such arise out of that definite order itself.

Whether these ideas are well or ill found is not the question. No one can deny th they exist, and have been the inevita outgrowth of the improvement of natu knowledge. And if so, it cannot be doubt that they are changing the form of me most cherished and most important conv tions.

And as regards the second point — t extent to which the improvement of natu knowledge has remodelled and altered wh may be termed the intellectual ethics of m — what are among the moral convictio most fondly held by barbarous and sen barbarous people?

They are the convictions that authority the soundest basis of belief; that merit a taches to a readiness to believe; that t doubting disposition is a bad one, and scep cism a sin; that when good authority h pronounced what is to be believed, and fai has accepted it, reason has no further dut There are many excellent persons who y hold by these principles, and it is not m present business, or intention, to discu their views. All I wish to bring clearly b fore your minds is the unquestionable fa that the improvement of natural knowledg is affected by methods which directly giv the lie to all these convictions, and assum the exact reverse of each to be true.

The improver of natural knowledge abs lutely refuses to acknowledge authority, a such. For him, scepticism is the highest duties; blind faith the one unpardonabl sin. And it cannot be otherwise, for ever great advance in natural knowledge has in volved the absolute rejection of authority the cherishing of the keenest scepticism, th annihilation of the spirit of blind faith; an the most ardent votary of science holds hi firmest convictions, not because the men h most venerates hold them; not because thei verity is testified by portents and wonders but because his experience teaches him tha whenever he chooses to bring these convic tions into contact with their primary source nature — whenever he thinks fit to test then by appealing to experiment and to observa tion — nature will confirm them. The ma

science has learned to believe in justification, not by faith, but by verification.

Thus, without for a moment pretending to despise the practical results of the improvement of natural knowledge, and its beneficial influence on material civilization, it must, I think, be admitted that the great ideas, some of which I have indicated, and the ethical spirit which I have endeavored to sketch, in the few moments which remained at my disposal, constitute the real and permanent significance of natural knowledge.

If these ideas be destined, as I believe they are, to be more and more firmly established as the world grows older; if that spirit be united, as I believe it is, to extend itself into all departments of human thought, and to become co-extensive with the range of knowledge; if, as our race approaches its maturity, it discovers, as I believe it will, that there is but one kind of knowledge and but one method of acquiring it; then we, who are still children, may justly feel it our highest duty to recognize the advisableness of improving natural knowledge, and so to aid ourselves and our successors in our course towards the noble goal which lies before mankind.

## A LIBERAL EDUCATION; AND WHERE TO FIND IT

1871

A lecture delivered at the South London Working Men's College, and published in *Lay Sermons*, 1871. The concluding portion of the lecture deals with conditions peculiar to England in Huxley's day.

The business which the South London Working Men's College has undertaken is a great work; indeed, I might say, that Education, with which that college proposes to grapple, is the greatest work of all those which are ready to a man's hand just at present.

And, at length, this fact is becoming generally recognized. You cannot go anywhere without hearing a buzz of more or less confused and contradictory talk on this subject — nor can you fail to notice that, in one point at any rate, there is a very decided advance upon like discussions in former days. Nobody outside the agricultural interest now cares to say that education is a bad thing. Of any representative of the once large and powerful party, which, in former days, proclaimed this opinion, still exists in a semi-fossil state, he keeps his thoughts to himself. In fact, there is a chorus of voices, almost distressing in their harmony, raised in favor of the doctrine that education is the great panacea for human troubles, and that, if the country is not shortly to go to the dogs, everybody must be educated.

The politicians tell us, "you must educate the masses because they are going to be masters." The clergy join in the cry for education, for they affirm that the people are drifting away from church and chapel into the broadest infidelity. The manufacturers and the capitalists swell the chorus lustily. They declare that ignorance makes bad workmen; that England will soon be unable to turn out cotton goods, or steam engines, cheaper than other people; and then, Ichabod! Ichabod! the glory will be departed from us. And a few voices are lifted up in favor of the doctrine that the masses should be educated because they are men and women with unlimited capacities of being, doing, and suffering, and that it is as true now, as ever it was, that the people perish for lack of knowledge.

These members of the minority, with whom I confess I have a good deal of sympathy, are doubtful whether any of the other reasons urged in favor of the education of the people are of much value — whether, indeed, some of them are based upon either wise or noble grounds of action. They question if it be wise to tell people that you will do for them, out of fear of their power, what you have left undone, so long as your only motive was compassion for their weakness and their sorrows. And if ignorance of everything which it is needful a ruler should know is likely to do so much harm in the governing classes of the future, why is it, they ask reasonably enough, that such ignorance in the governing classes of the past has not been viewed with equal horror?

Compare the average artisan and the average country squire, and it may be doubted if you will find a pin to choose between the two in point of ignorance, class feeling, or prejudice. It is true that the ignorance is of a different sort — that the class feeling is in favor of a different class — and that the prejudice has a distinct savor of wrong-headedness in each case — but it is questionable if the one is either a bit better, or a bit worse, than the other. The old protectionist theory is the doctrine of trades unions as applied by the squires, and the modern trades unionism is the doctrine of the squires applied by the artisans. Why should we be

worse off under one *régime* than under the other?

Again, this sceptical minority asks the clergy to think whether it is really want of education which keeps the masses away from their ministrations — whether the most completely educated men are not as open to reproach on this score as the workmen; and whether, perchance, this may not indicate that it is not education which lies at the bottom of the matter?

Once more, these people, whom there is no pleasing, venture to doubt whether the glory, which rests upon being able to undersell all the rest of the world, is a very safe kind of glory — whether we may not purchase it too dear; especially if we allow education, which ought to be directed to the making of men, to be diverted into a process of manufacturing human tools, wonderfully adroit in the exercise of some technical industry, but good for nothing else.

And, finally, these people inquire whether it is the masses alone who need a reformed and improved education. They ask whether the richest of our public schools might not well be made to supply knowledge, as well as gentlemanly habits, a strong class feeling, and eminent proficiency in cricket. They seem to think that the noble foundations of our old universities are hardly fulfilling their functions in their present posture of half-clerical seminaries, half racecourses, where men are trained to win a senior wranglership, or a double-first, as horses are trained to win a cup, with as little reference to the needs of after-life in the case of the man as in that of the racer. And while as zealous for education as the rest, they affirm that if the education of the richer classes were such as to fit them to be the leaders and the governors of the poorer; and if the education of the poorer classes were such as to enable them to appreciate really wise guidance and good governance, the politicians need not fear mob-law, nor the clergy lament their want of flocks, nor the capitalists prognosticate the annihilation of the prosperity of the country.

Such is the diversity of opinion upon the why and the wherefore of education. And my hearers will be prepared to expect that the practical recommendations which are put forward are not less discordant. There is a loud cry for compulsory education. We English, in spite of constant experience to the contrary, preserve a touching faith in the efficacy of acts of parliament; and I believe we should have compulsory education in the course of next session if there were the lea probability that half a dozen leading state men of different parties would agree wh that education should be.

Some hold that education without th ology is worse than none. Others mainta quite as strongly, that education with th ology is in the same predicament. But th is certain, that those who hold the first opi ion can by no means agree what theolo should be taught; and that those who mai tain the second are in a small minority.

At any rate "make people learn to rea write, and cipher," say a great many; a the advice is undoubtedly sensible as far it goes. But, as has happened to me former days, those who, in despair of getti anything better, advocate this measure, a met with the objection that it is very li making a child practise the use of a knif fork, and spoon, without giving it a partic of meat. I really don't know what reply to be made to such an objection.

But it would be unprofitable to spend mo time in disentangling, or rather in showi up the knots in, the ravelled skeins of o neighbors. Much more to the purpose it to ask if we possess any clue of our ow which may guide us among these entangl ments. And by way of a beginning, let ask ourselves — What is education? Abov all things, what is our ideal of a thorough liberal education? — of that educatio which, if we could begin life again, we woul give ourselves — of that education which, we could mold the fates to our own will, w would give our children? Well, I know no what may be your conceptions upon th matter, but I will tell you mine, and I hop I shall find that our views are not ver discrepant.

Suppose it were perfectly certain that th life and fortune of every one of us would, on day or other, depend upon his winning o losing a game at chess. Don't you thin that we should all consider it to be a primar duty to learn at least the names and th moves of the pieces; to have a notion of gambit, and a keen eye for all the means o giving and getting out of check? Do yo not think that we should look with a disa probation amounting to scorn, upon th father who allowed his son, or the state whic allowed its members, to grow up withou knowing a pawn from a knight?

Yet, it is a very plain and elementar truth that the life, the fortune, and the hap piness of every one of us, and, more or less

f those who are connected with us, do epend upon our knowing something of the ules of a game infinitely more difficult and omplicated than chess. It is a game which as been played for untold ages, every man nd woman of us being one of the two play- rs in a game of his or her own. The chess- oard is the world, the pieces are the phe- omena of the universe, the rules of the game re what we call the laws of nature. The layer on the other side is hidden from us. Ve know that his play is always fair, just, nd patient. But also we know, to our cost, hat he never overlooks a mistake, or makes he smallest allowance for ignorance. To he man who plays well, the highest stakes re paid, with that sort of overflowing gener- sity with which the strong shows delight in trength. And one who plays ill is check- nated — without haste, but without re- iorse.

My metaphor will remind some of you of he famous picture in which Retzsch has epicted Satan playing at chess with man for is soul. Substitute for the mocking fiend n that picture a calm, strong angel who is laying for love, as we say, and would ather lose than win — and I should accept : as an image of human life.

Well, what I mean by Education is learn- ng the rules of this mighty game. In other ords, education is the instruction of the ntellect in the laws of Nature, under which ame I include not merely things and their orces, but men and their ways; and the fash- oning of the affections and of the will into n earnest and loving desire to move in armony with those laws. For me, educa- ion means neither more nor less than this. anything which professes to call itself edu- ation must be tried by this standard, and if fails to stand the test, I will not call it Education, whatever may be the force of uthority or of numbers upon the other side.

It is important to remember that, in strict- ess, there is no such thing as an uneducated nan. Take an extreme case. Suppose that n adult man, in the full vigor of his fac- lties, could be suddenly placed in the world, s Adam is said to have been, and then left o do as he best might. How long would he e left uneducated? Not five minutes. Na- ure would begin to teach him, through the ye, the ear, the touch, the properties of ob- cts. Pain and pleasure would be at his bow telling him to do this and avoid that; nd by slow degrees the man would receive n education which, if narrow, would be thorough, real, and adequate to his circumstances, though there would be no extras and very few accomplishments.

And if to this solitary man entered a second Adam, or, better still, an Eve, a new and greater world, that of social and moral phenomena, would be revealed. Joys and woes, compared with which all others might seem but faint shadows, would spring from the new relations. Happiness and sorrow would take the place of the coarser monitors, pleasure and pain; but conduct would still be shaped by the observation of the natural consequences of actions; or, in other words, by the laws of the nature of man.

To every one of us the world was once as fresh and new as to Adam. And then, long before we were susceptible of any other mode of instruction, Nature took us in hand, and every minute of waking life brought its educational influence, shaping our actions into rough accordance with Nature's laws, so that we might not be ended untimely by too gross disobedience. Nor should I speak of this process of education as past, for any one, be he as old as he may. For every man the world is as fresh as it was at the first day, and as full of untold novelties for him who has the eyes to see them. And Nature is still continuing her patient education of us in that great university, the universe, of which we are all members — Nature having no Test-Acts.

Those who take honors in Nature's university, who learn the laws which govern men and things and obey them, are the really great and successful men in this world. The great mass of mankind are the "Poll," who pick up just enough to get through without much discredit. Those who won't learn at all are plucked; and then you can't come up again. Nature's pluck means extermination.

Thus the question of compulsory education is settled so far as Nature is concerned. Her bill on that question was framed and passed long ago. But, like all compulsory legislation, that of Nature is harsh and wasteful in its operation. Ignorance is visited as sharply as wilful disobedience — incapacity meets with the same punishment as crime. Nature's discipline is not even a word and a blow, and the blow first; but the blow without the word. It is left to you to find out why your ears are boxed.

The object of what we commonly call education — that education in which man intervenes and which I shall distinguish as arti-

ficial education — is to make good these defects in Nature's methods; to prepare the child to receive Nature's education, neither incapably nor ignorantly, nor with wilful disobedience; and to understand the preliminary symptoms of her pleasure, without waiting for the box on the ear. In short, all artificial education ought to be an anticipation of natural education. And a liberal education is an artificial education, which has not only prepared a man to escape the great evils of disobedience to natural laws, but has trained him to appreciate and to seize upon the rewards which Nature scatters with as free a hand as her penalties.

That man, I think, has had a liberal education who has been so trained in youth that his body is the ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all the work that, as a mechanism, it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine, with all its parts of equal strength, and in smooth working order; ready, like a steam engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind; whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of Nature and of the laws of her operations; one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience; who has learned to love all beauty, whether of Nature or of art, to hate all vileness, and to respect others as himself.

Such an one and no other, I conceive, has had a liberal education; for he is, as completely as a man can be, in harmony with Nature. He will make the best of her, and she of him. They will get on together rarely; she as his ever-beneficent mother; he as her mouthpiece, her conscious self, her minister and interpreter. . . .

## ON THE PHYSICAL BASIS OF LIFE

1868

A lecture delivered at Edinburgh, November 8, 1868, and printed in the *Fortnightly Review*, February, 1869, and in *Lay Sermons*, 1871. Huxley here defines the philosophy of science, and his own position as an agnostic, i.e., one who refuses to believe in anything that cannot be proved by scientific methods.

In order to make the title of this discourse generally intelligible, I have translated the term "Protoplasm," which is the scientific name of the substance of which I am al to speak, by the words "the physical bas life." I suppose that, to many, the idea there is such a thing as a physical basis matter, of life may be novel — so wi spread is the conception of life as a someth which works through matter, but is dependent of it; and even those who aware that matter and life are inspara connected, may not be prepared for the clusion plainly suggested by the phrase, physical basis or matter of life," that ther some one kind of matter which is common all living beings, and that their end diversities are bound together by a physi as well as an ideal, unity. In fact, when f apprehended, such a doctrine as this appe almost shocking to common sense.

What, truly, can seem to be more ob ously different from one another, in facul in form, and in substance, than the vari kinds of living beings? What community faculty can there be between the brig colored lichen, which so nearly resemble mere mineral incrustation of the bare rock which it grows, and the painter, to whom is instinct with beauty, or the botanist, wh it feeds with knowledge?

Again, think of the microscopic fungus a mere infinitesimal ovoid particle, wh finds space and duration enough to multi into countless millions in the body of a liv fly; and then of the wealth of foliage, luxuriance of flower and fruit, which between this bald sketch of a plant and giant pine of California, towering to dimensions of a cathedral spire, or the Indi fig, which covers acres with its profou shadow, and endures while nations and e pires come and go around its vast circu ference. Or, turning to the other half of world of life, picture to yourselves the gr Finner whale, hugest of beasts that live, have lived, disporting his eighty or nine feet of bone, muscle and blubber, with e roll, among waves in which the stoutest s that ever left dockyard would flounder hop lessly; and contrast him with the invisil animalcules — mere gelatinous specks, mul tudes of which could, in fact, dance upon t point of a needle with the same ease as t angels of the Schoolmen could, in imagin tion. With these images before your minc you may well ask, what community of for or structure, is there between the animalcu and the whale; or between the fungus and t fig-tree? And, *a fortiori*,[1] between all foun

[1] so much the more.

Finally, if we regard substance, or material composition, what hidden bond can connect the flower which a girl wears in her hair and the blood which courses through her youthful veins; or, what is there in common between the dense and resisting mass of the oak, or the strong fabric of the tortoise, and those broad disks of glassy jelly which may be seen pulsating through the waters of a calm sea, but which drain away to mere films in the hand which raises them out of their element?

Such objections as these must, I think, arise in the mind of every one who ponders, for the first time, upon the conception of a single physical basis of life underlying all the diversities of vital existence; but I propose to demonstrate to you that, notwithstanding these apparent difficulties, a threefold unity — namely, a unity of power or faculty, a unity of form, and a unity of substantial composition — does pervade the whole living world.

No very abstruse argumentation is needed, in the first place, to prove that the powers, or faculties, of all kinds of living matter, diverse as they may be in degree, are substantially similar in kind.

Goethe has condensed a survey of all the powers of mankind into the well-known epigram:

*Warum treibt sich das Volk so und schreit? Es will sich ernähren,*
*Kinder zeugen, und die nähren so gut es vermag.*
. . . . . .
*Weiter bringt es kein Mensch, stell' er sich wie er auch will.*" [1]

In physiological language this means, that all the multifarious and complicated activities of man are comprehensible under three categories. Either they are immediately directed towards the maintenance and development of the body, or they effect transitory changes in the relative positions of parts of the body, or they tend towards the continuance of the species. Even those manifestations of intellect, of feeling, and of will, which we rightly name the higher faculties, are not excluded from this classification, inasmuch as to every one but the subject of them, they are known only as transitory changes in the relative positions of parts of the body. Speech, gesture, and every other form of human action are, in the long run, resolvable into muscular contraction, and muscular contraction is but a transitory change in the relative positions of the parts of a muscle. But the scheme which is large enough to embrace the activities of the highest form of life, covers all those of the lower creatures. The lowest plant, or animalcule, feeds, grows, and reproduces its kind. In addition, all animals manifest those transitory changes of form which we class under irritability and contractility; and it is more than probable that when the vegetable world is thoroughly explored, we shall find all plants in possession of the same powers, at one time or other of their existence.

I am not now alluding to such phenomena, at once rare and conspicuous, as those exhibited by the leaflets of the sensitive plants, or the stamens of the barberry, but to much more widely spread, and at the same time, more subtle and hidden, manifestations of vegetable contractility. You are doubtless aware that the common nettle owes its stinging property to the innumerable stiff and needle-like, though exquisitely delicate, hairs which cover its surface. Each stinging-needle tapers from a broad base to a slender summit, which, though rounded at the end, is of such microscopic fineness that it readily penetrates, and breaks off in, the skin. The whole hair consists of a very delicate outer case of wood, closely applied to the inner surface of which is a layer of semifluid matter, full of innumerable granules of extreme minuteness. This semifluid lining is protoplasm, which thus constitutes a kind of bag, full of a limpid liquid, and roughly corresponding in form with the interior of the hair which it fills. When viewed with a sufficiently high magnifying power, the protoplasmic layer of the nettle hair is seen to be in a condition of unceasing activity. Local contractions of the whole thickness of its substance pass slowly and gradually from point to point, and give rise to the appearance of progressive waves, just as the bending of successive stalks of corn by a breeze produces the apparent billows of a cornfield.

But, in addition to these movements, and independently of them, the granules are driven, in relatively rapid streams, through channels in the protoplasm which seem to have a considerable amount of persistence. Most commonly, the currents in adjacent parts of the protoplasm take similar directions; and thus there is a general stream up

[1] "Why does the mass of people so push and shout? They wish to acquire a living, bring forth children, and nurture them as well as they can. . . . No man can go further, let him imagine what he will." (From the *Venetian Epigrams*.)

one side of the hair and down the other. But this does not prevent the existence of partial currents which take different routes; and sometimes trains of granules may be seen coursing swiftly in opposite directions within a twenty-thousandth of an inch of one another; while, occasionally, opposite streams come into direct collision, and, after a longer or shorter struggle, one predominates. The cause of these currents seems to lie in contractions of the protoplasm which bounds the channels in which they flow, but which are so minute that the best microscopes show only their effects, and not themselves.

The spectacle afforded by the wonderful energies prisoned within the compass of the microscopic hair of a plant, which we commonly regard as a merely passive organism, is not easily forgotten by one who has watched its display, continued hour after hour, without pause or sign of weakening. The possible complexity of many other organic forms, seemingly as simple as the protoplasm of the nettle, dawns upon one; and the comparison of such a protoplasm to a body with an internal circulation, which has been put forward by an eminent physiologist, loses much of its startling character. Currents similar to those of the hairs of the nettle have been observed in a great multitude of very different plants, and weighty authorities have suggested that they probably occur, in more or less perfection, in all young vegetable cells. If such be the case, the wonderful noonday silence of a tropical forest is, after all, due only to the dulness of our hearing; and could our ears catch the murmur of these tiny Maelstroms, as they whirl in the innumerable myriads of living cells which constitute each tree, we should be stunned, as with the roar of a great city.

Among the lower plants, it is the rule rather than the exception, that contractility should be still more openly manifested at some periods of their existence. The protoplasm of *Algæ* and *Fungi* becomes, under many circumstances, partially, or completely, freed from its woody case, and exhibits movements of its whole mass, or is propelled by the contractility of one or more hair-like prolongations of its body, which are called vibratile cilia. And, so far as the conditions of the manifestation of the phenomena of contractility have yet been studied, they are the same for the plant as for the animal. Heat and electric shocks influence both, and in the same way, though it may be in different degrees. It is by means my intention to suggest that there no difference in faculty between the low plant and the highest, or between plants a animals. But the difference between t powers of the lowest plant, or animal, a those of the highest, is one of degree, not kind, and depends, as Milne-Edwards lo ago so well pointed out, upon the extent which the principle of the division of lab is carried out in the living economy. In t lowest organism all parts are competent perform all functions, and one and the sa portion of protoplasm may successfully ta on the function of feeding, moving, or producing apparatus. In the highest, on contrary, a great number of parts combine perform each function, each part doing allotted share of the work with great accura and efficiency, but being useless for a other purpose.

On the other hand, notwithstanding all fundamental resemblances which exist tween the powers of the protoplasm in pla and in animals, they present a striking d ference (to which I shall advert more length presently), in the fact that plants d manufacture fresh protoplasm out of mine compounds, whereas animals are obliged procure it ready made, and hence, in the lo run, depend upon plants. Upon what con tion this difference in the powers of the t great divisions of the world of life depen nothing is at present known.

With such qualifications as arise out of last-mentioned fact, it may be truly said th the acts of all living things are fundamenta one. Is any such unity predicable of th forms? Let us seek in easily verified fa for a reply to this question. If a drop blood be drawn by pricking one's finger, a viewed with proper precautions, and unde sufficiently high microscopic power, th will be seen, among the innumerable mu tude of little, circular, discoidal bodies, corpuscles, which float in it and give it color, a comparatively small number of col less corpuscles, of somewhat larger size a very irregular shape. If the drop of blood kept at the temperature of the body, th colorless corpuscles will be seen to exhibit marvellous activity, changing their for with great rapidity, drawing in and thrusti out prolongations of their substance, a creeping about as if they were independe organisms.

The substance which is thus active is mass of protoplasm, and its activity differs

detail, rather than in principle, from that of the protoplasm of the nettle. Under sundry circumstances the corpuscle dies and becomes distended into a round mass, in the midst of which is seen a smaller spherical body, which existed, but was more or less hidden, in the living corpuscle, and is called its *nucleus*. Corpuscles of essentially similar structure are to be found in the skin, in the lining of the mouth, and scattered through the whole framework of the body. Nay, more; in the earliest condition of the human organism, in that state in which it has but just become distinguishable from the egg in which it arises, it is nothing but an aggregation of such corpuscles, and every organ of the body was, once, no more than such an aggregation.

Thus a nucleated mass of protoplasm turns out to be what may be termed the structural unit of the human body. As a matter of fact, the body, in its earliest state, is a mere multiple of such units; and in its perfect condition, it is a multiple of such units, variously modified.

But does the formula which expresses the essential structural character of the highest animal cover all the rest, as the statement of its powers and faculties covered that of all others? Very nearly. Beast and fowl, reptile and fish, mollusk, worm, and polyp, are all composed of structural units of the same character, namely, masses of protoplasm with a nucleus. There are sundry very low animals, each of which, structurally, is a mere colorless blood-corpuscle, leading an independent life. But, at the very bottom of the animal scale, even this simplicity becomes simplified, and all the phenomena of life are manifested by a particle of protoplasm without a nucleus. Nor are such organisms insignificant by reason of their want of complexity. It is a fair question whether the protoplasm of those simplest forms of life which people an immense extent of the bottom of the sea, would not outweigh all of the higher living beings which inhabit the land put together. And in ancient times, no less than at the present day, such living beings as these have been the greatest of rock builders.

What has been said of the animal world is no less true of plants. Imbedded in the protoplasm at the broad, or attached, end of the nettle hair, there lies a spheroidal nucleus. Careful examination further proves that the whole substance of the nettle is made up of a repetition of such masses of nucleated protoplasm, each contained in a wooden case, which is modified in form, sometimes into a woody fibre, sometimes into a duct or spiral vessel, sometimes into a pollen grain, or an ovule. Traced back to its earliest state, the nettle arises as the man does, in a particle of nucleated protoplasm. And in the lowest plants, as in the lowest animals, a single mass of such protoplasm may constitute the whole plant, or the protoplasm may exist without a nucleus.

Under these circumstances, it may well be asked, how is one mass of non-nucleated protoplasm to be distinguished from another? why call one "plant" and the other "animal"?

The only reply is that, so far as form is concerned, plants and animals are not separable, and that, in many cases, it is a mere matter of convention whether we call a given organism an animal or a plant. There is a living body called *Æthalium septicum*, which appears upon decaying vegetable substances, and, in one of its forms, is common upon the surfaces of tan-pits. In this condition it is, to all intents and purposes, a fungus, and formerly was always regarded as such; but the remarkable investigations of De Bary have shown that, in another condition, the *Æthalium* is an actively locomotive creature, and takes in solid matters, upon which, apparently, it feeds, thus exhibiting the most characteristic feature of animality. Is this a plant; or is it an animal? Is it both; or is it neither? Some decide in favor of the last supposition, and establish an intermediate kingdom, a sort of biological No Man's Land for all these questionable forms. But, as it is admittedly impossible to draw any distinct boundary line between this no man's land and the vegetable world on the one hand, or the animal, on the other, it appears to me that this proceeding merely doubles the difficulty which before was single.

Protoplasm, simple or nucleated, is the formal basis of all life. It is the clay of the potter: which, bake it and paint it as he will, remains clay, separated by artifice, and not by nature, from the commonest brick or sun-dried clod.

Thus it becomes clear that all living powers are cognate, and that all living forms are fundamentally of one character. The researches of the chemist have revealed a no less striking uniformity of material composition in living matter.

In perfect strictness, it is true that chemical investigation can tell us little or nothing,

directly, of the composition of living matter, inasmuch as such matter must needs die in the act of analysis — and upon this very obvious ground, objections, which I confess seem to me to be somewhat frivolous, have been raised to the drawing of any conclusions whatever respecting the composition of actually living matter, from that of the dead matter of life, which alone is accessible to us. But objectors of this class do not seem to reflect that it is also, in strictness, true that we know nothing about the composition of any body whatever, as it is. The statement that a crystal of calc-spar consists of carbonate of lime, is quite true, if we only mean that, by appropriate processes, it may be resolved into carbonic acid and quicklime. If you pass the same carbonic acid over the very quicklime thus obtained, you will obtain carbonate of lime again; but it will not be calc-spar, nor anything like it. Can it, therefore, be said that chemical analysis teaches nothing about the chemical composition of calc-spar? Such a statement would be absurd; but it is hardly more so than the talk one occasionally hears about the uselessness of applying the results of chemical analysis to the living bodies which have yielded them.

One fact, at any rate, is out of reach of such refinements, and that is, that all the forms of protoplasm which have yet been examined contain the four elements, carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen, in very complex union, and that they behave similarly towards several reagents. To this complex combination, the nature of which has never been determined with exactness, the name of Protein has been applied. And if we use this term with such caution as may properly arise out of our comparative ignorance of the things for which it stands, it may be truly said that all protoplasm is proteinaceous; or, as the white, or albumen, of an egg is one of the commonest examples of a nearly pure protein matter, we may say that all living matter is more or less albuminoid.

Perhaps it would not yet be safe to say that all forms of protoplasm are affected by the direct action of electric shocks; and yet the number of cases in which the contraction of protoplasm is shown to be affected by this agency increases every day.

Nor can it be affirmed with perfect confidence, that all forms of protoplasm are liable to undergo that peculiar coagulation at a temperature of 40°–50° centigrade, which has been called "heat-stiffening," though Kühne's beautiful researches have proved this occurrence to take place in so many and such diverse living beings, that it is hardly rash to expect that the law holds good for all.

Enough has, perhaps, been said to prove the existence of a general uniformity in the character of the protoplasm, or physical basis, of life, in whatever group of living beings it may be studied. But it will be understood that this general uniformity by no means excludes any amount of special modifications of the fundamental substance. The mineral, carbonate of lime, assumes an immense diversity of characters, though no one doubts that, under all these Protean changes, it is one and the same thing.

And now, what is the ultimate fate, and what the origin, of the matter of life?

Is it, as some of the older naturalists supposed, diffused throughout the universe in molecules, which are indestructible and unchangeable in themselves, but, in endless transmigration, unite in innumerable permutations, into the diversified forms of life we know? Or, is the matter of life composed of ordinary matter, differing from it only in the manner in which its atoms are aggregated? Is it built up of ordinary matter, and again resolved into ordinary matter when its work is done?

Modern science does not hesitate a moment between these alternatives. Physiology writes over the portals of life —

"*Debemur morti nos nostraque,*" [1]

with a profounder meaning than the Roman poet attached to that melancholy line. Under whatever disguise it takes refuge, whether fungus or oak, worm or man, the living protoplasm not only ultimately dies and is resolved into its mineral and lifeless constituents, but is always dying, and, strange as the paradox may sound, could not live unless it died.

In the wonderful story of the *Peau de Chagrin*,[2] the hero becomes possessed of a magical wild ass's skin, which yields him the means of gratifying all his wishes. But its surface represents the duration of the proprietor's life; and for every satisfied desire the skin shrinks in proportion to the intensity of fruition, until at length life, and the last

1 "Ourselves and what we have to death are due." (Horace.)

2 *The Wild Ass's Skin*, by Balzac.

handbreadth of the *peau de chagrin*, disappear with the gratification of a last wish.

Balzac's studies had led him over a wide range of thought and speculation, and his shadowing forth of physiological truth in this strange story may have been intentional. At any rate, the matter of life is a veritable *peau de chagrin*, and for every vital act it is somewhat the smaller. All work implies waste, and the work of life results, directly or indirectly, in the waste of protoplasm.

Every word uttered by a speaker costs him some physical loss; and, in the strictest sense, he burns that others may have light — so much eloquence, so much of his body resolved into carbonic acid, water, and urea. It is clear that this process of expenditure cannot go on for ever. But, happily, the protoplasmic *peau de chagrin* differs from Balzac's in its capacity of being repaired, and brought back to its full size, after every exertion.

For example, this present lecture, whatever its intellectual worth to you, has a certain physical value to me, which is, conceivably, expressible by the number of grains of protoplasm and other bodily substance wasted in maintaining my vital processes during its delivery. My *peau de chagrin* will be distinctly smaller at the end of the discourse than it was at the beginning. By and by, I shall probably have recourse to the substance commonly called mutton, for the purpose of stretching it back to its original size. Now this mutton was once the living protoplasm, more or less modified, of another animal — a sheep. As I shall eat it, it is the same matter altered, not only by death, but by exposure to sundry artificial operations in the process of cooking.

But these changes, whatever be their extent, have not rendered it incompetent to resume its old functions as matter of life. A singular inward laboratory, which I possess, will dissolve a certain portion of the modified protoplasm; the solution so formed will pass into my veins; and the subtle influences to which it will then be subjected will convert the dead protoplasm into living protoplasm, and transubstantiate sheep into man.

Nor is this all. If digestion were a thing to be trifled with, I might sup upon lobster, and the matter of life of the crustacean would undergo the same wonderful metamorphosis into humanity. And were I to return to my kin place by sea, and undergo shipwreck, the crustacean might, and probably would, return the compliment, and demonstrate our common nature by turning my protoplasm into living lobster. Or, if nothing better were to be had, I might supply my wants with mere bread, and I should find the protoplasm of the wheat-plant to be convertible into man, with no more trouble than that of the sheep, and with far less, I fancy, than that of the lobster.

Hence it appears to be a matter of no great moment what animal, or what plant, I lay under contribution for protoplasm, and the fact speaks volumes for the general identity of that substance in all living beings. I share this catholicity of assimilation with other animals, all of which, so far as we know, could thrive equally well on the protoplasm of any of their fellows, or of any plant; but here the assimilative powers of the animal world cease. A solution of smelling-salts in water, with an infinitesimal proportion of some other saline matters, contains all the elementary bodies which enter into the composition of protoplasm; but, as I need hardly say, a hogshead of that fluid would not keep a hungry man from starving, nor would it save any animal whatever from a like fate. An animal cannot make protoplasm, but must take it ready-made from some other animal, or some plant — the animal's highest feat of constructive chemistry being to convert dead protoplasm into that living matter of life which is appropriate to itself.

Therefore, in seeking for the origin of protoplasm, we must eventually turn to the vegetable world. A fluid containing carbonic acid, water, and nitrogenous salts, which offers such a Barmecide feast[1] to the animal, is a table richly spread to multitudes of plants; and, with a due supply of only such materials, many a plant will not only maintain itself in vigor, but grow and multiply until it has increased a million-fold, or a million million-fold, the quantity of protoplasm which it originally possessed; in this way building up the matter of life, to an indefinite extent, from the common matter of the universe.

Thus, the animal can only raise the complex substance of dead protoplasm to the higher power, as one may say, of living protoplasm; while the plant can raise the less complex substances — carbonic acid, water, and nitrogenous salts — to the same stage of living protoplasm, if not to the same level. But the plant also has its limitations. Some

1 A mock feast, of empty dishes (from the story of the Barmecide family in the *Arabian Nights*).

of the fungi, for example, appear to need higher compounds to start with; and no known plant can live upon the uncompounded elements of protoplasm. A plant supplied with pure carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen, phosphorus, sulphur, and the like, would as infallibly die as the animal in his bath of smelling-salts, though it would be surrounded by all the constituents of protoplasm. Nor, indeed, need the process of simplification of vegetable food be carried so far as this, in order to arrive at the limit of the plant's thaumaturgy. Let water, carbonic acid, and all the other needful constituents be supplied except nitrogenous salts, and an ordinary plant will still be unable to manufacture protoplasm.

Thus the matter of life, so far as we know it (and we have no right to speculate on any other), breaks up, in consequence of that continual death which is the condition of its manifesting vitality, into carbonic acid, water, and nitrogenous compounds, which certainly possess no properties but those of ordinary matter. And out of these same forms of ordinary matter, and from none which are simpler, the vegetable world builds up all the protoplasm which keeps the animal world a-going. Plants are the accumulators of the power which animals distribute and disperse.

But it will be observed that the existence of the matter of life depends on the pre-existence of certain compounds; namely, carbonic acid, water, and certain nitrogenous bodies. Withdraw any one of these three from the world, and all vital phenomena come to an end. They are as necessary to the protoplasm of the plant, as the protoplasm of the plant is to that of the animal. Carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen are all lifeless bodies. Of these, carbon and oxygen unite in certain proportions and under certain conditions, to give rise to carbonic acid; hydrogen and oxygen produce water; nitrogen and other elements give rise to nitrogenous salts. These new compounds, like the elementary bodies of which they are composed, are lifeless. But when they are brought together, under certain conditions, they give rise to the still more complex body, protoplasm, and this protoplasm exhibits the phenomena of life.

I see no break in this series of steps in molecular complication, and I am unable to understand why the language which is applicable to any one term of the series may not be used to any of the others. We think fit to call different kinds of matter carb oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen, and speak of the various powers and activities these substances as the properties of matter of which they are composed.

When hydrogen and oxygen are mixed i certain proportion, and an electric spark passed through them, they disappear, an quantity of water, equal in weight to t sum of their weights, appears in their pla There is not the slightest parity between t passive and active powers of the water a those of the oxygen and hydrogen which ha given rise to it. At 32° Fahrenheit, and below that temperature, oxygen and hydr gen are elastic gaseous bodies, whose partic tend to rush away from one another wi great force. Water, at the same temper ture, is a strong though brittle solid whc particles tend to cohere into definite ge metrical shapes, and sometimes build frosty imitations of the most complex for of vegetable foliage.

Nevertheless we call these, and many oth strange phenomena, the properties of t water, and we do not hesitate to believe tha in some way or another, they result from th properties of the component elements of th water. We do not assume that a somethir called "aquosity" entered into and toc possession of the oxidated hydrogen as soc as it was formed, and then guided th aqueous particles to their places in the face of the crystal, or amongst the leaflets of th hoar-frost. On the contrary, we live in th hope and in the faith that, by the advance molecular physics, we shall by and by be ab to see our way as clearly from the constitu ents of water to the properties of water, a we are now able to deduce the operations c a watch from the form of its parts and th manner in which they are put together.

Is the case in any way changed whe carbonic acid, water, and nitrogenous salt disappear, and in their place, under th influence of pre-existing living protoplasm an equivalent weight of the matter of lif makes its appearance?

It is true that there is no sort of parity between the properties of the component and the properties of the resultant, bu neither was there in the case of the water It is also true that what I have spoken of a the influence of pre-existing living matter is something quite unintelligible; but does any body quite comprehend the *modus operandi* of an electric spark, which traverses a mixture of oxygen and hydrogen?

What justification is there, then, for the assumption of the existence in the living matter of a something which has no representative, or correlative, in the not living matter which gave rise to it? What better philosophical status has "vitality" than "aquosity"? And why should "vitality" hope for a better fate than the other "itys" which have disappeared since Martinus Scriblerus [1] accounted for the operation of the meat-jack by its inherent "meat-roasting quality," and scorned the "materialism" of those who explained the turning of the spit by a certain mechanism worked by the draught of the chimney?

If scientific language is to possess a definite and constant signification whenever it is employed, it seems to me that we are logically bound to apply to the protoplasm, or physical basis of life, the same conceptions as those which are held to be legitimate elsewhere. If the phenomena exhibited by water are its properties, so are those presented by protoplasm, living or dead, its properties.

If the properties of water may be properly said to result from the nature and disposition of its component molecules, I can find no intelligible ground for refusing to say that the properties of protoplasm result from the nature and disposition of its molecules.

But I bid you beware that, in accepting these conclusions, you are placing your feet on the first rung of a ladder which, in most people's estimation, is the reverse of Jacob's, and leads to the antipodes of heaven. It may seem a small thing to admit that the dull vital actions of a fungus, or a foraminifer, are the properties of their protoplasm, and are the direct results of the nature of the matter of which they are composed. But if, as I have endeavored to prove to you, their protoplasm is essentially identical with, and most readily converted into, that of any animal, I can discover no logical halting-place between the admission that such is the case, and the further concession that all vital action may, with equal propriety, be said to be the result of the molecular forces of the protoplasm which displays it. And if so, it must be true, in the same sense and to the same extent, that the thoughts to which I am now giving utterance, and your thoughts regarding them, are the expression of molecular changes in that matter of life which is the source of our other vital phenomena.

Past experience leads me to be tolerably certain that, when the propositions I have just placed before you are accessible to public comment and criticism, they will be condemned by many zealous persons, and perhaps by some few of the wise and thoughtful. I should not wonder if "gross and brute materialism" were the mildest phrase applied to them in certain quarters. And, most undoubtedly, the terms of the propositions are distinctly materialistic. Nevertheless two things are certain: the one, that I hold the statements to be substantially true; the other, that I, individually, am no materialist, but, on the contrary, believe materialism to involve grave philosophical error. . . .

What is the difference between the conception of life as the product of a certain disposition of material molecules, and the old notion of an Archæus [1] governing and directing blind matter within each living body, except this — that here, as elsewhere, matter and law have devoured spirit and spontaneity? And as surely as every future grows out of past and present, so will the physiology of the future gradually extend the realm of matter and law until it is coextensive with knowledge, with feeling, and with action. The consciousness of this great truth weighs like a nightmare, I believe, upon many of the best minds of these days. They watch what they conceive to be the progress of materialism, in such fear and powerless anger as a savage feels, when, during an eclipse, the great shadow creeps over the face of the sun. The advancing tide of matter threatens to drown their souls; the tightening grasp of law impedes their freedom; they are alarmed lest man's moral nature be debased by the increase of his wisdom.

If the "New Philosophy" be worthy of the reprobation with which it is visited, I confess their fears seem to me to be well founded. While, on the contrary, could David Hume [2] be consulted, I think he would smile at their perplexities, and chide them for doing even as the heathen, and falling down in terror before the hideous idols their own hands have raised.

For, after all, what do we know of this terrible "matter," except as a name for the unknown and hypothetical cause of states of our own consciousness? And what do we know of that "spirit" over whose threatened

A character invented by Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot, whose alleged *Memoirs* (published 1741) included various satiric attacks on the abuses of learning.

1 The vital principle of animal and vegetable creatures, according to the school of Paracelsus.

2 Hume was regarded by Huxley as the founder of the new skeptical philosophy, which refused belief in what could not be proved.

extinction by matter a great lamentation is arising, like that which was heard at the death of Pan, except that it is also a name for an unknown and hypothetical cause, or condition, of states of consciousness? In other words, matter and spirit are but names for the imaginary substrata of groups of natural phenomena.

And what is the dire necessity and "iron" law under which men groan? Truly, most gratuitously invented bugbears. I suppose if there be an "iron" law, it is that of gravitation; and if there be a physical necessity, it is that a stone, unsupported, must fall to the ground. But what is all we really know, and can know, about the latter phenomenon? Simply, that in all human experience stones have fallen to the ground under these conditions; that we have not the smallest reason for believing that any stone so circumstanced will not fall to the ground; and that we have, on the contrary, every reason to believe that it will so fall. It is very convenient to indicate that all the conditions of belief have been fulfilled in this case, by calling the statement that unsupported stones will fall to the ground, "a law of nature." But when, as commonly happens, we change *will* into *must*, we introduce an idea of necessity which most assuredly does not lie in the observed facts, and has no warranty that I can discover elsewhere. For my part, I utterly repudiate and anathematize the intruder. Fact I know; and Law I know; but what is this Necessity, save an empty shadow of my own mind's throwing?

But, if it is certain that we can have no knowledge of the nature of either matter or spirit, and that the notion of necessity is something illegitimately thrust into the perfectly legitimate conception of law, the materialistic position that there is nothing in the world but matter, force, and necessity, is as utterly devoid of justification as the most baseless of theological dogmas. The fundamental doctrines of materialism, like those of spiritualism, and most other "isms," lie outside "the units of philosophical inquiry," and David Hume's great service to humanity is his irrefragable demonstration of what these limits are. Hume called himself a "sceptic," and therefore others cannot be blamed if they apply the same title to him; but that does not alter the fact that the name, with its existing implications, does him gross injustice.

If a man asks me what the politics of the inhabitants of the moon are, and I reply that I do not know, that neither I nor any one else, have any means of knowing; and th under these circumstances, I decline to tr ble myself about the subject at all, I do think he has any right to call me a scep On the contrary, in replying thus, I conce that I am simply honest and truthful, a show a proper regard for the economy time. So Hume's strong and subtle intell takes up a great many problems ab which we are naturally curious, and shows that they are essentially questions of lu politics, in their essence incapable of be answered, and therefore not worth the att tion of men who have work to do in world. And he thus ends one of his essa

"If we take in hand any volume of Div ity, or school metaphysics, for instance, us ask, *Does it contain any abstract reason concerning quantity or number?* No. *Doe contain any experimental reasoning concern matter of fact and existence?* No. Comm it then to the flames; for it can contain thing but sophistry and illusion."[1]

Permit me to enforce this most wise a vice. Why trouble ourselves about matt of which, however important they may we do know nothing, and can know nothin We live in a world which is full of misery a ignorance, and the plain duty of each and of us is to try to make the little corner he c influence somewhat less miserable and son what less ignorant than it was before he e tered it. To do this effectually it is necessa to be fully possessed of only two beliefs: t first, that the order of nature is ascertainab by our faculties to an extent which is prac cally unlimited; the second, that our voliti counts for something as a condition of t course of events.

Each of these beliefs can be verified e perimentally, as often as we like to t Each, therefore, stands upon the strong foundation upon which any belief can re and forms one of our highest truths. If find that the ascertainment of the order nature is facilitated by using one termin logy, or one set of symbols, rather than a other, it is our clear duty to use the form and no harm can accrue, so long as we be in mind that we are dealing merely wi terms and symbols. In itself it is of litt moment whether we express the phenome of matter in terms of spirit, or the ph nomena of spirit in terms of matter: matt may be regarded as a form of though thought may be regarded as a property

[1] Hume's Essay "Of the Academical or Sceptical Philos phy," in the *Inquiry Concerning the Human Understandi*

matter — each statement has a certain relative truth. But with a view to the progress of science, the materialistic terminology is in every way to be preferred. For it connects thought with the other phenomena of the universe, and suggests inquiry into the nature of those physical conditions, or concomitants of thought, which are more or less accessible to us, and a knowledge of which may, in future, help us to exercise the same kind of control over the world of thought as we already possess in respect of the material world; whereas the alternative, or spiritualistic, terminology is utterly barren, and leads to nothing but obscurity and confusion of ideas.

Thus there can be little doubt that, the further science advances, the more extensively and consistently will all the phenomena of nature be represented by materialistic formulæ and symbols. But the man of science, who, forgetting the limits of philosophical inquiry, slides from these formulæ and symbols into what is commonly understood by materialism, seems to me to place himself on a level with the mathematician who should mistake the *x*'s and *y*'s with which he works his problems, for real entities — and with this further disadvantage, as compared with the mathematician, that the blunders of the latter are of no practical consequence, while the errors of systematic materialism may paralyze the energies and destroy the beauty of a life.

## ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH (1819–1861)

Arthur Hugh Clough was one of the pupils of Thomas Arnold at Rugby, and the friend of Matthew Arnold. He was born in 1819. After his school days at Rugby he went to Oxford in 1837, then in the full tide of the Oxford Movement led by John Henry Newman. As in the case of other young men, to Clough the revival of the medieval religious spirit caused in the end a reaction to rationalism. He left Oxford in 1848, and after visiting America, he became an Examiner in the Education Office. He died in 1861. Clough is one of the more significant minor figures in English poetry, because his poems, like those of Matthew Arnold, express the doubt and uncertainty caused by the challenge to supernatural faith made by natural science. Clough's characteristic mood, however, is not one of discouragement and pessimism, rather one of courage and joy in achievement. His verse is simple and sparing of ornament, but it has the strength of sincerity. It frequently anticipates the realism of a later day.

Clough's poems are published in one volume by Macmillan. His poems and prose remains have been edited by his wife, with a memoir, in two volumes (Macmillan).

### SAY NOT, THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT AVAILETH

Say not, the struggle nought availeth,
The labor and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main,

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

1849.

### *From* DIPSYCHUS

*Dipsychus*, published after Clough's death, is a poetic play, laid in Venice. As may be gathered from the following lines, spoken by the Spirit in a dialogue with Dipsychus, it is filled with humor. In the epilogue to the play, Clough remarks, half-seriously, that his purpose was to represent "the conflict between the tender conscience and the world."

This world is very odd we see,
We do not comprehend it;
But in one fact we all agree,
God won't, and we can't, mend it.

Being common sense, it can't be sin
To take it as I find it;
The pleasure to take pleasure in;
The pain, try not to mind it.

These juicy meats, this flashing wine,
May be an unreal mere appearance;
Only — for my inside, in fine,
They have a singular coherence.

Oh, yes, my pensive youth, abstain;
And any empty sick sensation,
Remember, anything like pain
Is only your imagination.

Trust me, I've read your German sage
To far more purpose e'er than you did;
You find it in his wisest page,
Whom God deludes is well deluded.[1]

1849.

## QUA CURSUM VENTUS[2]

As ships, becalmed at eve, that lay
With canvas drooping, side by side,
Two towers of sail at dawn of day
Are scarce long leagues apart descried;

When fell the night, upsprung the breeze,
And all the darkling hours they plied,
Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas
By each was cleaving, side by side:

E'en so — but why the tale reveal
Of those, whom year by year unchanged,
Brief absence joined anew to feel,
Astounded, soul from soul estranged?

At dead of night their sails were filled,
And onward each rejoicing steered —
Ah, neither blame, for neither willed,
Or wist, what first with dawn appeared!

To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,
Brave barks! In light, in darkness too,
Through winds and tides one compass guides —
To that, and your own selves, be true.

But O blithe breeze; and O great seas,
Though ne'er, that earliest parting past,
On your wide plain they join again,
Together lead them home at last.

One port, methought, alike they sought,
One purpose hold where'er they fare, —
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!
At last, at last, unite them there!

Pub. 1849.

## THE LATEST DECALOGUE

Thou shalt have one God only; who
Would be at the expense of two?
No graven images may be
Worshiped, except the currency:
Swear not at all; for, for thy curse
Thine enemy is none the worse:
At church on Sunday to attend
Will serve to keep the world thy friend:
Honor thy parents: that is, all
From whom advancement may befall;
Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive
Officiously to keep alive:
Do not adultery commit;
Advantage rarely comes of it:
Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat,
When it's so lucrative to cheat:
Bear not false witness; let the lie
Have time on its own wings to fly:
Thou shalt not covet, but tradition
Approves all forms of competition.

Pub. 1862.

## HOPE EVERMORE AND BELIEVE

Hope evermore and believe, O man, for e'en as thy thought
So are the things that thou see'st; e'en as thy hope and belief.
Cowardly art thou and timid? they rise to provoke thee against them;
Hast thou courage? enough, see them exulting to yield.
Yea, the rough rock, the dull earth, the wild sea's furying waters
(Violent say'st thou and hard, mighty thou think'st to destroy),
All with ineffable longing are waiting their Invader,
All, with one varying voice, call to him, Come and subdue;
Still for their Conqueror call, and but for the joy of being conquered
(Rapture they will not forego), dare to resist and rebel;
Still, when resisting and raging, in soft under-voice say unto him,
Fear not, retire not, O man; hope evermore and believe.

Go from the east to the west, as the sun and the stars direct thee,
Go with the girdle of man, go and encompass the earth.
Not for the gain of the gold; for the getting, the hoarding, the having,
But for the joy of the deed; but for the Duty to do.
Go with the spiritual life, the higher volition and action,
With the great girdle of God, go and encompass the earth.

[1] "Wen Gott betrügt, ist wohl betrogen." Clough used this line as the title of one of his early poems.
[2] The course lies as the wind blows.

Go; say not in thy heart, And what then were it accomplished,
Were the wild impulse allayed, what were the use or the good!
Go, when the instinct is stilled, and when the deed is accomplished,
What thou hast done and shalt do, shall be declared to thee then.
Go with the sun and the stars, and yet evermore in thy spirit
Say to thyself: It is good: yet is there better than it.
This that I see is not all, and this that I do is but little;
Nevertheless it is good, though there is better than it.

Pub. 1862.

## QUI LABORAT, ORAT[1]

O only Source of all our light and life,
Whom as our truth, our strength, we see and feel,
But whom the hours of mortal moral strife
Alone aright reveal!

Mine inmost soul, before Thee inly brought,
Thy presence owns ineffable, divine;
Chastised each rebel self-encentered thought,
My will adoreth Thine.

With eye down-dropt, if then this earthly mind
Speechless remain, or speechless e'en depart;
Nor seek to see — for what of earthly kind
Can see Thee as Thou art? —

If well-assured 'tis but profanely bold
In thought's abstractest forms to seem to see,
It dare not dare the dread communion hold
In ways unworthy Thee,

O not unowned, thou shalt unnamed forgive,
In worldly walks the prayerless heart prepare;
And if in work its life it seem to live,
Shalt make that work be prayer.

Nor times shall lack, when while the work it plies,
Unsummoned powers the blinding film shall part,
And scarce by happy tears made dim, the eyes
In recognition start.

But, as thou willest, give or e'en forbear
The beatific supersensual sight,
So, with Thy blessing blest, that humbler prayer
Approach Thee morn and night.

Pub. 1862.

1 He who works, prays.

## ITE DOMUM SATURÆ, VENIT HESPERUS[1]

The skies have sunk, and hid the upper snow
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie),[2]
The rainy clouds are filing fast below,
And wet will be the path, and wet shall we.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.

Ah dear, and where is he, a year agone,
Who stepped beside and cheered us on and on?
My sweetheart wanders far away from me,
In foreign land or on a foreign sea.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.

The lightning zigzags shoot across the sky
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie),
And through the vale the rains go sweeping by;
Ah me, and when in shelter shall we be?
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.

Cold, dreary cold, the stormy winds feel they
O'er foreign lands and foreign seas that stray
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie).
And doth he e'er, I wonder, bring to mind
The pleasant huts and herds he left behind?
And doth he sometimes in his slumbering see
The feeding kine, and doth he think of me,
My sweetheart wandering wheresoe'er it be?
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.

The thunder bellows far from snow to snow
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie),
And loud and louder roars the flood below.
Heigho! but soon in shelter shall we be:
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie,

1 Go home, well fed; evening is here.
2 The names of the cows that the girl is driving home.

Or shall he find before his term be sped,
Some comelier maid that he shall wish to wed?
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.)
For weary is work, and weary day by day
To have your comfort miles on miles away.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.

Or may it be that I shall find my mate,
And he returning see himself too late?
For work we must, and what we see, we see,
And God he knows, and what must be, must be
When sweethearts wander far away from me.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie.

The sky behind is brightening up anew
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie),
The rain is ending, and our journey too:
Heigho! aha! for here at home are we: —
In, Rose, and in, Provence and La Palie.

Pub. 1862.

## LIFE IS STRUGGLE

To wear out heart, and nerves, and brain,
And give oneself a world of pain;
Be eager, angry, fierce, and hot,
Imperious, supple — God knows what,
For what's all one to have or not;
O false, unwise, absurd, and vain!
For 'tis not joy, it is not gain,
It is not in itself a bliss,
Only it is precisely this
That keeps us all alive.

To say we truly feel the pain,
And quite are sinking with the strain; —
Entirely, simply, undeceived,
Believe, and say we ne'er believed
The object, e'en were it achieved,
A thing we e'er had cared to keep;
With heart and soul to hold it cheap,
And then to go and try it again;
O false, unwise, absurd, and vain!
O, 'tis not joy, and 'tis not bliss,
Only it is precisely this
That keeps us still alive.

Pub. 1869.

## IN A LONDON SQUARE

Put forth thy leaf, thou lofty plane,
East wind and frost are safely gone;
With zephyr mild and balmy rain
The summer comes serenely on;
Earth, air, and sun and skies combine
To promise all that's kind and fair: —
But thou, O human heart of mine,
Be still, contain thyself, and bear.

December days were brief and chill,
The winds of March were wild and dre
And, nearing and receding still,
Spring never would, we thought, be he
The leaves that burst, the suns that shine
Had, not the less, their certain date: —
And thou, O human heart of mine,
Be still, refrain thyself, and wait.

Pub. 1869.

## ALL IS WELL

Whate'er you dream with doubt possess
Keep, keep it snug within your breast,
And lay you down and take your rest;
Forget in sleep the doubt and pain,
And when you wake, to work again.
The wind it blows, the vessel goes,
And where and whither, no one knows.

'Twill all be well: no need of care;
Though how it will, and when, and wher
We cannot see, and can't declare.
In spite of dreams, in spite of thought,
'Tis not in vain, and not for nought,
The wind it blows, the ship it goes,
Though where and whither, no one know

1869.

# ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING (1806–1861)

Elizabeth Barrett Browning's name is regularly linked with her husband's, but in her own right she richly deserves the place generally accorded her as the foremost poetess of England. She began writing early, and in spite of poor health published a volume of poems, anonymously, in 1826; *Prometheus Bound* in 1835; and numerous pieces in various magazines. In 1841 appeared her famous poem, *The Cry of the Children*, followed during the next few years by two volumes of poems. In 1846 she married Robert Browning and lived with him in Italy until her death fifteen years later. During these years she published *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, 1850, a sonnet sequence (not translations as the title implies) inspired by and celebrating her love for Browning; *Casa Guidi Windows*, 1851; and a novel in verse, *Aurora Leigh*, 1856.

## SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE

### I

I thought once how Theocritus[1] had sung
Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for years,
Who each one in a gracious hand appears
To bear a gift for mortals, old or young;
And as I mused it in his antique tongue,
I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,
The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years,
Those of my own life, who by turns had flung
A shadow across me. Straightway I was 'ware,
So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move
Behind me, and drew me backward by the hair;
And a voice said in mastery while I strove,
"Guess now who holds thee?" — "Death!" I said. But there
The silver answer rang: "Not Death, but Love."

### 3

Unlike are we, unlike, O princely Heart!
Unlike our uses and our destinies.
Our ministering two angels look surprise
On one another, as they strike athwart
Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink thee, art
A guest for queens to social pageantries,
With gages[2] from a hundred brighter eyes
Than tears even can make mine, to ply thy part
Of chief musician. What hast *thou* to do
With looking from the lattice-lights at me,
A poor, tired, wandering singer, singing through
The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?
The chrism[3] is on thine head, — on mine, the dew, —
And Death must dig the level where these agree.

1 The great Greek idyllic poet of the third century, B.C.
2 pledges. 3 ointment.

### 4

Thou hast thy calling to some palace floor,
Most gracious singer of high poems, where
The dancers will break footing, from the care
Of watching up thy pregnant lips for more.
And dost thou lift this house's latch too poor
For hand of thine? and canst thou think and bear
To let thy music drop here unaware
In folds of golden fulness at my door?
Look up and see the casement broken in,
The bats and owlets builders in the roof!
My cricket chirps against thy mandolin.
Hush, call no echo up in further proof
Of desolation! there's a voice within
That weeps as — thou must sing — alone, aloof.

### 14

If thou must love me, let it be for nought
Except for love's sake only. Do not say,
"I love her for her smile — her look — her way
Of speaking gently, — for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day;" —
For these things in themselves, beloved, may
Be changed, or change for thee, — and love so wrought,
May be unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry:
A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby.
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou may'st love on through love's eternity.

### 22

When our two souls stand up erect and strong,
Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and nigher,
Until the lengthening wings break into fire
At either curved point, — What bitter wrong
Can the earth do to us, that we should not long

Be here contented? Think. In mounting higher,
The angels would press on us, and aspire
To drop some golden orb of perfect song
Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay
Rather on earth, beloved, — where the unfit,
Contrarious moods of men recoil away
And isolate pure spirits, and permit
A place to stand and love in for a day,
With darkness and the death-hour rounding it.

26

I lived with visions for my company
Instead of men and women, years ago,
And found them gentle mates, nor thought to know
A sweeter music than they played to me.
But soon their trailing purple was not free
Of this world's dust, their lutes did silent grow,
And I myself grew faint and blind below
Their vanishing eyes. Then THOU didst come — to be,
Beloved, what they seemed. Their shining fronts,
Their songs, their splendors — better, yet the same,
As river-water hallowed into fonts —
Met in thee, and from out thee overcame
My soul with satisfaction of all wants —
Because God's gifts put man's best dreams to shame.

35

If I leave all for thee, wilt thou exchange
And be all to me? Shall I never miss
Home-talk and blessing and the common kiss
That comes to each in turn, nor count it strange,
When I look up, to drop on a new range
Of walls and floors, another home than this?
Nay, wilt thou fill that place by me which is
Filled by dead eyes too tender to know change?
That's hardest! If to conquer love has tried,
To conquer grief, tries more, as all things prove;
For grief indeed is love and grief beside.
Alas, I have grieved so I am hard to love.
Yet love me — wilt thou? Open thine heart wide
And fold within the wet wings of thy dove.

43

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sig
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as men turn from Prais
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood
faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints, — I love thee with t
breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life! — and, if G
choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

## TO GEORGE SAND [1]

A RECOGNITION

True genius, but true woman! dost deny
Thy woman's nature with a manly scorn,
And break away the gauds and armlets wo
By weaker women in captivity?
Ah, vain denial! that revolted cry
Is sobbed in by a woman's voice forlorn:
Thy woman's hair, my sister, all unshorn,
Floats back dishevelled strength in agony,
Disproving thy man's name: and while befo
The world thou burnest in a poet fire,
We see thy woman's heart beat evermore
Through the large flame. Beat purer, hear
and higher,
Till God unsex thee on the heavenly shore,
Where unincarnate spirits purely aspire!

## THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

The poem is Mrs. Browning's eloquent pr
test against child labor.

Do ye hear the children weeping, O m
brothers,
Ere the sorrow comes with years?
They are leaning their young heads agains
their mothers,
And *that* cannot stop their tears.
The young lambs are bleating in th
meadows:
The young birds are chirping in the nest
The young fawns are playing with th
shadows;
The young flowers are blowing towar
the west —
But the young, young children, O m
brothers,
They are weeping bitterly! 1

1 Literary pseudonym of Armandine Dupin, th
French poetess, novelist, and playwright, 1804–76.

They are weeping in the playtime of the others,
In the country of the free.

Do you question the young children in their sorrow,
Why their tears are falling so?
The old man may weep for his to-morrow
Which is lost in Long Ago;
The old tree is leafless in the forest,
The old year is ending in the frost,
The old wound, if stricken, is the sorest,
The old hope is hardest to be lost:
But the young, young children, O my brothers,
Do you ask them why they stand
Weeping sore before the bosoms of their mothers,
In our happy Fatherland?

They look up with their pale and sunken faces,
And their looks are sad to see,
For the man's hoary anguish draws and presses
Down the cheeks of infancy;
"Your old earth," they say, "is very dreary,
Our young feet," they say, "are very weak!
Few paces have we taken, yet are weary —
Our grave-rest is very far to seek:
Ask the aged why they weep, and not the children,
For the outside earth is cold,
And we young ones stand without, in our bewildering,
And the graves are for the old:

"True," say the children, "it may happen
That we die before our time:
Little Alice died last year, her grave is shapen
Like a snowball, in the rime.
We looked into the pit prepared to take her:
Was no room for any work in the close clay!
From the sleep wherein she lieth none will wake her
Crying, 'Get up, little Alice! it is day.'
If you listen by that grave, in sun and shower,
With your ear down, little Alice never cries;
Could we see her face, be sure we should not know her,
For a smile has time for growing in her eyes:
And merry go her moments, lulled and stilled in
The shroud by the kirk-chime.
It is good when it happens," say the children,
"That we die before our time."

Alas, alas, the children! they are seeking
Death in life as best to have:
They are binding up their hearts away from breaking,
With a cerement from the grave.
Go out, children, from the mine and from the city,
Sing out, children, as the little thrushes do;
Pluck your handfuls of the meadow-cowslips pretty,
Laugh aloud, to feel your fingers let them through!
But they answer, "Are your cowslips of the meadows
Like our weeds anear the mine?
Leave us quiet in the dark of the coal-shadows,
From your pleasures fair and fine!

"For oh," say the children, "we are weary,
And we cannot run or leap;
If we cared for any meadows, it were merely
To drop down in them and sleep.
Our knees tremble sorely in the stooping,
We fall upon our faces, trying to go;
And, underneath our heavy eyelids drooping,
The reddest flower would look as pale as snow.
For, all day, we drag our burden tiring,
Through the coal-dark, underground;
Or, all day, we drive the wheels of iron
In the factories, round and round.

"For, all day, the wheels are droning, turning;
Their wind comes in our faces,
Till our hearts turn, our heads, with pulses burning,
And the walls turn in their places:
Turns the sky in the high window, blank and reeling,
Turns the long light that drops adown the wall,
Turn the black flies that crawl along the ceiling:
All are turning, all the day, and we with all.
And all day the iron wheels are droning:
And sometimes we could pray,
'O ye wheels,' (breaking out in a mad moaning)
'Stop! be silent for to-day!'"

Ay, be silent! Let them hear each other breathing
For a moment, mouth to mouth!
Let them touch each other's hands, in a fresh wreathing
Of their tender human youth!
Let them feel that this cold metallic motion
Is not all the life God fashions or reveals:
Let them prove their living souls against the notion
That they live in you, or under you, O wheels!
Still, all day, the iron wheels go onward,
Grinding life down from its mark;
And the children's souls, which God is calling sunward,
Spin on blindly in the dark.

Now tell the poor young children, O my brothers,
To look up to Him and pray;
So the blessed One who blesseth all the others,
Will bless them another day.
They answer, "Who is God that He should hear us,
While the rushing of the iron wheels is stirred?
When we sob aloud, the human creatures near us
Pass by, hearing not, or answer not a word.
And *we* hear not (for the wheels in their resounding)
Strangers speaking at the door:
Is it likely God, with angels singing round Him,
Hears our weeping any more?

"Two words, indeed, of praying we remember;
And at midnight's hour of harm,
'Our Father,' looking upward in the chamber,
We say softly for a charm.
We know no other words, except 'Our Father,'
And we think that, in some pause of angels' song,
God may pluck them with the silence sweet to gather,
And hold both within His right hand which is strong.
'Our Father!' If He heard us, He would surely
(For they call Him good and mild)
Answer, smiling down the steep world very purely,
'Come and rest with me, my child.'

"But no!" say the children, weeping faster,
"He is speechless as a stone:
And they tell us, of His image is the master
Who commands us to work on.
Go to!" say the children, — "Up in Heaven,
Dark, wheel-like, turning clouds are all we find:
Do not mock us; grief has made us unbelieving:
We look up for God, but tears have made us blind."
Do you hear the children weeping and disproving,
O my brothers, what ye preach?
For God's possible is taught by His world's loving,
And the children doubt of each.

And well may the children weep before you!
They are weary ere they run;
They have never seen the sunshine, nor the glory
Which is brighter than the sun:
They know the grief of man, without its wisdom;
They sink in man's despair, without its calm;
And slaves, without the liberty in Christdom,
Are martyrs, by the pang without the palm:
Are worn as if with age, yet unretrievingly
The harvest of its memories cannot reap, —
Are orphans of the earthly love and heavenly.
Let them weep! let them weep!

They look up with their pale and sunken faces,
And their look is dread to see,
For they mind you of their angels in high places,
With eyes turned on Deity.
"How long," they say, "how long, O cruel nation,
Will you stand, to move the world, on a child's heart, —
Stifle down with a mailed heel its palpitation,
And tread onward to your throne amid the mart?
Our blood splashes upward, O gold-heaper,
And your purple shows your path!
But the child's sob in the silence curses deeper
Than the strong man in his wrath."

Pub. 1841.

# EMILY BRONTE (1818–1848)

Emily Bronte, sister of the more famous Charlotte, is the author of *Wuthering Heights*, 1848, a highly original, impressive novel, reflective in part of the life on the moors that she herself led as a child. Her poems, often halty in technique, are the remarkable outpourings of a soul sincere, aloof, and courageous.

## STANZAS

Often rebuked, yet always back returning
To those first feelings that were born with me,
And leaving busy chase of wealth and learning
For idle dreams of things which cannot be:

To-day, I will seek not the shadowy region;
Its unsustaining vastness waxes drear;
And visions rising, legion after legion,
Bring the unreal world too strangely near.

I'll walk, but not in old heroic traces,
And not in paths of high morality,
And not among the half-distinguished faces,
The clouded forms of long-past history.

I'll walk where my own nature would be leading:
It vexes me to choose another guide:
Where the grey flocks in ferny glens are feeding;
Where the wild wind blows on the mountain side.

## THE OLD STOIC

Riches I hold in light esteem,
And Love I laugh to scorn;
And lust of fame was but a dream,
That vanished with the morn:

And if I pray, the only prayer
That moves my lips for me
Is, "Leave the heart that now I bear
And give me liberty!"

Yes, as my swift days near their goal,
'Tis all that I implore;
In life and death, a chainless soul,
With courage to endure.

## LAST LINES

No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere:
I see Heaven's glories shine,
And faith shines equal, arming me from fear.

O God within my breast,
Almighty, ever-present Deity!
Life — that in me has rest,
As I — undying Life — have power in thee!

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts: unutterably vain;
Worthless as withered weeds,
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by thine infinity;
So surely anchored on
The stedfast rock of immortality.

With wide-embracing love
Thy spirit animates eternal years,
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.

Though earth and man were gone,
And suns and universes ceased to be,
And Thou were left alone,
Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is not room for Death,
Nor atom that his might could render void:
Thou — THOU art Being and Breath,
And what THOU art may never be destroyed.

# EDWARD FITZGERALD (1809–1883)

Fitzgerald, an original, skeptical man of great talent, is remembered as the outspoken friend of most of the great English writers of his time; as a writer of many interesting letters; as a translator of Calderón, Æschylus, and Sophocles; and, especially, as the translator of Omar Khayyám's Rubáiyát. He was at Cambridge University at the same time as Thackeray and Tennyson. Most of his life thereafter, with the exception of a brief, unhappy marriage, he lived alone in and near London, studying what he liked, and writing.

## RUBÁIYÁT OF OMAR KHAYYÁM OF NAISHÁPÚR

I

Wake! For the Sun who scattered into flight
The Stars before him from the Field of Night,
Drives Night along with them from Heav'n, and strikes
The Sultán's Turret with a Shaft of Light.

2

Before the phantom of False morning [1] died,
Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried,
"When all the Temple is prepared within,
Why nods the drowsy Worshipper outside?"

3

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted — "Open then the door!
You know how little while we have to stay,
And, once departed, may return no more."

4

Now the New Year [2] reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,
Where the WHITE HAND OF MOSES [3] on the Bough
Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground suspires.[4]

5

Iram [5] indeed is gone with all his Rose,
And Jamshyd's [6] Sev'n-ringed Cup [7] where no one knows;
But still a Ruby gushes from the Vine,
And many a Garden by the Water blows.

1 The "false dawn" of the East, a light seen on the horizon about an hour before the true dawn.
2 Here, springtime.
3 See Exodus, IV, 6; the reference in this and the next line is to the blossoms in spring.
4 "According to [the Persians] the healing power of Jesus resided in his breath." (Fitzgerald.)
5 A Persian garden that sank in the sands of Arabia.
6 Ancient king of Persia.
7 It "was typical of the seven heavens, seven planets, seven seas, etc., and was a divining cup." (Fitzgerald.)

6

And David's lips are lockt; but in divine
High-piping Péhlevi,[1] with "Wine! Wine Wine!
Red Wine!" — the Nightingale cries to the Rose
That sallow cheek of hers to incarnadine.

7

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter — and the Bird is on the Wing.

8

Whether at Naishápúr or Babylon,
Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,
The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

9

Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you say;
Yes, but where leaves the Rose of Yesterday?
And this first Summer month that brings the Rose
Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobád away.

10

Well, let it take them! What have we to do
With Kaikobád the Great, or Kaikhosrú? [2]
Let Zál and Rustum [3] thunder as they will,
Or Hátim [4] call to Supper — heed not you.

11

With me along the strip of Herbage strown
That just divides the desert from the sown,
Where name of Slave and Sultán is forgot —
And Peace to Máhmúd [5] on his golden Throne!

1 Sanscrit, the language of old Persian literature.
2 Famous Persians.
3 Cf. Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum.* Rustum, Zál's son, was the Persian Hercules.
4 He was generosity personified. 5 The Sultan.

12

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread — and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness —
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

13

Some for the Glories of This World; and some
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;
Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!

14

Look to the blowing Rose about us — "Lo,
Laughing," she says, "into the world I blow,
At once the silken tassel of my Purse
Tear, and its Treasure[1] on the Garden throw."

15

And those who husbanded the Golden grain,
And those who flung it to the winds like Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turned
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

16

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes — or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
Lighting a little hour or two — was gone.

17

Think, in this battered Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his destined Hour, and went his way.

18

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep:
And Bahrám,[2] that great Hunter — the Wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his Sleep.

19

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

1 "The rose's golden centre." (Fitzgerald.)
2 An ancient king, who sank in a swamp while hunting.

20

And thus reviving Herb whose tender Green
Fledges the River-Lip on which we lean —
Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

21

Ah, my Belovéd, fill the cup that clears
To-DAY of past Regret and future Fears:
*To-morrow!* — Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand Years.[1]

22

For some we loved, the loveliest and the best
That from his Vintage rolling Time has prest,
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to rest.

23

And we, that now make merry in the Room
They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,
Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth
Descend — ourselves to make a Couch — for whom?

24

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and — sans End!

25

Alike for those who for To-DAY prepare,
And those that after some To-MORROW stare,
A Muezzín[2] from the Tower of Darkness cries,
"Fools, your Reward is neither Here nor There."

26

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discussed
Of the Two Worlds so learnedly are thrust
Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn
Are scattered, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust.

27

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went.

1 "A thousand years to each planet." (Fitzgerald.)
2 The crier who summons the faithful to prayer.

28

With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with my own hand wrought to make it grow;
And this was all the Harvest that I reaped —
"I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

29

Into this Universe, and *Why* not knowing,
Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing;
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

30

What, without asking, hither hurried *Whence?*
And, without asking, *Whither* hurried hence!
Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden Wine
Must drown the memory of that insolence!

31

Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate
I rose, and on the Throne of Saturn[1] sate,
And many a Knot unravelled by the Road;
But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.

32

There was the Door to which I found no Key;
There was the Veil through which I could not see:
Some little talk awhile of ME and THEE
There was — and then no more of THEE and ME.

33

Earth could not answer; nor the Seas that mourn
In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn;
Nor rolling Heaven, with all his Signs revealed
And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.

34

Then of the THEE IN ME who works behind
The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find
A Lamp amid the Darkness; and I heard,
As from Without — "THE ME WITHIN THEE BLIND!"

35

Then to the Lip of this poor earthen Urn
I leaned, the Secret of my Life to learn:
And Lip to Lip it murmured — "While you live,
Drink! — for, once dead, you never shall return."

1 "Lord of the seventh heaven." (Fitzgerald.)

36

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
Articulation answered, once did live,
And drink; and Ah! the passive Lip kissed,
How many Kisses might it take — and gi

37

For I remember stopping by the way
To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay
And with its all-obliterated Tongue
It murmured — "Gently, Brother, gen pray!"[1]

38

Listen — a moment listen! — Of the same
Poor Earth from which that Human Whis came
The luckless Mould in which Mankind w cast
They did compose, and called him by t name.

39

And not a drop that from our Cups we thr
For Earth to drink of,[2] but may steal bel
To quench the fire of Anguish in some E
There hidden — far beneath, and long ago

40

As then the Tulip for her morning sup
Of Heav'nly Vintage from the soil looks up
Do you devoutly do the like, till Heav'n
To Earth invert you like an empty Cup.

41

Perplext no more with Human or Divine,
To-morrow's tangle to the winds resign,
And lose your fingers in the tresses of
The Cypress-slender Minister of Wine.

42

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you pres
End in what All begins and ends in — Yes
Think then you are TO-DAY what YESTER DAY
You were — TO-MORROW you shall not b less.

43

So when the Angel of the darker Drink
At last shall find you by the river-brink,
And, offering his Cup, invite your Soul
Forth to your Lips to quaff — you shall no shrink.

1 "The clay from which the bowl is made was onc Man." (Fitzgerald.)
2 A Persian custom.

44

Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust aside,
And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,
Wer't not a Shame — wer't not a Shame for him
In this clay carcase crippled to abide?

45

'Tis but a Tent where takes his one-day's rest
A Sultan to the realm of Death addrest;
The Sultan rises, and the dark Ferrásh [1]
Strikes, and prepares it for another Guest.

46

And fear not lest Existence closing your
Account, and mine, should know the like no more;
The Eternal Sáki [2] from that Bowl has poured
Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

47

When You and I behind the Veil are past,
Oh but the long long while the World shall last,
Which of our Coming and Departure heeds
As the SEV'N SEAS should heed a pebble-cast.

48

A Moment's Halt — a momentary taste
Of BEING from the Well amid the Waste —
And Lo! — the phantom Caravan has reached
The NOTHING it set out from — Oh, make haste!

49

Would you that spangle of Existence spend
About THE SECRET — quick about it, Friend!
A Hair perhaps divides the False and True —
And upon what, prithee, does Life depend?

50

A Hair perhaps divides the False and True;
Yes; and a single Alif were the clue —
Could you but find it — to the Treasure-house,
And peradventure to THE MASTER too;

51

Whose secret Presence, through Creation's veins
Running Quicksilver-like eludes your pains;
Taking all shapes from Máh to Máhi; [3] and
They change and perish all — but He remains;

1 Servant. 2 Wine-pourer.
3 "From fish to moon." (Fitzgerald.)

52

A moment guessed — then back behind the Fold
Immerst of Darkness round the Drama rolled
Which, for the Pastime of Eternity,
He does Himself contrive, enact, behold.

53

But if in vain, down on the stubborn floor
Of Earth, and up to Heav'n's unopening Door,
You gaze TO-DAY, while You are You — how then
TO-MORROW, You when shall be You no more?

54

Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain pursuit
Of This and That endeavor and dispute;
Better be jocund with the fruitful Grape
Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

55

You know, my Friends, with what a brave Carouse
I made a Second Marriage in my house;
Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed,
And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

56

For "Is" and "IS-NOT" though with Rule And Line,
And "UP-AND-DOWN" by Logic I define,
Of all that one should care to fathom, I
Was never deep in anything but — Wine.

57

Ah, but my Computations, People say,
Reduced the Year to better reckoning? [1] —
Nay,
'Twas only striking from the Calendar
Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday.

58

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came shining through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas — the Grape!

59

The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute:
The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice
Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute:

1 Omar was a profound mathematician, and at Jamshyd's request helped to correct the calendar.

60

The mighty Mahmúd, Allah-breathing Lord,
That all the misbelieving and black Horde [1]
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters before him with his whirlwind Sword.

61

Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who dare
Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?
A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse — why, then, Who set it there?

62

I must abjure the Balm of Life, I must,
Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on trust,
Or lured with Hope of some Diviner Drink,
To fill the Cup — when crumbled into Dust!

63

O threats of Hell and hopes of Paradise!
One thing at least is certain, — *This* Life flies;
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies;
The Flower that once has blown forever dies.

64

Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us passed the door of Darkness through
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.

65

The Revelations of Devout and Learned
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burned,
Are all but Stories, which, awoke from Sleep
They told their fellows, and to Sleep returned.

66

I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell:
And by and by my Soul returned to me,
And answered "I Myself am Heav'n and Hell."

67

Heav'n but the Vision of fulfilled Desire,
And Hell the Shadow of a Soul on fire,
Cast on the Darkness into which Ourselves,
So late emerged from, shall so soon expire.

1 "Alluding to Sultan Mahmúd's conquest of India." (Fitzgerald.)

68

We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and g
Round with this Sun-illumined Lante
held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

69

Impotent Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Checker-board of Nights an
Days;
Hither and thither moves, and checks, an
slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays.

70

The Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noe
But Right or Left as strikes the Player goes
And He that tossed you down into th
Field,
*He* knows about it all — HE knows — HI
knows!

71

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.

72

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,
Whereunder crawling cooped we live and die
Lift not your hands to *It* for help — for I
As impotently rolls as you or I.

73

With Earth's first Clay They did the Las
Man knead,
And there of the Last Harvest sowed the Seed
And the first Morning of Creation wrote
What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read

74

YESTERDAY *This* Day's Madness did prepare
To-MORROW's Silence, Triumph, or Despair
Drink! for you know not whence you came
nor why:
Drink! for you know not why you go, no
where.

75

I tell you this — When, started from the
Goal,
Over the flaming shoulders of the Foal
Of Heav'n Parwín [1] and Mushtari [2] they
flung,
In my predestined Plot of Dust and Soul

1 The Pleiades. 2 Jupiter.

76

The Vine had struck a fibre: which about
If clings my Being — let the Dervish [1] flout;
Of my Base metal may be filed a Key,
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

77

And this I know: whether the one True Light
Kindle to Love, or Wrath-consume me quite,
One Flash of It within the Tavern caught
Better than in the Temple lost outright.

78

What! out of senseless Nothing to provoke
A conscious Something to resent the yoke
Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain
Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!

79

What, from his helpless Creature be repaid
Pure Gold for what he lent us dross-allayed —
Sue for a Debt we never did contract,
And cannot answer — Oh the sorry trade!

80

Oh Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in,
Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!

81

Oh, Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blackened — Man's Forgiveness give — and take!

. . . . . .

82

As under cover of departing Day
Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazán [2] away,
Once more within the Potter's house alone
I stood, surrounded by the Shapes of Clay.

83

Shapes of all Sorts and Sizes, great and small,
That stood along the floor and by the wall;
And some loquacious Vessels were; and some
Listened perhaps, but never talked at all.

84

Said one among them — "Surely not in vain
My substance of the common Earth was ta'en
And to this Figure moulded, to be broke,
Or trampled back to shapeless Earth again."

85

Then said a Second — "Ne'er a peevish Boy
Would break the Bowl from which he drank in joy;
And He that with his hand the Vessel made
Will surely not in after Wrath destroy."

86

After a momentary silence spake
Some Vessel of a more ungainly Make;
"They sneer at me for leaning all awry:
What! did the Hand then of the Potter shake?"

87

Whereat some one of the loquacious Lot —
I think a Súfi [1] pipkin — waxing hot —
"All this of Pot and Potter — Tell me then,
Who makes — Who sells — Who buys — Who *is* the Pot?"

88

"Why," said another, "Some there are who tell
Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell
The luckless Pots he marred in making — Pish!
He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well."

89

"Well," murmured one, "Let whoso make or buy,
My Clay with long Oblivion is gone dry:
But fill me with the old familiar Juice,
Methinks I might recover by and by."

90

So while the Vessels one by one were speaking,
The little Moon [2] looked in that all were seeking:
And then they jogged each other, "Brother! Brother!
Now for the Porter's shoulder-knot [3] a-creaking!"

. . . . . .

91

Ah, with the Grape my fading Life provide,
And wash the Body whence the Life has died,
And lay me, shrouded in the living Leaf,
By some not unfrequented Garden-side.

1 A fervent Mohammedan.
2 The month of fasting.

1 A Persian pantheist. 2 The end of Ramazán.
3 Used for carrying the wine-jars.

92

That ev'n my buried Ashes such a snare
Of Vintage shall fling up into the Air
As not a True-believer passing by
But shall be overtaken unaware.

93

Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
Have done my credit in Men's eyes much wrong:
Have drowned my Glory in a shallow Cup,
And sold my Reputation for a Song.

94

Indeed, indeed, Repentance oft before
I swore — but was I sober when I swore?
And then and then came Spring, and Rose-in-hand
My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

95

And much as Wine has played the Infidel,
And robbed me of my Robe of Honor — Well,
I wonder often what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the stuff they sell.

96

Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!
The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

97

Would but the Desert of the Fountain yield
One glimpse — if dimly, yet indeed, revealed,
To which the fainting Traveller might spring,
As springs the trampled herbage of the field!

98

Would but some wingéd Angel ere too late
Arrest the yet unfolded Roll of Fate,
And make the stern Recorder otherwise
Enregister, or quite obliterate!

99

Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits — and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!

. . . . . .

100

Yon rising Moon that looks for us again —
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;
How oft hereafter rising look for us
Through this same Garden — and for *one* in vain!

101

And when like her, oh Sáki, you shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scattered on the Grass,
And in your blissful errand reach the spot
Where I made One — turn down an empty Glass!

TAMÁM

## DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI (1828–1882)

Rossetti, poet and painter, was three-quarters Italian. His father, Professor of Italian in King's College, University of London, had come to England, a self-exiled revolutionist, four years before the poet's birth in 1828. His mother was the daughter of an Italian who had married an English girl.

Rossetti received his education at King's College School and at home, with his sister, Christina, and his brother, William Michael. At fourteen, he began the study of painting, continuing at the same time the writing of verses, which he had done since childhood. At twenty, through Ford Madox Brown, his instructor in art, he became acquainted with Holman Hunt, Millais, Woolner, and other painters. They organized the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, whose members sought to revive great painting in England by going back for instruction and inspiration to the Italian masters before Raphael. Many of the Pre-Raphaelites, like Rossetti, wrote as well as painted. For a while they published a magazine, *The Germ*, of which William Michael Rossetti was editor. Here, in 1848, appeared *The Blessed Damozel*, which Rossetti had written the year before, when he was nineteen.

In 1851, Rossetti became engaged to Elizabeth Siddal, a girl in a milliner's shop. They were not married until 1860, partly because of her poor health, partly because of lack of money. During this time, Rossetti wrote and painted, supported largely by both the patronage and encouragement of Ruskin. In 1861, he published *Dante and his Circle*, translations of early Italian poets. In 1862, his wife died from an accidental overdose of medicine. In his grief Rossetti buried with her the manuscript of all his unpublished poems. These were recovered, with his consent, some

seven years later, and printed in his *Collected Poems*, 1870. During the remainder of his life, Rossetti suffered much from ill health and from the drugs that he used to relieve his pain. He lived more and more in isolation. In 1881, he brought out *Ballads and Sonnets*, the third and last volume of his published work. He died April 10, 1882.

In Rossetti can be seen the chief qualities of Pre-Raphaelite artists. They used much detail, but it was simple, carefully selected detail that would appeal to the imagination and enhance the strange, the mystical, or the supernatural effect that they wished to produce. They were concrete in their descriptions, rich in their coloring. In short, they tried to create beauty in a world which they thought was materialistic and matter-of-fact; and this they felt they could do best when they took their themes or inspiration from the Middle Ages.

Swinburne in *Essays and Studies*, and Pater in *Appreciations*, have written excellent essays on Rossetti.

## THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

According to Hall Caine, Rossetti said of this poem: "I saw that Poe had done the utmost it was possible to do with the grief of the lover on earth, and so I determined to reverse the conditions, and give utterance to the yearning of the loved one in heaven." The reference is, of course, to *The Raven*.

The blessed damozel leaned out
From the golden bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
— Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me — her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .
Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
Time, like a pulse, shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened? When those bells
Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come," she said.
"Have I not prayed in Heaven? — on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not prayed?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?

"When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,

I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
As unto a stream we will step down,
And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

"We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly.

"And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know."

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

"We two," she said, "will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret, and Rosalys.

"Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth, white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robes for them
Who are just born, being dead.

"He shall fear, haply, and be dumb:
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak;
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

"Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round Whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
Bowed with their aureoles;

And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me: —
Only to live as once on earth
With Love, — only to be,
As then awhile, forever now
Together, I and he."

She gazed and listened and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild, —
"All this is when he comes." She ceased.
The light thrilled towards her, filled
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres:
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

1847.

## SISTER HELEN

"Why did you melt your waxen man,[1]
Sister Helen?
To-day is the third since you began."
"The time was long, yet the time ran,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Three days to-day, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"But if you have done your work aright,
Sister Helen,
You'll let me play, for you said I might."
"Be very still in your play to-night,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Third night, to-night, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"You said it must melt ere vesper-bell,
Sister Helen;
If now it be molten, all is well."
"Even so, — nay, peace! you cannot tell,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*What is this, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"Oh the waxen knave was plump to-day,
Sister Helen;
How like dead folk he has dropped away!"
"Nay now, of the dead what can you say,

1 According to an old superstition, a woman might cause her faithless lover's life to dwindle by melting a wax image of him slowly in front of a fire.

Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*What of the dead, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"See, see, the sunken pile of wood,
Sister Helen,
Shines through the thinned wax red as blood!"
"Nay now, when looked you yet on blood,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*How pale she is, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Now close your eyes, for they're sick and sore,
Sister Helen,
And I'll play without the gallery door."
"Aye, let me rest, — I'll lie on the floor,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*What rest to-night, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"Here high up in the balcony,
Sister Helen,
The moon flies face to face with me."
"Aye, look and say whatever you see,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*What sight to-night, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"Outside it's merry in the wind's wake,
Sister Helen;
In the shaken trees the chill stars shake."
"Hush, heard you a horse-tread as you spake,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*What sound to-night, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"I hear a horse-tread, and I see,
Sister Helen,
Three horsemen that ride terribly."
"Little brother, whence come the three,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Whence should they come, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"They come by the hill-verge from Boyne Bar,
Sister Helen,
And one draws nigh, but two are afar."
"Look, look, do you know them who they are,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Who should they be, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"Oh, it's Keith of Eastholm rides so fast,
Sister Helen,
For I know the white mane on the blast."
"The hour has come, has come at last,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Her hour at last, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"He has made a sign and called 'Halloo!'
Sister Helen,
And he says that he would speak with you."
"Oh tell him I fear the frozen dew,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Why laughs she thus, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"The wind is loud, but I hear him cry,
Sister Helen,
That Keith of Ewern's like to die."
"And he and thou, and thou and I,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*And they and we, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Three days ago, on his marriage-morn,
Sister Helen,
He sickened, and lies since then forlorn."
"For bridegroom's side is the bride a thorn,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Cold bridal cheer, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Three days and nights he has lain abed,
Sister Helen,
And he prays in torment to be dead."
"The thing may chance, if he have prayed,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*If he have prayed, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"But he has not ceased to cry to-day,
Sister Helen,
That you should take your curse away."
"*My* prayer was heard, — he need but pray,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Shall God not hear, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"But he says, till you take back your ban,
Sister Helen,
His soul would pass, yet never can."
"Nay then, shall I slay a living man,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*A living soul, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"But he calls forever on your name,
Sister Helen,
And says that he melts before a flame."
"My heart for his pleasure fared the same,

Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Fire at the heart, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Here's Keith of Westholm riding fast,
Sister Helen,
For I know the white plume on the blast."
"The hour, the sweet hour I forecast,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Is the hour sweet, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"He stops to speak, and he stills his horse,
Sister Helen;
But his words are drowned in the wind's course."
"Nay hear, nay hear, you must hear perforce,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*What word now heard, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"Oh he says that Keith of Ewern's cry,
Sister Helen,
Is ever to see you ere he die."
"In all that his soul sees, there am I,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*The soul's one sight, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"He sends a ring and a broken coin,
Sister Helen,
And bids you mind the banks of Boyne."
"What else he broke will he ever join,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*No, never joined, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"He yields you these and craves full fain,
Sister Helen,
You pardon him in his mortal pain."
"What else he took will he give again,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Not twice to give, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"He calls your name in an agony,
Sister Helen,
That even dead Love must weep to see."
"Hate, born of Love, is blind as he,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Love turned to hate, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Oh it's Keith of Keith now that rides fast,
Sister Helen,
For I know the white hair on the blast."
"The short, short hour will soon be past,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Will soon be past, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"He looks at me and he tries to speak,
Sister Helen,
But oh his voice is sad and weak!"
"What here should the mighty Baron seek,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Is this the end, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"Oh his son still cries, if you forgive,
Sister Helen,
The body dies, but the soul shall live."
"Fire shall forgive me as I forgive,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*As she forgives, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Oh he prays you, as his heart would rive,
Sister Helen,
To save his dear son's soul alive."
"Fire cannot slay it, it shall thrive,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Alas, alas, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"He cries to you, kneeling in the road,
Sister Helen,
To go with him for the love of God!"
"The way is long to his son's abode,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*The way is long, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"A lady's here, by a dark steed brought,
Sister Helen,
So darkly clad, I saw her not."
"See her now or never see aught,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*What more to see, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Her hood falls back, and the moon shines fair,
Sister Helen,
On the Lady of Ewern's golden hair."
"Blest hour of my power and her despair,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Hour blest and banned, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Pale, pale her cheeks, that in pride did glow,
Sister Helen,

'Neath the bridal-wreath three days ago."
"One morn for pride and three days for woe,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Three days, three nights, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Her clasped hands stretch from her bending head,
Sister Helen;
With the loud wind's wail her sobs are wed."
"What wedding-strains hath her bridal-bed,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*What strain but death's, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"She may not speak, she sinks in a swoon,
Sister Helen, —
She lifts her lips and gasps on the moon."
"Oh! might I but hear her soul's blithe tune,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Her woe's dumb cry, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"They've caught her to Westholm's saddle-bow,
Sister Helen,
And her moonlit hair gleams white in its flow."
"Let it turn whiter than winter snow,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Woe-withered gold, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"O Sister Helen, you heard the bell,
Sister Helen;
More loud than the vesper-chime it fell."
"No vesper-chime, but a dying knell,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*His dying knell, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Alas! but I fear the heavy sound,
Sister Helen;
Is it in the sky or in the ground?"
"Say, have they turned their horses round,
Little brother?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*What would she more, between Hell and Heaven?*)

"They have raised the old man from his knee,
Sister Helen,
And they ride in silence hastily."
"More fast the naked soul doth flee,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*The naked soul, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Flank to flank are the three steeds gone,
Sister Helen,
But the lady's dark steed goes alone."
"And lonely her bridegroom's soul hath flown,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*The lonely ghost, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Oh the wind is sad in the iron chill,
Sister Helen,
And weary sad they look by the hill."
"But he and I are sadder still,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Most sad of all, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"See, see, the wax has dropped from its place,
Sister Helen,
And the flames are winning up apace!"
"Yet here they burn but for a space,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Here for a space, between Hell and Heaven!*)

"Ah! what white thing at the door has crossed,
Sister Helen,
Ah! what is this that sighs in the frost?"
"A soul that's lost as mine is lost,
Little brother!"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*Lost, lost, all lost, between Hell and Heaven!*)

Pub. 1853.

## THE BALLAD OF DEAD LADIES

From François Villon

Tell me now in what hidden way is
Lady Flora the lovely Roman?
Where's Hipparchia, and where is Thaïs,
Neither of them the fairer woman?
Where is Echo, beheld of no man,
Only heard on river and mere, —
She whose beauty was more than human? . . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

Where's Héloïse, the learned nun,
For whose sake Abeillard, I ween,

Lost manhood and put priesthood on?
(From Love he won such dule and teen![1])
And where, I pray you, is the Queen
Who willed that Buridan should steer
Sewed in a sack's mouth down the Seine? . . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

White Queen Blanche, like a queen of lilies,
With a voice like any mermaiden, —
Bertha Broadfoot, Beatrice, Alice,
And Ermengarde the lady of Maine, —
And that good Joan whom Englishmen
At Rouen doomed and burned her there, —
Mother of God, where are they then? . . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

Nay, never ask this week, fair lord,
Where they are gone, nor yet this year,
Except with this for an overword, —
"But where are the snows of yester-year?"

## TROY TOWN

Heavenborn Helen, Sparta's queen,
(*O Troy Town!*)
Had two breasts of heavenly sheen,
The sun and moon of the heart's desire:
All Love's lordship lay between.
(*O Troy's down,*
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

Helen knelt at Venus' shrine,
(*O Troy Town!*)
Saying "A little gift is mine,
A little gift for a heart's desire.
Hear me speak and make me a sign!
(*O Troy's down,*
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

"Look, I bring thee a carven cup;
(*O Troy Town!*)
See it here as I hold it up, —
Shaped it is to the heart's desire,
Fit to fill when the gods would sup.
(*O Troy's down,*
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

"It was moulded like my breast;
(*O Troy Town!*)
He that sees it may not rest,
Rest at all for his heart's desire.
O give ear to my heart's behest!
(*O Troy's down,*
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

"See my breast, how like it is;
(*O Troy Town!*)
See it bare for the air to kiss!
Is the cup to thy heart's desire?
O for the breast, O make it his!
(*O Troy's down,*
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

"Yea, for my bosom here I sue:
(*O Troy Town!*)
Thou must give it where 'tis due,
Give it there to the heart's desire.
Whom do I give my bosom to?
(*O Troy's down,*
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

"Each twin breast is an apple sweet!
(*O Troy Town!*)
Once an apple stirred the beat
Of thy heart with the heart's desire:
Say, who brought it then to thy feet?
(*O Troy's down,*
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

"They that claimed it then were three:
(*O Troy Town!*)
For thy sake two hearts did he
Make forlorn of the heart's desire.
Do for him as he did for thee!
(*O Troy's down,*
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

"Mine are apples grown to the south,
(*O Troy Town!*)
Grown to taste in the days of drouth,
Taste and waste to the heart's desire:
Mine are apples meet for his mouth!"
(*O Troy's down,*
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

Venus looked on Helen's gift,
(*O Troy Town!*)
Looked and smiled with subtle drift,
Saw the work of her heart's desire: —
"There thou kneel'st for Love to lift!"
(*O Troy's down,*
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

Venus looked in Helen's face,
(*O Troy Town!*)
Knew far off an hour and place,
And fire lit from the heart's desire;
Laughed and said, "Thy gift hath grace!"
(*O Troy's down,*
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

[1] grief.

Cupid looked on Helen's breast,
(*O Troy Town!*)
Saw the heart within its nest,
Saw the flame of the heart's desire, —
Marked his arrow's burning crest.
(*O Troy's down,*
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

Cupid took another dart,
(*O Troy Town!*)
Fledged it for another heart,
Winged the shaft with the heart's desire,
Drew the string and said, "Depart!"
(*O Troy's down,*
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

Paris turned upon his bed,
(*O Troy Town!*)
Turned upon his bed and said,
Dead at heart with the heart's desire, —
"O to clasp her golden head!"
(*O Troy's down,*
*Tall Troy's on fire!*)

Pub. 1870.

## THE HOUSE OF LIFE [1]

### THE SONNET

A Sonnet is a moment's monument, —
Memorial from the Soul's eternity
To one dead deathless hour. Look that it be,
Whether for lustral rite [2] or dire portent,
Of its own arduous fulness reverent:
Carve it in ivory or in ebony,
As Day or Night may rule; and let Time see
Its flowering crest impearled and orient.
A Sonnet is a coin: its face reveals
The soul, — its converse, to what Power 'tis due: —
Whether for tribute to the august appeals
Of Life, or dower in Love's high retinue,
It serve; or, 'mid the dark wharf's [3] cavernous breath,
In Charon's palm it pay the toll to Death.

### 4. LOVE-SIGHT

When do I see thee most, beloved one?
When in the light the spirits of mine eyes
Before thy face, their altar, solemnize
The worship of that Love through thee made known?
Or when in the dusk hours (we two alone),
Close kissed and eloquent of still replies,
Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage lies,
And my soul only sees thy soul its own?
O love, my love! if I no more should see
Thyself, nor on the earth the shadow of thee,
Nor image of thine eyes in any spring, —
How then should sound upon Life's darkening slope
The ground-whirl of the perished leaves of Hope,
The wind of Death's imperishable wing?

### 19. SILENT NOON

Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass, —
The finger-points look through like rosy blooms:
Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms
'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.
All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,
Are golden kingcup-fields with silver edge,
Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn-hedge.
'Tis visible silence, still as the hour-glass.
Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragon-fly
Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the sky: —
So this winged hour is dropped to us from above.
Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless dower,
This close-companioned, inarticulate hour
When twofold silence was the song of love.

### 71, 72, 73, THE CHOICE

#### I

Eat thou and drink; to-morrow thou shalt die.
Surely the earth, that's wise being very old,
Needs not our help. Then loose me, love, and hold
Thy sultry hair up from my face; that I
May pour for thee this golden wine, brimhigh,
Till round the glass thy fingers glow like gold.
We'll drown all hours: thy song, while hours are tolled,
Shall leap, as fountains veil the changing sky.
Now kiss, and think that there are really those,

1 The title is taken from astrology, according to which the heavens were divided into twelve houses, the first of which, on the eastern horizon, was called the house of the ascendant, or the house of life.

2 Purification.

3 At the Styx, where the soul had to pay Charon for ferrying across.

My own high-bosomed beauty, who increase
Vain gold, vain lore, and yet might choose our way!
Through many years they toil; then on a day
They die not, — for their life was death, — but cease;
And round their narrow lips the mould falls close.

2

Watch thou and fear; to-morrow thou shalt die.
Or art thou sure thou shalt have time for death?
Is not the day which God's word promiseth
To come man knows not when? In yonder sky,
Now while we speak, the sun speeds forth: can I
Or thou assure him of his goal? God's breath
Even at this moment haply quickeneth
The air to a flame; till spirits, always nigh
Though screened and hid, shall walk the daylight here.
And dost thou prate of all that man shall do?
Canst thou, who hast but plagues, presume to be
Glad in his gladness that comes after thee?
Will *his* strength slay *thy* worm in Hell? Go to:
Cover thy countenance, and watch, and fear.

3

Think thou and act; to-morrow thou shalt die.
Outstretched in the sun's warmth upon the shore,
Thou say'st: "Man's measured path is all gone o'er;
Up all his years, steeply, with strain and sigh,
Man clomb until he touched the truth; and I,
Even I, am he whom it was destined for."
How should this be? Art thou, then, so much more
Than they who sowed, that thou shouldst reap thereby?
Nay, come up hither. From this wave-washed mound
Unto the furthest flood-brim look with me;
Then reach on with thy thought till it be drowned.
Miles and miles distant though the last line be,
And though thy soul sail leagues and leagues beyond,
Still, leagues beyond those leagues, there is more sea.

85. VAIN VIRTUES

What is the sorriest thing that enters Hell?
None of the sins, — but this and that fair deed
Which a soul's sin at length could supersede.
These yet are virgins, whom death's timely knell
Might once have sainted; whom the fiend did compel
Together now, in snake-bound shudderings sheaves
Of anguish, while the pit's pollution leaves
Their refuse maidenhood abominable.
Night sucks them down, the tribute of the pit:
Whose names, half entered in the book of Life,
Were God's desire at noon. And as their hair
And eyes sink last, the Torturer designs not whit
To gaze, but, yearning, waits his destined wife,
The Sin still blithe on earth that sent them there.

86. LOST DAYS

The lost days of my life until to-day,
What were they, could I see them on the street
Lie as they fell? Would they be ears of wheat
Sown once for food but trodden into clay?
Or golden coins squandered and still to pay?
Or drops of blood dabbling the guilty feet?
Or such spilt water as in dreams must cheat
The undying throats of Hell, athirst alway?
I do not see them here; but after death
God knows I know the faces I shall see,
Each one a murdered self, with low last breath.
"I am thyself, — what hast thou done to me?"
"And I — and I — thyself" (lo! each one saith),
"And thou thyself to all eternity!"

97. A SUPERSCRIPTION

Look in my face; my name is Might-have-been;
I am also called No-more, Too-late, Farewell;
Unto thine ear I hold the dead-sea shell

Cast up thy Life's foam-fretted feet between;
Unto thine eyes the glass where that is seen
Which had Life's form and Love's, but by my spell
Is now a shaken shadow intolerable,
Of ultimate things unuttered the frail screen.
Mark me, how still I am! But should there dart
One moment through thy soul the soft surprise
Of that winged Peace which lulls the breath of sighs, —
Then shalt thou see me smile, and turn apart
Thy visage to mine ambush at thy heart
Sleepless with cold commemorative eyes.

101. THE ONE HOPE

When vain desire at last and vain regret
Go hand in hand to death, and all is vain,
What shall assuage the unforgotten pain
And teach the unforgetful to forget?
Shall Peace be still a sunk stream long unmet, —
Or may the soul at once in a green plain
Stoop through the spray of some sweet life-fountain
And cull the dew-drenched flowering amulet?
Ah! when the wan soul in that golden air
Between the scriptured petals softly blown
Peers breathless for the gift of grace unknown, —
Ah! let none other alien spell soe'er
But only the one Hope's one name be there, —
Not less nor more, but even that word alone.

## THE CLOUD CONFINES

The day is dark and the night
To him that would search their heart;
No lips of cloud that will part
Nor morning song in the light:
Only, gazing alone,
To him wild shadows are shown,
Deep under deep unknown
And height above unknown height.
Still we say as we go, —
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know,
That shall we know one day."

The Past is over and fled;
Named new, we name it the old;
Thereof some tale hath been told
But no word comes from the dead;
Whether at all they be,
Or whether as bond or free,
Or whether they too were we,
Or by what spell they have sped.
Still we say as we go, —
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know,
That shall we know one day."

What of the heart of hate
That beats in thy breast, O Time? —
Red strife from the furthest prime,
And anguish of fierce debate;
War that shatters her slain,
And peace that grinds them as grain,
And eyes fixed ever in vain
On the pitiless eyes of Fate.
Still we say as we go, —
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know,
That shall we know one day."

What of the heart of love
That bleeds in thy breast, O Man? —
Thy kisses snatched 'neath the ban
Of fangs that mock them above;
Thy bells prolonged unto knells,
Thy hope that a breath dispels,
Thy bitter forlorn farewells
And the empty echoes thereof?
Still we say as we go, —
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know,
That shall we know one day."

The sky leans dumb on the sea,
Aweary with all its wings;
And oh! the song the sea sings
Is dark everlastingly.
Our past is clean forgot,
Our present is and is not,
Our future's a sealed seedplot,
And what betwixt them are we? —
We who say as we go, —
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know
That shall we know one day."

Pub. 1872.

# WILLIAM MORRIS (1834–1896)

William Morris was at Oxford in the years when Dante Gabriel Rossetti and his friends were starting their Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in London. He and his friend Edward Burne-Jones became the sponsors for a similar movement back to the Middle Ages for inspiration in art and poetry. Morris was younger than Rossetti, having been born in 1834. The two became intimate friends. Morris studied painting with Rossetti, and later, when he came to London, the two were members of a firm which Morris directed with the object of bringing beautiful design and decoration into English churches and homes. The firm dealt in carving, stained glass, metal-work, chintzes, carpets, and furniture. All his life Morris remained interested in handicrafts of all sorts. He set up looms for weaving tapestry. He set up his own printing-press. He learned to write a beautiful hand like the medieval scribes. This interest in reviving the fine traditions of industry of which the great tradition was a workman's joy in the work of his hands, led him to protest against the modern industrial system in much the same way as Ruskin. Morris, however, believed for a time that the way to bring back medieval conditions of work inspired by art was through socialism. He joined the Social Democratic Federation in 1883, and devoted many years to speaking, writing, and editing papers in behalf of the cause of social justice. He died in 1896.

Morris began his career as poet in the full tide of the medieval revival. His first volume, *The Defence of Guenevere* (1858), contains work of extraordinary originality — bits of medieval psychology and realism which are much more penetrating than Tennyson's *Idylls*. Most of Morris's poetic achievement, however, consisted in retelling the old stories of the race. The most famous of his works is *The Earthly Paradise*. Two groups of voyagers, Greeks and Northmen, unite to exchange month by month the old myths of their people. Other longer narratives in verse to which Morris set his hand are *The Life and Death of Jason* (1867), and *Sigurd the Volsung* (1876). He translated the *Æneid* and the *Odyssey*, as well as some of the Icelandic sagas and Beowulf. As a socialist he lectured on the connection between art and society, in *Hopes and Fears for Art*, and wrote a Utopian romance, *News from Nowhere*. His last phase of literary activity was marked by the prose romances, *The House of the Wolfings* (1889), and its successors, in which he pictured the early life of the Germanic tribes.

Altogether the bulk of Morris's work in prose and verse is very great. Most of it owes its inspiration to the literature of the past rather than the life of the present. To Morris, poetry was a decoration of life, and like other arts a matter of sound craftsmanship. He once wrote that, if a man could not compose an epic while he was weaving a tapestry, he was no good at all. But if Morris as a poet seems withdrawn from the life of his time, there must not be forgotten the devotion with which he set himself to work out its social problem and create a better world.

The Collected Works of William Morris are published by Longmans. The most complete biography is by J. W. Mackail, in two volumes (Longmans).

## THE DEFENCE OF GUENEVERE

But, knowing now that they would have her speak,
She threw her wet hair backward from her brow,
Her hand close to her mouth touching her cheek,

As though she had had there a shameful blow,
And feeling it shameful to feel ought but shame
All through her heart, yet felt her cheek burned so,

She must a little touch it; like one lame
She walked away from Gauwaine, with her head
Still lifted up; and on her cheek of flame

The tears dried quick; she stopped at last and said:

"O knights and lords, it seems but little skill
To talk of well-known things past now and dead.

"God wot I ought to say, I have done ill,
And pray you all forgiveness heartily!
Because you must be right such great lords — still

"Listen, suppose your time were come to die,
And you were quite alone and very weak;
Yea, laid a dying while very mightily

"The wind was ruffling up the narrow streak
Of river through your broad lands running well:
Suppose a hush should come, then some one speak:

"'One of these cloths is heaven, and one is hell,
Now choose one cloth for ever, which they be,
I will not tell you, you must somehow tell

"'Of your own strength and mightiness; here, see!'
Yea, yea, my lord, and you to ope your eyes,
At foot of your familiar bed to see

"A great God's angel standing, with such dyes,
Not known on earth, on his great wings, and hands,
Held out two ways, light from the inner skies

"Showing him well, and making his commands
Seem to be God's commands, moreover, too,
Holding within his hands the cloths on wands;

"And one of these strange choosing cloths was blue,
Wavy and long and one cut short and red;
No man could tell the better of the two.

"After a shivering half-hour you said,
'God help! heaven's color, the blue;' and he said, 'hell.'
Perhaps you then would roll upon your bed,

"And cry to all good men that loved you well,
'Ah Christ! if only I had known, known, known;'
Launcelot went away, then I could tell,

"Like wisest man how all things would be, moan,
And roll and hurt myself, and long to die,
And yet fear much to die for what was sown.

"Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,
Whatever may have happened through these years,
God knows I speak truth, saying that you lie."

Her voice was low at first, being full of tears,
But as it cleared, it grew full loud and shrill,
Growing a windy shriek in all men's ears,

A ringing in their startled brains, until
She said that Gauwaine lied, then her voice sunk,
And her great eyes began again to fill,

Though still she stood right up, and never shrunk,
But spoke on bravely, glorious lady fair!
Whatever tears her full lips may have drunk,

She stood, and seemed to think, and wrung her hair,
Spoke out at last with no more trace of shame,
With passionate twisting of her body there:

"It chanced upon a day that Launcelot came
To dwell at Arthur's court: at Christmas-time
This happened; when the heralds sung his name,

"'Son of King Ban of Benwick,' seemed to chime
Along with all the bells that rang that day,
O'er the white roofs, with little change of rhyme.

"Christmas and whitened winter passed away,
And over me the April sunshine came,
Made very awful with black hail-clouds, yea

"And in the Summer I grew white with flame,
And bowed my head down — Autumn, and the sick
Sure knowledge things would never be the same,

"However often Spring might be most thick
Of blossoms and buds, smote on me, and I grew
Careless of most things, let the clock tick, tick,

"To my unhappy pulse, that beat right through
My eager body; while I laughed out loud,
And let my lips curl up at false or true,

"Seemed cold and shallow without any cloud.
Behold my judges, then the cloths were brought:
While I was dizzied thus, old thoughts would crowd,

"Belonging to the time ere I was bought
By Arthur's great name and his little love,
Must I give up for ever then, I thought,

"That which I deemed would ever round me move
Glorifying all things; for a little word,
Scarce ever meant at all, must I now prove

"Stone-cold for ever? Pray you, does the Lord
Will that all folks should be quite happy and good?
I love God now a little, if this cord

"Were broken, once for all what striving could
Make me love anything in earth or heaven.
So day by day it grew, as if one should

"Slip slowly down some path worn smooth and even,
Down to a cool sea on a summer day;
Yet still in slipping was there some small leaven

"Of stretched hands catching small stones by the way,
Until one surely reached the sea at last,
And felt strange new joy as the worn head lay

"Back, with the hair like sea-weed; yea all past
Sweat of the forehead, dryness of the lips,
Washed utterly out by the dear waves o'ercast

"In the lone sea, far off from any ships!
Do I not know now of a day in Spring?
No minute of that wild day ever slips

"From out my memory; I hear thrushes sing,
And wheresoever I may be, straightway
Thoughts of it all come up with most fresh sting;

"I was half mad with beauty on that day,
And went without my ladies all alone,
In a quiet garden walled round every way;

"I was right joyful of that wall of stone,
That shut the flowers and trees up with the sky,
And trebled all the beauty: to the bone,

"Yea right through to my heart, grown very shy
With weary thoughts, it pierced, and made me glad;
Exceedingly glad, and I knew verily,

"A little thing just then had made me mad;
I dared not think, as I was wont to do,
Sometimes, upon my beauty; if I had

'Held out my long hand up against the blue,
And, looking on the tenderly darkened fingers,
Thought that by rights one ought to see quite through,

"There, see you, where the soft still light yet lingers,
Round by the edges; what should I have done,
If this had joined with yellow spotted singers,

"And startling green drawn upward by the sun?
But shouting, loosed out, see now! all my hair,
And trancedly stood watching the west wind run

"With faintest half-heard breathing sound — why there
I lose my head e'en now in doing this;
But shortly listen — In that garden fair

"Came Launcelot walking; this is true, the kiss
Wherewith we kissed in meeting that spring day,
I scarce dare talk of the remembered bliss,

"When both our mouths went wandering in one way,
And aching sorely, met among the leaves;
Our hands being left behind strained far away.

"Never within a yard of my bright sleeves
Had Launcelot come before — and now, so nigh!
After that day why is it Guenevere grieves?

"Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,
Whatever happened on through all those years,
God knows I speak truth, saying that you lie.

"Being such a lady could I weep these tears
If this were true? A great queen such as I
Having sinned this way, straight her conscience sears;

"And afterwards she liveth hatefully,
Slaying and poisoning, certes never weeps, —
Gauwaine be friends now, speak me lovingly.

"Do I not see how God's dear pity creeps
All through your frame, and trembles in your mouth?
Remember in what grave your mother sleeps,

"Buried in some place far down in the south,
Men are forgetting as I speak to you;
By her head severed in that awful drouth

"Of pity that drew Agravaine's fell blow,
I pray your pity! let me not scream out
For ever after, when the shrill winds blow

"Through half your castle-locks! let me not shout
For ever after in the winter night
When you ride out alone! in battle rout

"Let not my rusting tears make your sword light!
Ah! God of mercy how he turns away!
So, ever must I dress me to the fight,

"So — let God's justice work! Gauwaine, I say,
See me hew down your proofs: yea all men know
Even as you said how Mellyagraunce one day,

"One bitter day in *la Fausse Garde*, for so
All good knights held it after, saw —
Yea, sirs, by cursed unknightly outrage; though

"You, Gauwaine, held his word without a flaw,
This Mellyagraunce saw blood upon my bed —
Whose blood then pray you? is there any law

"To make a queen say why some spots of red
Lie on her coverlet? or will you say,
Your hands are white, lady, as when you wed,

"'Where did you bleed?" and must I stammer out — 'Nay,
I blush indeed, fair lord, only to rend
My sleeve up to my shoulder, where there lay

"'A knife-point last night:' so must I defend
The honor of the lady Guenevere?
Not so, fair lords, even if the world should end

"This very day, and you were judges here
Instead of God. Did you see Mellyagraunce
When Launcelot stood by him? what white fear

"Curdled his blood, and how his teeth did dance,
His side sink in? as my knight cried and said,
'Slayer of unarmed men, here is a chance!

"'Setter of traps, I pray you guard your head,
By God I am so glad to fight with you,
Stripper of ladies, that my hand feels lead

"'For driving weight; hurrah now! draw and do,
For all my wounds are moving in my breast,
And I am getting mad with waiting so."

"He struck his hands together o'er the beast,
Who fell down flat, and grovelled at his feet,
And groaned at being slain so young — 'at least.'

"My knight said, 'Rise you, sir, who are so fleet
At catching ladies, half-armed will I fight,
My left side all uncovered!' then I weet,

"Up sprang Sir Mellyagraunce with great delight
Upon his knave's face; not until just then
Did I quite hate him, as I saw my knight

"Along the lists look to my stake and pen
With such a joyous smile, it made me sigh
From agony beneath my waist-chain, when

"The fight began, and to me they drew nigh;
Ever Sir Launcelot kept him on the right,
And traversed warily, and ever high

"And fast leapt caitiff's sword, until my knight
Sudden threw up his sword to his left hand,
Caught it, and swung it; that was all the fight.

"Except a spout of blood on the hot land;
For it was hottest summer; and I know
I wondered how the fire, while I should stand,

"And burn, against the heat, would quiver so,
Yards above my head; thus these matters went;
Which things were only warnings of the woe

"That fell on me. Yet Mellyagraunce was shent,
For Mellyagraunce had fought against the Lord;
Therefore, my lords, take heed lest you be blent

"With all this wickedness; say no rash word
Against me, being so beautiful; my eyes,
Wept all away to grey, may bring some sword

"To drown you in your blood; see my breast rise,
Like waves of purple sea, as here I stand;
And how my arms are moved in wonderful wise,

"Yea also at my full heart's strong command,
See through my long throat how the words go up
In ripples to my mouth; how in my hand

"The shadow lies like wine within a cup
Of marvellously colored gold; yea now
This little wind is rising, look you up,

"And wonder how the light is falling so
Within my moving tresses: will you dare,
When you have looked a little on my brow,

"To say this thing is vile? or will you care
For any plausible lies of cunning woof,
When you can see my face with no lie there

"For ever? am I not a gracious proof — 'But in your chamber Launcelot was found' —
Is there a good knight then would stand aloof,

"When a queen says with gentle queenly sound:
'O true as steel come now and talk with me,
I love to see your step upon the ground

"'Unwavering, also well I love to see
That gracious smile light up your face, and hear
Your wonderful words, that all mean verily

"'The thing they seem to mean: good friend, so dear
To me in everything, come here to-night,
Or else the hours will pass most dull and drear;

"'If you come not, I fear this time I might
Get thinking over much of times gone by,
When I was young, and green hope was in sight;

"'For no man cares now to know why I sigh
And no man comes to sing me pleasant song:
Nor any brings me the sweet flowers that li

"'So thick in the gardens; therefore one s longs
To see you, Launcelot; that we may be
Like children once again, free from all wrong

"'Just for one night.' Did he not come t me?
What thing could keep true Launcelot awa
If I said 'come'? there was one less tha three

"In my quiet room that night, and we wer gay;
Till sudden I rose up, weak, pale, and sick,
Because a bawling broke our dream up, yea

"I looked at Launcelot's face and could no speak,
For he looked helpless too, for a little while
Then I remember how I tried to shriek,

"And could not, but fell down; from tile t tile
The stones they threw up rattled o'er m head,
And made me dizzier; till within a while

"My maids were all about me, and m head
On Launcelot's breast was being soothe away
From its white chattering, until Launcelo said —

"By God! I will not tell you more to-day,
Judge any way you will — what matters it?
You know quite well the story of that fray,

"How Launcelot stilled their bawling, th mad fit
That caught up Gauwaine — all, all, verily
But just that which would save me; these things flit.

"Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,
Whatever may have happened these lon years,
God knows I speak truth, saying that you lie!

"All I have said is truth, by Christ's dear tears."
She would not speak another word, but stood
Turned sideways; listening, like a man who hears

His brother's trumpet sounding through the wood
Of his foes' lances. She leaned eagerly,
And gave a slight spring sometimes, as she could

At last hear something really; joyfully
Her cheek grew crimson, as the headlong speed
Of the roan charger drew all men to see,
The knight who came was Launcelot at good need.

Pub. 1858.

## THE EVE OF CRECY

Gold on her head, and gold on her feet,
And gold where the hems of her kirtle meet,
And a golden girdle round my sweet; —
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

Margaret's maids are fair to see,
Freshly dressed and pleasantly;
Margaret's hair falls down to her knee; —
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

If I were rich I would kiss her feet,
I would kiss the place where the gold hems meet,
And the golden girdle round my sweet —
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

Ah me! I have never touched her hand;
When the arriere-ban[1] goes through the land,
Six basnets[2] under my pennon stand; —
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

And many an one grins under his hood:
"Sir Lambert de Bois, with all his men good,
Has neither food nor firewood;" —
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

If I were rich I would kiss her feet,
And the golden girdle of my sweet,
And thereabouts where the gold hems meet; —
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

1 The summons of a French king calling his vassals to war.
2 helmets.

Yet even now it is good to think,
While my few poor varlets grumble and drink
In my desolate hall, where the fires sink, —
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

Of Margaret sitting glorious there,
In glory of gold and glory of hair,
And glory of glorious face most fair; —
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

Likewise to-night I make good cheer,
Because this battle draweth near:
For what have I to lose or fear? —
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

For, look you, my horse is good to prance
A right fair measure in this war-dance,
Before the eyes of Philip of France; —
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

And sometime it may hap, perdie,
While my new towers stand up three and three,
And my hall gets painted fair to see —
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite —*

That folks may say: "Times change, by the rood,
For Lambert, banneret of the wood,
Has heaps of food and firewood; —
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

"And wonderful eyes, too, under the hood
Of a damsel of right noble blood:"
St. Ives, for Lambert of the wood! —
*Ah! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.*

Pub. 1858.

## THE HAYSTACK IN THE FLOODS

Had she come all the way for this,
To part at last without a kiss?
Yea, had she borne the dirt and rain
That her own eyes might see him slain
Beside the haystack in the floods?

Along the dripping leafless woods,
The stirrup touching either shoe,
She rode astride as troopers do;
With kirtle kilted to her knee,
To which the mud splashed wretchedly;
And the wet dripped from every tree
Upon her head and heavy hair,
And on her eyelids broad and fair;
The tears and rain ran down her face.
By fits and starts they rode apace,
And very often was his place

Far off from her; he had to ride
Ahead, to see what might betide
When the roads crossed; and sometimes, when
There rose a murmuring from his men,
Had to turn back with promises;
Ah me! she had but little ease;
And often for pure doubt and dread
She sobbed, made giddy in the head
By the swift riding; while, for cold,
Her slender fingers scarce could hold
The wet reins; yea, and scarcely, too,
She felt the foot within her shoe
Against the stirrup: all for this,
To part at last without a kiss
Beside the haystack in the floods.

For when they neared that old soaked hay,
They saw across the only way
That Judas, Godmar, and the three
Red running lions dismally
Grinned from his pennon, under which,
In one straight line along the ditch,
They counted thirty heads.

So then,
While Robert turned round to his men,
She saw at once the wretched end,
And, stooping down, tried hard to rend
Her coif [1] the wrong way from her head,
And hid her eyes; while Robert said:
"Nay, love, 'tis scarcely two to one,
At Poictiers where we made them run
So fast — why, sweet my love, good cheer.
The Gascon frontier is so near,
Nought after this."

But, "O," she said,
"My God! my God! I have to tread
The long way back without you; then
The court at Paris; those six men;
The gratings of the Chatelet;
The swift Seine on some rainy day
Like this, and people standing by,
And laughing, while my weak hands try
To recollect how strong men swim.
All this, or else a life with him,
For which I should be damned at last,
Would God that this next hour were past!"

He answered not, but cried his cry,
"St. George for Marny!" cheerily;
And laid his hand upon her rein.
Alas! no man of all his train
Gave back that cheery cry again;
And, while for rage his thumb beat fast
Upon his sword-hilts, some one cast
About his neck a kerchief long,
And bound him.

Then they went alon
To Godmar; who said: "Now, Jehane,
Your lover's life is on the wane
So fast, that, if this very hour
You yield not as my paramour,
He will not see the rain leave off —
Nay, keep your tongue from gibe and scoff,
Sir Robert, or I slay you now."

She laid her hand upon her brow,
Then gazed upon the palm, as though
She thought her forehead bled, and — "No
She said, and turned her head away,
As there were nothing else to say,
And everything were settled: red
Grew Godmar's face from chin to head:
"Jehane, on yonder hill there stands
My castle, guarding well my lands:
What hinders me from taking you,
And doing that I list to do
To your fair wilful body, while
Your knight lies dead?"

A wicked smile
Wrinkled her face, her lips grew thin,
A long way out she thrust her chin:
"You know that I should strangle you
While you were sleeping; or bite through
Your throat, by God's help — ah!" she said
"Lord Jesus, pity your poor maid!
For in such wise they hem me in,
I cannot choose but sin and sin,
Whatever happens: yet I think
They could not make me eat or drink,
And so should I just reach my rest."
"Nay, if you do not my behest,
O Jehane! though I love you well,"
Said Godmar, "would I fail to tell
All that I know." "Foul lies," she said.
"Eh? lies my Jehane? by God's head,
At Paris folks would deem them true!
Do you know, Jehane, they cry for you,
'Jehane the brown! Jehane the brown!
Give us Jehane to burn or drown!' —
Eh — gag me Robert! — sweet my friend,
This were indeed a piteous end
For those long fingers, and long feet,
And long neck, and smooth shoulders sweet
An end that few men would forget
That saw it — So, an hour yet:
Consider, Jehane, which to take
Of life or death!"

So, scarce awake,
Dismounting, did she leave that place,
And totter some yards: with her face

[1] tight-fitting cap.

Turned upward to the sky she lay,
Her head on a wet heap of hay,
And fell asleep: and while she slept,
And did not dream, the minutes crept
Round to the twelve again; but she,
Being waked at last, sighed quietly,
And strangely childlike came, and said:
"I will not." Straightway Godmar's head,
As though it hung on strong wires, turned
Most sharply round, and his face burned.

For Robert — both his eyes were dry,
He could not weep, but gloomily
He seemed to watch the rain; yea, too,
His lips were firm; he tried once more
To touch her lips; she reached out, sore
And vain desire so tortured them,
The poor grey lips, and now the hem
Of his sleeve brushed them.

With a start
Up Godmar rose, thrust them apart;
From Robert's throat he loosed the bands
Of silk and mail; with empty hands
Held out, she stood and gazed, and saw,
The long bright blade without a flaw
Glide out from Godmar's sheath, his hand
In Robert's hair; she saw him bend
Back Robert's head; she saw him send
The thin steel down; the blow told well,
Right backward the knight Robert fell,
And moaned as dogs do, being half dead,
Unwitting, as I deem: so then
Godmar turned grinning to his men,
Who ran, some five or six, and beat
His head to pieces at their feet.

Then Godmar turned again and said:
"So, Jehane, the first fitte[1] is read!
Take note, my lady, that your way
Lies backward to the Chatelet!"
She shook her head and gazed awhile
At her cold hands with a rueful smile,
As though this thing had made her mad.

This was the parting that they had
Beside the haystack in the floods.

Pub. 1858.

## AN APOLOGY

PROLOGUE TO THE EARTHLY PARADISE

Of Heaven or Hell I have no power to sing,
I cannot ease the burden of your fears,
Or make quick-coming death a little thing,
Or bring again the pleasure of past years,
Nor for my words shall ye forget your tears,
Or hope again for aught that I can say,
The idle singer of an empty day.[1]

But rather, when, aweary of your mirth,
From full hearts still unsatisfied ye sigh,
And, feeling kindly unto all the earth,
Grudge every minute as it passes by,
Made the more mindful that the sweet days die —
Remember me a little then, I pray,
The idle singer of an empty day.

The heavy trouble, the bewildering care
That weighs us down who live and earn our bread,
These idle verses have no power to bear;
So let me sing of names rememberèd,
Because they, living not, can ne'er be dead,
Or long time take their memory quite away
From us poor singers of an empty day.

Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due time,
Why should I strive to set the crooked straight?
Let it suffice me that my murmuring rhyme
Beats with light wing against the ivory gate,
Telling a tale not too importunate
To those who in the sleepy region stay,
Lulled by the singer of an empty day.

Folk say, a wizard to a northern king
At Christmas-tide such wondrous things did show,
That through one window men beheld the spring,
And through another saw the summer glow,
And through a third the fruited vines a-row,
While still, unheard, but in its wonted way,
Piped the drear wind of that December day.

So with this Earthly Paradise it is,
If ye will read aright, and pardon me,
Who strive to build a shadowy isle of bliss
Midmost the beating of the steely sea,
Where tossed about all hearts of men must be;
Whose ravening monsters mighty men shall slay,
Not the poor singer of an empty day.

Pub. 1868.

1 canto.

1 Note that the stanza is the rime royal.

## L'ENVOI *to* THE EARTHLY PARADISE

Here are we for the last time face to face,
Thou and I, Book, before I bid thee speed
Upon thy perilous journey to that place
For which I have done on thee pilgrim's weed,
Striving to get thee all things for thy need —
I love thee, whatso time or men may say
Of the poor singer of an empty day.

Good reason why I love thee, e'en if thou
Be mocked or clean forgot as time wears on;
For ever as thy fashioning did grow,
Kind word and praise because of thee I won
From those without whom were my world all gone,
My hope fallen dead, my singing cast away,
And I set soothly in an empty day.

I love thee; yet this last time must it be
That thou must hold thy peace and I must speak,
Lest if thou babble I begin to see
Thy gear too thin, thy limbs and heart too weak,
To find the land thou goest forth to seek —
Though what harm if thou die upon the way,
Thou idle singer of an empty day?

But though this land desired thou never reach,
Yet folk who know it mayst thou meet, or death;
Therefore a word unto thee would I teach
To answer these, who, noting thy weak breath,
Thy wandering eyes, thy heart of little faith,
May make thy fond desire a sport and play
Mocking the singer of an empty day.

That land's name, say'st thou? and the road thereto?
Nay, Book, thou mockest, saying thou know'st it not;
Surely no book of verse I ever knew
But ever was the heart within him hot
To gain the Land of Matters Unforgot —
There, now we both laugh — as the whole world may,
At us poor singers of an empty day.

Nay, let it pass, and harken! Hast thou heard
That therein I believe I have a friend,
Of whom for love I may not be afeared?
It is to him indeed I bid thee wend;
Yea, he perchance may meet thee ere the end,
Dying so far off from the hedge of bay,
Thou idle singer of an empty day!

Well, think of him, I bid thee, on the road,
And if it hap that midst of thy defeat,
Fainting beneath thy follies' heavy load,
My Master, GEOFFREY CHAUCER, thou do meet,
Then shalt thou win a space of rest full sweet;
Then be thou bold, and speak the words I say
The idle singer of an empty day!

"O Master, O thou great of heart and tongue,
Thou well mayst ask me why I wander here
In raiment rent of stories oft besung!
But of thy gentleness draw thou anear,
And then the heart of one who held thee dear
Mayst thou behold! So near as that I lay
Unto the singer of an empty day.

"For this he ever said, who sent me forth
To seek a place amid thy company:
That howsoever little was my worth,
Yet was he worth e'en just so much as I;
He said that rhyme hath little skill to lie;
Nor feigned to cast his worser part away;
In idle singing for an empty day.

"I have beheld him tremble oft enough
At things he could not choose but trust to me,
Although he knew the world was wise and rough;
And never did he fail to let me see
His love, — his folly and faithlessness, maybe;
And still in turn I gave him voice to pray
Such prayers as cling about an empty day.

"Thou, keen-eyed, reading me, mayst read him through,
For surely little is there left behind;
No power great deeds unnameable to do;
No knowledge for which words he may not find,
No love of things as vague as autumn wind —
Earth of the earth lies hidden by my clay,
The idle singer of an empty day!

"Children we twain are, saith he, late made wise
In love, but in all else most childish still,
And seeking still the pleasure of our eyes,

And what our ears with sweetest sounds may fill;
Not fearing Love, lest these things he should kill;
Howe'er his pain by pleasure doth he lay,
Making a strange tale of an empty day.

"Death have we hated, knowing not what it meant;
Life have we loved, through green leaf and through sere,
Though still the less we knew of its intent;
The Earth and Heaven through countless year on year,
Slow changing, were to us but curtains fair,
Hung around about a little room, where play
Weeping and laughter of man's empty day.

'O Master, if thine heart could love us yet,
Spite of things left undone, and wrongly done,
Some place in loving hearts then should we get,
For thou, sweet-souled, didst never stand alone,
But knew'st the joy and woe of many an one—
By lovers dead, who live through thee, we pray,
Help thou us singers of an empty day!"

Fearest thou, Book, what answer thou mayst gain
Lest he should scorn thee, and thereof thou die?
Nay, it shall not be. — Thou mayst toil in vain,
And never draw the House of Fame anigh;
Yet he and his shall know whereof we cry,
Shall call it not ill done to strive to lay
The ghosts that crowd about life's empty day.

Then let the others go! and if indeed
In some old garden thou and I have wrought,
And made fresh flowers spring up from hoarded seed,
And fragrance of old days and deeds have brought
Back to folk weary; all was not for nought.
— No little part it was for me to play —
The idle singer of an empty day.

Pub. 1870.

## ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE (1837–1909)

By birth, Swinburne was an aristocrat. His father, an admiral in the British navy, was the son of a baronet, his mother the daughter of an earl. He was born in London, April 5, 1837; reared by his mother and his father's father, who together gave him rigid training in Italian and French; and formally educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford, where he added a thorough knowledge of Latin and Greek literature to his accomplishments. To a non-conformer like Swinburne, a voracious reader, a sensitive and very able student whose passion already was the study and practice of poetic expression, formal education, like any restraint, was an irritant. After four years at Oxford, during the last terms of which his attendance was desultory, he left without a degree. The very next year, 1860, he published a volume containing two poetic plays, *The Queen Mother*, and *Rosamund*. In 1864, he made an extended trip on the Continent, meeting and spending much time with Landor in Florence. Returning to London in 1865, he took up his residence with Meredith and Rossetti in Cheyne Row, Chelsea, London. Morris, Burne-Jones, and other Pre-Raphaelites became his close friends. In this year he published two volumes, each containing a poetic play, *Atalanta in Calydon* and *Chastelard*. The first established Swinburne as a poet; the second play (the first in a trilogy, later completed by *Bothwell*, 1874, and *Mary Stuart*, 1881) was condemned by many as immoral. The following year, 1866, all England became aroused by the publication of his *Poems and Ballads*. Many readers were thrilled by his remarkable skill in versifying; more were shocked by what they considered his immorality. In 1878, he published a second, and in 1889, a third series of *Poems and Ballads*. Among his other works may be mentioned *Erechtheus*, 1876, and *Tristram of Lyonnesse*, 1882. As a critic, Swinburne wrote studies of Blake, 1867, Chapman, 1875, Shakespeare, 1879, Victor Hugo, 1886, and Ben Jonson, 1889. Most of his criticism is impressionistic.

As a man, Swinburne was erratic. He lived a Bohemian life in London, associating mainly with the Pre-Raphaelites, the influence of whose romanticism and modern social ideas is evident in his writings. When Swinburne was in danger of wasting himself in unrestrained living, Theodore Watts-Dunton brought him to his own home in Putney. There he lived for thirty-odd years until his death in 1909. He never married.

As a poet, Swinburne is approached by few in his remarkable mastery of technique. None of his contemporaries could make words sing as he could. At times his facility in verse is almost fatal to any ideas that he may have had in mind. The charge, however, that his poems are

merely full of sound, signifying nothing, is greatly exaggerated. In Swinburne can be found t nineteenth-century struggle over religion, indignant cries at the existing social order, and abo all, a deep feeling for nature, especially the sea.

Harpers publish the complete works of Swinburne. For his life, see the *Dictionary of Natio Biography.*

## CHORUSES *from* ATALANTA IN CALYDON

1

When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces,
The mother of months [1] in meadow or plain
Fills the shadows and windy places
With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;
And the brown bright nightingale [2] amorous
Is half assuaged for Itylus,[3]
For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,
The tongueless vigil and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of quivers,
Maiden most perfect,[4] lady of light,
With a noise of winds and many rivers,
With a clamor of waters, and with might;
Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,
Over the splendor and speed of thy feet;
For the faint east quickens, the wan west shivers,
Round the feet of the day and the feet of the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to her,
Fold our hands round her knees, and cling?
O that man's heart were as fire and could spring to her,
Fire, or the strength of the streams that spring!
For the stars and the winds are unto her
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;
For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,
And the southwest-wind and the west-wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins;
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins;
And time remembered is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,
Ripe grasses trammel a traveling foot,
The faint fresh flame of the young ye flushes
From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;
And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,
And the oat is heard above the lyre,
And the hoofed heel of a satyr crushes
The chestnut-husk at the chestnut-root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,
Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,
Follows with dancing and fills with delight
The Mænad [1] and the Bassarid; [1]
And soft as lips that laugh and hide,
The laughing leaves of the trees divide,
And screen from seeing and leave in sight
The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair
Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes;
The wild vine slipping down leaves bare
Her bright breast shortening into sighs;
The wild vine slips with the weight of it leaves,
But the berried ivy catches and cleaves
To the limbs that glitter, the feet tha scare
The wolf that follows, the fawn that flie

2

Before the beginning of years
There came to the making of man
Time, with a gift of tears;
Grief, with a glass that ran;
Pleasure, with pain for leaven;
Summer, with flowers that fell;
Remembrance fallen from heaven,
And madness risen from hell;
Strength without hands to smite;
Love that endures for a breath:
Night, the shadow of light,
And life, the shadow of death.

And the high gods took in hand
Fire, and the falling of tears,
And a measure of sliding sand
From under the feet of the years;

1 Diana or Artemis, goddess of the moon as well as of the chase.

2 Philomela, who was changed into a nightingale when King Tereus pursued her.

3 Son of Tereus and Procne. Procne killed him and fed him to his father when Tereus violated her sister, Philomela.

4 Diana.

1 Bacchantes, female devotees of Bacchus and Pan.

And froth and drift of the sea;
And dust of the laboring earth;
And bodies of things to be
In the houses of death and of birth;
And wrought with weeping and laughter,
And fashioned with loathing and love,
With life before and after
And death beneath and above,
For a day and a night and a morrow,
That his strength might endure for a span
With travail and heavy sorrow,
The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the south
They gathered as unto strife;
They breathed upon his mouth,
They filled his body with life;
Eyesight and speech they wrought
For the veils of the soul therein,
A time for labor and thought,
A time to serve and to sin:
They gave him light in his ways,
And love, and a space for delight,
And beauty and length of days,
And night, and sleep in the night.
His speech is a burning fire;
With his lips he travaileth;
In his heart is a blind desire,
In his eyes foreknowledge of death;
He weaves, and is clothed with derision;
Sows, and he shall not reap;
His life is a watch or a vision
Between a sleep and a sleep.

Pub. 1865.

## HYMN TO PROSERPINE [1]

AFTER THE PROCLAMATION IN ROME OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

*Vicisti, Galilæe* [2]

I have lived long enough, having seen one thing, that love hath an end;
Goddess and maiden and queen, be near me now and befriend.
Thou art more than the day or the morrow, the seasons that laugh or that weep;
For these give joy and sorrow; but thou, Proserpina, sleep.
Sweet is the treading of wine, and sweet the feet of the dove;
But a goodlier gift is thine than foam of the grapes or love.

Yea, is not even Apollo, with hair and harp-string of gold,
A bitter God to follow, a beautiful God to behold?
I am sick of singing: the bays burn deep and chafe: I am fain
To rest a little from praise and grievous pleasure and pain.
For the Gods we know not of, who give us our daily breath,
We know they are cruel as love or life, and lovely as death.
O Gods dethroned and deceased, cast forth, wiped out in a day!
From your wrath is the world released, redeemed from your chains, men say.
New Gods are crowned in the city; their flowers have broken your rods;
They are merciful, clothed with pity, the young compassionate Gods.
But for me their new device is barren, the days are bare;
Things long past over suffice, and men forgotten that were.
Time and the Gods are at strife; ye dwell in the midst thereof,
Draining a little life from the barren breasts of love.
I say to you, cease, take rest; yea, I say to you all be at peace,
Till the bitter milk of her breast and the barren bosom shall cease.
Wilt thou yet take all, Galilean? but these thou shalt not take,
The laurel, the palms and the pæan, the breast of the nymphs in the brake;
Breasts more soft than a dove's, that tremble with tenderer breath;
And all the wings of the Loves, and all the joy before death;
All the feet of the hours that sound as a single lyre,
Dropped and deep in the flowers, with strings that flicker like fire,
More than these wilt thou give, things fairer than all these things?
Nay, for a little we live, and life hath mutable wings.
A little while and we die; shall life not thrive as it may?
For no man under the sky lives twice, outliving his day.
And grief is a grievous thing, and a man hath enough of his tears:
Why should he labor, and bring fresh grief to blacken his years?
Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean; the

1 Proserpine or Persephone was queen of the lower regions.
2 Thou hast conquered, O Galilean.

world has grown gray from thy breath;
We have drunken of things Lethean, and fed on the fulness of death.
Laurel is green for a season, and love is sweet for a day;
But love grows bitter with treason, and laurel outlives not May.
Sleep, shall we sleep after all? for the world is not sweet in the end;
For the old faiths loosen and fall, the new years ruin and rend.
Fate is a sea without shore, and the soul is a rock that abides;
But her ears are vexed with the roar and her face with the foam of the tides.
O lips that the live blood faints in, the leavings of rack and rods!
O ghastly glories of saints, dead limbs of gibbeted Gods!
Though all men abase them before you in spirits, and all knees bend,
I kneel not neither adore you, but standing, look to the end.
All delicate days and pleasant, all spirits and sorrows are cast
Far out with the foam of the present that sweeps to the surf of the past:
Where beyond the extreme sea-wall, and between the remote sea-gates,
Waste water washes, and tall ships founder, and deep death waits:
Where, mighty with deepening sides, clad about with the seas as with wings,
And impelled of invisible tides, fulfilled of unspeakable things,
White-eyed and poisonous-finned, shark-toothed and serpentine-curled,
Rolls, under the whitening wind of the future, the wave of the world.
The depths stand naked in sunder behind it, the storms flee away;
In the hollow before it the thunder is taken and snared as a prey;
In its sides is the north-wind bound; and its salt is of all men's tears;
With light of ruin, and sound of changes, and pulse of years:
With travail of day after day, and with trouble of hour upon hour;
And bitter as blood is the spray; and the crests are as fangs that devour:
And its vapor and storm of its steam as the sighing of spirits to be;
And its noise as the noise in a dream; and its depth as the roots of the sea:
And the height of its head as the height of the utmost stars of the air:
And the ends of the earth at the might there tremble, and time is made bare.
Will ye bridle the deep sea with reins, will chasten the high sea with rods?
Will ye take her to chain her with chain who is older than all ye Gods?
All ye as a wind shall go by, as a fire shall pass and be past;
Ye are Gods, and behold, ye shall die, and t waves be upon you at last.
In the darkness of time, in the deeps of t years, in the changes of things,
Ye shall sleep as a slain man sleeps, and t world shall forget you for kings.
Though the feet of thine high priests tre where thy lords and our forefathe trod,
Though these that were Gods are dead, a thou being dead art a God,
Though before thee the throned Cythere be fallen, and hidden her head,
Yet thy kingdom shall pass, Galilean, t dead shall go down to the dead.
Of the maiden thy mother men sing as goddess with grace clad around;
Thou art throned where another was kin where another was queen she crowned.
Yea, once we had sight of another: but no she is queen, say these.
Not as thine, not as thine was our mother, blossom of flowering seas,
Clothed round with the world's desire with raiment, and fair as the foam,
And fleeter than kindled fire, and a goddes and mother of Rome.
For thine came pale and a maiden, and sist to sorrow; but ours,
Her deep hair heavily laden with odor, an color of flowers,
White rose of the rose-white water, a silv splendor, a flame,
Bent down into us that besought her, an earth grew sweet with her name.
For thine came weeping, a slave amor slaves, and rejected; but she
Came flushed from the full-flushed wave, an imperial, her foot on the sea.
And the wonderful waters knew her, th winds and the viewless ways,
And the roses grew rosier, and bluer the sea blue stream of the bays.
Ye are fallen, our lords, by what token? w wist that ye should not fall.
Ye were all so fair that are broken; and on more fair than ye all.
But I turn to her still, having seen she sha surely abide in the end;

Goddess and maiden and queen, be near me now and befriend.
O daughter of earth, of my mother, her crown and blossom of birth,
I am also, I also thy brother; I go as I came unto earth.
In the night where thine eyes are as moons are in heaven, the night where thou art,
Where the silence is more than all tunes, where sleep overflows from the heart,
Where the poppies are sweet as the rose in our world, and the red rose is white,
And the wind falls faint as it blows with the fume of the flowers of the night,
And the murmur of spirits that sleep in the shadow of Gods from afar
Grows dim in thine ears and deep as the deep dim soul of a star,
In the sweet low light of thy face, under heavens untrod by the sun,
Let my soul with their souls find place, and forget what is done and undone.
Thou art more than the Gods who number the days of our temporal breath;
For these give labor and slumber; but thou, Proserpina, death.
Therefore now at thy feet I abide for a season in silence. I know
I shall die as my fathers died, and sleep as they sleep; even so.
For the glass of the years is brittle wherein we gaze for a span;
A little soul for a little bears up this corpse which is man.[1]
So long I endure, no longer; and laugh not again, neither weep.
For there is no God found stronger than death; and death is a sleep.

## A MATCH

This poem is a kind of *rondeau* or *rondel*, the chief characteristic of which is the repetition, at the end of each stanza, of the first two lines.

If love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf,
Our lives would grow together
In sad or singing weather,
Blown fields or flowerful closes,
Green pleasure or gray grief;
If love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,
And love were like the tune,
With double sound and single
Delight our lips would mingle,
With kisses glad as birds are
That get sweet rain at noon;
If I were what the words are
And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death,
We'd shine and snow together
Ere March made sweet the weather
With daffodil and starling
And hours of fruitful breath;
If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy,
We'd play for lives and seasons
With loving looks and treasons
And tears of night and morrow
And laughs of maid and boy;
If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May,
We'd throw with leaves for hours
And draw for days with flowers,
Till day like night were shady
And night were bright like day;
If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May.

If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain,
We'd hunt down love together,
Pluck out his flying-feather,
And teach his feet a measure,
And find his mouth a rein;
If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain.

## A BALLAD OF BURDENS

This poem is a *ballade*, a French verse-form, which usually consists of three or more eight-line stanzas rhyming *ababbcbc* and a refrain or *envoy* of four lines, *bcbc*. The last line of each stanza is always the same, and often the same rhymes for *a*, *b*, and *c* are kept throughout the *ballade*. Swinburne allows himself variations.

The burden of fair women. Vain delight,
And love self-slain in some sweet shameful way,
And sorrowful old age that comes by night
As a thief comes that has no heart by day.

[1] ψυχάριον εἶ βαστάζον νεκρόν. EPICTETUS.

And change that finds fair cheeks and leaves them gray,
And weariness that keeps awake for hire,
And grief that says what pleasure used to say:
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bought kisses. This is sore,
A burden without fruit in childbearing;
Between the nightfall and the dawn threescore,
Threescore between the dawn and evening.
The shuddering in thy lips, the shuddering
In thy sad eyelids tremulous like fire,
Makes love seem shameful and a wretched thing
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of sweet speeches. Nay, kneel down,
Cover thy head, and weep: for verily
These market-men that buy thy white and brown
In the last days shall take no thought for thee;
In the last days like earth thy face shall be,
Yea, like sea-marsh made thick with brine and mire,
Sad with sick leavings of the sterile sea:
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of long living. Thou shalt fear
Waking, and sleeping mourn upon thy bed;
And say at night, "Would God the day were here!"
And say at dawn, "Would God the day were dead!"
With weary days thou shalt be clothed and fed,
And wear remorse of heart for thine attire,
Pain for thy girdle, and sorrow upon thine head:
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bright colors. Thou shalt see
Gold tarnished, and the gray above the green;
And as the thing thou seest thy face shall be,
And no more as the thing beforetime seen.
And thou shalt say of mercy, "It hath been;"
And living, watch the old lips and loves expire,
And talking, tears shall take thy brea
between:
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of sad sayings. In that day
Thou shalt tell all thy days and hours, a
tell
Thy times and ways and words of love, a
say
How one was dear, and one desirable,
And sweet was life to hear and sweet
smell;
But now with lights reverse the old hou
retire,
And the last hour is shod with fire fro
hell:
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of four seasons. Rain in sprin
White rain and wind among the tend
trees;
A summer of green sorrows gathering;
Rank autumn in a mist of miseries,
With sad face set towards the year, th
sees
The charred ash drop out of the droppi
pyre,
And winter wan with many maladies;
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of dead faces. Out of sight
And out of love, beyond the reach
hands,
Changed in the changing of the dark an
light,
They walk and weep about the barre
lands
Where no seed is, nor any garner stands
Where in short breaths the doubtful da
respire,
And time's turned glass lets through th
sighing sands:
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of much gladness. Life a
lust
Forsake thee, and the face of thy d
light;
And underfoot the heavy hour strews dust,
And overhead strange weathers burn an
bite;
And where the red was, lo the bloodles
white;
And where truth was, the likeness of
liar;
And where day was, the likeness of th
night:
This is the end of every man's desire.

L'ENVOY

Princes,[1] and ye whom pleasure quickeneth,
Heed well this rhyme before your pleasure tire;
For life is sweet, but after life is death.
This is the end of every man's desire.

## THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

Here, where the world is quiet,
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams,
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
And men that laugh and weep,
Of what may come hereafter
For men that sow to reap:
I am weary of days and hours,
Blown buds of barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers,
And every thing but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor,
And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labor,
Weak ships and spirits steer;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither;
But no such winds blow hither,
And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,
No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes
Where no leaf blooms or blushes
Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than Love's, who fears to greet her,
To men that mix and meet her
For many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
She waits for all men born;
Forgets the earth her mother,[1]
The life of fruits and corn;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her, and follow
Where summer song rings hollow,
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
The old loves with wearier wings,
And all dead years draw thither,
And all disastrous things;
Dead dreams of days forsaken,
Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
And joy was never sure;
To-day will die to-morrow;
Time stoops to no man's lure;
And love, grown faint and fretful,
With lips but half regretful
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
Whatever gods may be
That no life lives forever;
That dead men rise up never;
That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
Nor any change of light;
Nor sound of waters shaken,
Nor any sound or sight;

[1] Originally, in the *ballade*, the envoy was a kind of dedication, usually addressed to a prince.

[1] Proserpine's mother was Demeter, goddess of fruitfulness.

Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal:
Only the sleep eternal
In an eternal night.

Pub. 1866.

## HERTHA [1]

I am that which began;
Out of me the years roll;
Out of me God and man;
I am equal and whole;
God changes, and man, and the form of them
bodily; I am the soul.

Before ever land was,
Before ever the sea,
Or soft hair of the grass,
Or fair limbs of the tree,
Or the flesh-colored fruit of my branches, I
was, and thy soul was in me.

First life on my sources
First drifted and swam;
Out of me are the forces
That save it or damn;
Out of me man and woman, and wild-beast
and bird; before God was, I am.

Beside or above me
Nought is there to go;
Love or unlove me,
Unknow me or know,
I am that which unloves me and loves; I am
stricken, and I am the blow.

I the mark that is missed
And the arrows that miss,
I the mouth that is kissed
And the breath in the kiss,
The search, and the sought, and the seeker,
the soul and the body that is.

I am that thing which blesses
My spirit elate;
That which caresses
With hands uncreate
My limbs unbegotten that measure the
length of the measure of fate.

But what thing dost thou now,
Looking Godward, to cry
"I am I, thou art thou,
I am low, thou art high"?
I am thou, whom thou seekest to find him;
find thou but thyself, thou art I.

I the grain and the furrow,
The plough-cloven clod
And the ploughshare drawn thoroug
The germ and the sod,
The deed and the doer, the seed and th
sower, the dust which is God.

Hast thou known how I fashioned the
Child, underground?
Fire that impassioned thee,
Iron that bound,
Dim changes of water, what thing of a
these hast thou known of or found?

Canst thou say in thine heart
Thou hast seen with thine eyes
With what cunning of art
Thou wast wrought in what wise,
By what force of what stuff thou wast shaper
and shown on my breast to the skies

Who hath given, who hath sold it thee
Knowledge of me?
Has the wilderness told it thee?
Hast thou learnt of the sea?
Hast thou communed in spirit with night
have the winds taken counsel wit
thee?

Have I set such a star
To show light on thy brow
That thou sawest from afar
What I show to thee now?
Have ye spoken as brethren together, the sur
and the mountains and thou?

What is here, dost thou know it?
What was, hast thou known?
Prophet nor poet
Nor tripod nor throne
Nor spirit nor flesh can make answer, bu
only thy mother alone.

Mother, not maker,
Born, and not made;
Though her children forsake her,
Allured or afraid,
Praying prayers to the God of their fashion
she stirs not for all that have prayed

A creed is a rod,
And a crown is of night;
But this thing is God,
To be man with thy might,
To grow straight in the strength of thy
spirit, and live out thy life as the
light.

[1] The Teutonic earth-goddess.

I am in thee to save thee,
As my soul in thee saith;
Give thou, as I gave thee,
Thy life-blood and breath,
Green leaves of thy labor, white flowers of thy thought, and red fruit of thy death.

Be the ways of thy giving
As mine were to thee;
The free life of thy living,
Be the gift of it free;
Not as servant to lord, nor as master to slave, shalt thou give thee to me.

O children of banishment,
Souls overcast,
Were the lights ye see vanish meant
Always to last,
Ye would know not the sun overshining the shadows and stars overpast.

I that saw where ye trod
The dim paths of the night
Set the shadow called God
In your skies to give light;
But the morning of manhood is risen, and the shadowless soul is in sight.

The tree many-rooted
That swells to the sky
With frondage red-fruited,
The life-tree am I;
In the buds of your lives is the sap of my leaves: ye shall live and not die.

But the gods of your fashion
That take and that give,
In their pity and passion
That scourge and forgive,
They are worms that are bred in the bark that falls off; they shall die and not live.

My own blood is what stanches
The wounds in my bark;
Stars caught in my branches
Make day of the dark,
And are worshipped as suns till the sunrise shall tread out their fires as a spark.

Where dead ages hide under
The live roots of the tree,
In my darkness the thunder
Makes utterance of me;
In the clash of my boughs with each other ye hear the waves sound of the sea.

That noise is of Time,
As his feathers are spread
And his feet set to climb
Through the boughs overhead,
And my foliage rings round him and rustles, and branches are bent with his tread.

The storm-winds of ages
Blow through me and cease,
The war-wind that rages,
The spring-wind of peace,
Ere the breath of them roughen my tresses, ere one of my blossoms increase.

All sounds of all changes,
All shadows and lights
On the world's mountain-ranges
And stream-riven heights,
Whose tongue is the wind's tongue and language of storm-clouds on earth-shaking nights;

All forms of all faces,
All works of all hands
In unsearchable places
Of time-stricken lands,
All death and all life, and all reigns and all ruins, drop through me as sands.

Though sore be my burden
And more than ye know,
And my growth have no guerdon
But only to grow,
Yet I fail not of growing for lightnings above me or deathworms below.

These too have their part in me,
As I too in these;
Such fire is at heart in me,
Such sap is this tree's,
Which hath in it all sounds and all secrets of infinite lands and of seas.

In the spring-colored hours
When my mind was as May's
There brake forth of me flowers
By centuries of days,
Strong blossoms with perfume of manhood shot out from my spirit as rays.

And the sound of them springing
And smell of their shoots
Were as warmth and sweet singing
And strength to my roots;
And the lives of my children made perfect with freedom of soul were my fruits.

I bid you but be;
I have need not of prayer;
I have need of you free
As your mouths of mine air;
That my heart may be greater within me,
beholding the fruits of me fair.

More fair than strange fruit is
Of faiths ye espouse;
In me only the root is
That blooms in your boughs;
Behold now your God that ye made you, to
feed him with faith of your vows.

In the darkening and whitening
Abysses adored,
With dayspring and lightning
For lamp and for sword,
God thunders in heaven, and his angels are
red with the wrath of the Lord.

O my sons, O too dutiful
Toward gods not of me,
Was not I enough beautiful?
Was it hard to be free?
For behold, I am with you, am in you and
of you; look forth now and see.

Lo, winged with world's wonders,
With miracles shod,
With the fires of his thunders
For raiment and rod,
God trembles in heaven, and his angels are
white with the terror of God.

For his twilight is come on him,
His anguish is here;
And his spirits gaze dumb on him,
Grown gray from his fear;
And his hour taketh hold on him stricken,
the last of his infinite year.

Thought made him and breaks him,
Truth slays and forgives;
But to you, as time takes him,
This new thing it gives,
Even love, the beloved Republic, that feeds
upon freedom and lives.

For truth only is living,
Truth only is whole,
And the love of his giving
Man's polestar and pole;
Man, pulse of my centre, and fruit of my
body, and seed of my soul.

One birth of my bosom;
One beam of mine eye;
One topmost blossom
That scales the sky;
Man, equal and one with me, man that
made of me, man that is I.

Pub. 1871.

## TO WALT WHITMAN IN AMERICA

Send but a song oversea for us,
Heart of their hearts who are free,
Heart of their singer, to be for us
More than our singing can be;
Ours, in the tempest at error,
With no light but the twilight of terror;
Send us a song oversea!

Sweet-smelling of pine-leaves and grasses,
And blown as a tree through and throug
With the winds of the keen mountair
passes,
And tender as sun-smitten dew;
Sharp-tongued as the winter that shakes
The wastes of your limitless lakes,
Wide-eyed as the sea-line's blue.

O strong-winged soul with prophetic
Lips hot with the bloodbeats of song,
With tremor of heartstrings magnetic,
With thoughts as thunders in throng,
With consonant ardors of chords
That pierce men's souls as with swords
And hale them hearing along,

Make us too music, to be with us
As a word from a world's heart warm,
To sail the dark as a sea with us,
Full-sailed, outsinging the storm,
A song to put fire in our ears
Whose burning shall burn up tears,
Whose sign bid battle reform;

A note in the ranks of a clarion,
A word in the wind of cheer,
To consume as with lightning the carrion
That makes time foul for us here;
In the air that our dead things infest
A blast of the breath of the west,
Till east way as west way is clear.

Out of the sun beyond sunset,
From the evening whence morning shall be
With the rollers in measureless onset,
With the van of the storming sea,
With the world-wide wind, with the breath
That breaks ships driven upon death,
With the passion of all things free,

With the sea-steeds footless and frantic,
White myriads for death to bestride
In the charge of the ruining Atlantic
Where deaths by regiments ride,
With clouds and clamors of waters,
With a long note shriller than slaughter's
On the furrowless fields world-wide,

With terror, with ardor and wonder,
With the soul of the season that wakes
When the weight of a whole year's thunder
In the tidestream of autumn breaks,
Let the flight of the wide-winged word
Come over, come in and be heard,
Take form and fire for our sakes.

For a continent bloodless with travail
Here toils and brawls as it can,
And the web of it who shall unravel
Of all that peer on the plan;
Would fain grow men, but they grow not,
And fain be free, but they know not
One name for freedom and man?

One name, not twain for division;
One thing, not twain, from the birth;
Spirit and substance and vision,
Worth more than worship is worth;
Unbeheld, unadored, undivined,
The cause, the center, the mind,
The secret and sense of the earth.

Here as a weakling in irons,
Here as a weanling in bands,
As a prey that the stake-net environs,
Our life that we looked for stands:
And the man-child naked and dear,
Democracy, turns on us here
Eyes trembling with tremulous hands.

It sees not what season shall bring to it
Sweet fruit of its bitter desire;
Few voices it hears yet sing to it,
Few pulses of hearts reaspire;
Foresees not time, nor forehears
The noises of imminent years,
Earthquake, and thunder, and fire:

When crowned and weaponed and curbless
It shall walk without helm or shield
The bare burnt furrows and herbless
Of war's last flame-stricken field,
Till godlike, equal with time,
It stand in the sun sublime,
In the godhead of man revealed.

Round your people and over them
Light like raiment is drawn,
Close as a garment to cover them
Wrought not of mail nor of lawn;
Here, with hope hardly to wear,
Naked nations and bare
Swim, sink, strike out for the dawn.

Chains are here, and a prison,
Kings, and subjects, and shame.
If the God upon you be arisen,
How should our songs be the same?
How, in confusion of change,
How shall we sing, in a strange
Land, songs praising his name?

God is buried and dead to us,
Even the spirit of earth,
Freedom; so have they said to us,
Some with mocking and mirth,
Some with heartbreak and tears;
And a God without eyes, without ears,
Who shall sing of him, dead in the birth?

The earth-god Freedom, the lonely
Face lightening, the footprint unshod,
Not as one man crucified only
Nor scourged with but one life's rod;
The soul that is substance of nations,
Reincarnate with fresh generations;
The great god Man, which is God.

But in weariest of years and obscurest
Doth it live not at heart of all things,
The one God and one spirit, a purest
Life, fed from unstanchable springs?
Within love, within hatred it is,
And its seed in the stripe as the kiss,
And in slaves is the germ, and in kings.

Freedom we call it, for holier
Name of the soul's there is none;
Surelier its labors, if slowlier,
Than the meters of star or of sun;
Slowlier than life into breath,
Surelier than time into death,
It moves till its labor be done.

Till the motion be done and the measure
Circling through season and clime,
Slumber and sorrow and pleasure,
Vision of virtue and crime;
Till consummate with conquering eyes,
A soul disembodied, it rise
From the body transfigured of time.

Till it rise and remain and take station
With the stars of the worlds that rejoice;
Till the voice of its heart's exultation
Be as theirs an invariable voice;

By no discord of evil estranged,
By no pause, by no breach in it changed,
By no clash in the chord of its choice.

It is one with the world's generations,
With the spirit, the star, and the sod;
With the kingless and king-stricken nations,
With the cross, and the chain, and the rod;
The most high, the most secret, most lonely,
The earth-soul Freedom, that only
Lives, and that only is God.

## A BALLAD OF FRANÇOIS VILLON [1]

PRINCE OF ALL BALLAD-MAKERS

Bird of the bitter bright gray golden morn,
Scarce risen upon the dusk of dolorous years,
First of us all and sweetest singer born,
Whose far shrill note the world of new men hears
Cleave the cold shuddering shade as twilight clears;
When song new-born put off the old world's attire
And felt its tune on her changed lips expire,
Writ foremost on the roll of them that came
Fresh girt for service of the latter lyre,
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's name!

Alas, the joy, the sorrow, and the scorn,
That clothed thy life with hopes and sins and fears,
And gave thee stones for bread and tares for corn
And plume-plucked gaol-birds for thy starveling peers,
Till death clipt close their flight with shameful shears;
Till shifts came short and loves were hard to hire,
When lilt of song nor twitch of twangling wire
Could buy thee bread or kisses; when light fame
Spurned like a ball and haled through brake and briar,
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's name!

Poor splendid wings so frayed and soiled an
torn!
Poor kind wild eyes so dashed with ligh
quick tears!
Poor perfect voice, most blithe when mos
forlorn,
That rings athwart the sea whence no ma
steers,
Like joy-bells crossed with death-bells i
our ears!
What far delight has cooled the fierce desir
That, like some ravenous bird, was stron
to tire
On that frail flesh and soul consumed wit
flame,
But left more sweet than roses to respire,
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother'
name?

ENVOI

Prince of sweet songs made out of tears an
fire,
A harlot was thy nurse, a God thy sire;
Shame soiled thy song, and song assoile
thy shame.
But from thy feet now death has washed th
mire,
Love reads out first at head of all ou
quire,
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother'
name.

September, 1877.

## ON THE DEATHS OF THOMAS CARLYLE AND GEORGE ELIOT [1]

Two souls diverse out of our human sight
Pass, followed one with love and each with
wonder:
The stormy sophist with his mouth o
thunder,
Clothed with loud words and mantled in th
might
Of darkness and magnificence of night;
And one whose eye could smite the nigh
in sunder,
Searching if light or no light were there
under,
And found in love of loving-kindness light.
Duty divine and Thought with eyes of fire
Still following Righteousness with deep
desire
Shone sole and stern before her and above

1 The madcap poet of France.

1 George Eliot died December 22, 1880; Carlyle February 5, 1881.

Sure stars and sole to steer by; but more sweet
Shone lower the loveliest lamp for earthly feet, —
The light of little children, and their love.
Pub. 1882.

## HOPE AND FEAR

Beneath the shadow of dawn's aërial cope,
With eyes enkindled as the sun's own sphere,
Hope from the front of youth in godlike cheer
Looks Godward, past the shades where blind men grope
Round the dark door that prayers nor dreams can ope,
And makes for joy the very darkness dear
That gives her wide wings play; nor dreams that Fear
At noon may rise and pierce the heart of Hope.
Then, when the soul leaves off to dream and yearn,
May Truth first purge her eyesight to discern
What once being known leaves time no power to appal;
Till youth at last, ere yet youth be not, learn
The kind wise word that falls from years that fall —
"Hope thou not much, and fear thou not at all."
Pub. 1882.

## A CHILD'S FUTURE

What will it please you, my darling, hereafter to be?
Fame upon land will you look for, or glory by sea?
Gallant your life will be always, and all of it free.
Free as the wind when the heart of the twilight is stirred
Eastward, and sounds from the springs of the sunrise are heard:
Free — and we know not another as infinite word.

Darkness or twilight or sunlight may compass us round,
Hate may arise up against us, or hope may confound;
Love may forsake us; yet may not the spirit be bound.

Free in oppression of grief as in ardor of joy
Still may the soul be, and each to her strength as a toy:
Free in the glance of the man as the smile of the boy.

Freedom alone is the salt and the spirit that gives
Life, and without her is nothing that verily lives:
Death cannot slay her: she laughs upon death and forgives.

Brightest and hardiest of roses anear and afar
Glitters the blithe little face of you, round as a star:
Liberty bless you and keep you to be as you are.

England and liberty bless you and keep you to be
Worthy the name of their child and the sight of their sea;
Fear not at all; for a slave, if he fears not, is free.
Pub. 1882.

# WALTER PATER (1839–1894)

Walter Horatio Pater was born in London, August 4, 1839. He took his B.A. at Queen's College, Oxford, and, elected fellow of Brasenose in 1864, he spent the rest of his life in scholarly seclusion, writing about art and literature of which he was a brilliant critic. His *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* appeared in 1873, *Marius the Epicurean*, 1885, *Appreciations*, a volume of critical essays, in 1889. He died in 1894.

Pater applied the philosophy of Epicurus to modern life in the recognition that all we know is limited to the impressions which we receive of the world without, and that it is the part of wisdom to multiply these and cherish the most exquisite of them. This pagan attitude is in sharp contrast to Stevenson's strenuous defense of duty to others. Pater, however, experienced a revulsion to the Christian doctrine of sacrifice, which marks the dénouement of his chief work, *Marius the Epicurean*.

The standard biography of Pater is that by Thomas Wright. Shorter lives are those by Ferr Greenslet and A. C. Benson (English Men of Letters series). An excellent volume of selections that by E. E. Hale, Jr., (Henry Holt & Co.)

## STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF THE RENAISSANCE

### CONCLUSION

1873

This chapter was omitted from the second edition in 1877, but restored in 1888 with the note: "This brief Conclusion was omitted in the second edition of this book, as I conceived it might possibly mislead some of those young men into whose hands it might fall. On the whole, I have thought it best to reprint it here, with some slight changes which bring it closer to my original meaning." One of the changes, perhaps significant of some change in Pater's own attitude, is the introduction of the parenthetical clause, "at least among 'the children of this world,'" in the final paragraph.

*Λέγει που Ἡράκλειτος ὅτι πάντα Χωρει καὶ οὐδὲν μένει.*[1]

To regard all things and principles of things as inconstant modes or fashions has more and more become the tendency of modern thought. Let us begin with that which is without — our physical life. Fix upon it in one of its more exquisite intervals, — the moment, for instance, of delicious recoil from the flood of water in summer heat. What is the whole physical life in that moment but a combination of natural elements to which science gives their names? But these elements, phosphorus and lime and delicate fibres, are present not in the human body alone: we detect them in places most remote from it. Our physical life is a perpetual motion of them — the passage of the blood, the wasting and repairing of the lenses of the eye, the modification of the tissues of the brain by every ray of light and sound— processes which science reduces to simpler and more elementary forces. Like the elements of which we are composed, the action of these forces extends beyond us; it rusts iron and ripens corn. Far out on every side of us those elements are broadcast, driven by many forces; and birth and gesture and death and the springing of violets from the grave are but a few out of ten thousand resultant combinations. That clear, perpetual outline of face and limb is but an image of ours, under which we group them — a design in a web, the actual threads of which pass out beyond it. This at least of flame-like our life has, that it is but the concurrence, renewed from moment to moment, of forces parting sooner or later on their ways.

Or if we begin with the inward whirl of thought and feeling, the whirlpool is still more rapid, the flame more eager and devouring. There it is no longer the gradual darkening of the eye and fading of color from the wall, — the movement of the shore side, where the water flows down indeed though in apparent rest, — but the race of the mid-stream, a drift of momentary acts of sight and passion and thought. At first sight experience seems to bury us under a flood of external objects, pressing upon us with a sharp and importunate reality, calling us out of ourselves in a thousand forms of action. But when reflection begins to act upon those objects they are dissipated under its influence; the cohesive force seems suspended like a trick of magic; each object is loosed into a group of impressions — color, odor, texture — in the mind of the observer. And if we continue to dwell in thought on this world, not of objects in the solidity with which language invests them, but of impressions unstable, flickering, inconsistent, which burn and are extinguished with our consciousness of them, it contracts still further: the whole scope of observation is dwarfed to the narrow chamber of the individual mind. Experience, already reduced to a swarm of impressions, is ringed round for each one of us by that thick wall of personality through which no real voice has ever pierced on its way to us, or from us to that which we can only conjecture to be without. Every one of those impressions is the impression of the individual in his isolation, each mind keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world.

Analysis goes a step farther still, and assures us that those impressions of the individual mind to which, for each one of us experience dwindles down, are in perpetual flight; that each of them is limited by time, and that as time is infinitely divisible, each of them is infinitely divisible also; all that is actual in it being a single moment, gone while we try to apprehend it, of which it may ever be more truly said that it has ceased to be than that it is. To such a tremulous wisp constantly reforming itself on the stream, to a single sharp impression, with a sense in it —

1 "Heraclitus says that all things give way and nothing remains." (From Plato's *Cratylus*.)

a relic more or less fleeting — of such moments gone by, what is real in our life fines itself down. It is with this movement, with the passage and dissolution of impressions, images, sensations, that analysis leaves off — that continual vanishing away, that strange, perpetual weaving and unweaving of ourselves.

*Philosophiren*, says Novalis, *ist dephlegmatisiren, vivificiren.*[1] The service of philosophy, of speculative culture, towards the human spirit is to rouse, to startle it into sharp and eager observation. Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face; some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest; some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive for us, — but for that moment only. Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end. A counted number of pulses only is given to us of a variegated, dramatic life. How may we see in them all that is to be seen in them by the finest senses? How shall we pass most swiftly from point to point, and be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy?

To burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life. In a sense it might even be said that our failure is to form habits: for, after all, habit is relative to a stereotyped world, and meantime it is only the roughness of the eye that makes any two persons, things, situations, seem alike. While all melts under our feet, we may well catch at any exquisite passion, or any contribution to knowledge that seems by a lifted horizon to set the spirit free for a moment, or any stirring of the senses, strange dyes, strange colors, and curious odors, or work of the artist's hands, or the face of one's friend. Not to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us, and in the brilliancy of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways, is, on this short day of frost and sun, to sleep before evening. With this sense of the splendor of our experience and of its awful brevity, gathering all we are into one desperate effort to see and touch, we shall hardly have time to make theories about the things we see and touch. What we have to do is to be for ever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions, never acquiescing in a facile orthodoxy of Comte, or of Hegel, or of our own. Philosophical theories or ideas, as points of view, instruments of criticism, may help us to gather up what might otherwise pass unregarded by us. "Philosophy is the microscope of thought." The theory or idea or system which requires of us the sacrifice of any part of this experience, in consideration of some interest into which we cannot enter, or some abstract theory we have not identified with ourselves, or what is only conventional, has no real claim upon us.

One of the most beautiful passages in the writings of Rousseau is that in the sixth book of the *Confessions*, where he describes the awakening in him of the literary sense. An undefinable taint of death had always clung about him, and now in early manhood he believed himself smitten by mortal disease. He asked himself how he might make as much as possible of the interval that remained; and he was not biased by anything in his previous life when he decided that it must be by intellectual excitement, which he found just then in the clear, fresh writings of Voltaire. Well! we are all *condamnés*, as Victor Hugo says: we are all under sentence of death but with a sort of indefinite reprieve — *les hommes sont tous condamnés à mort avec des sursis indéfinis;* we have an interval, and then our place knows us no more. Some spend this interval in listlessness, some in high passions, the wisest — at least among "the children of this world" — in art and song. For our one chance lies in expanding that interval, in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time. Great passions may give us this quickened sense of life, ecstasy and sorrow of love, the various forms of enthusiastic activity, disinterested or otherwise, which come naturally to many of us. Only be sure it is passion — that it does yield you this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness. Of this wisdom, the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for art's sake, has most; for art comes to you professing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake.

## SANDRO BOTTICELLI

### 1870

This essay on the famous Italian painter of the fifteenth century appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, for August, 1870. It was re-

[1] "To be a philosopher is to cease to be sluggish, to become alive." Novalis was the pseudonym of Friedrich von Hardenberg (died 1801).

printed in *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, 1873.

In Leonardo's treatise on painting only one contemporary is mentioned by name — Sandro Botticelli. This preëminence may be due to chance only, but to some will rather appear a result of deliberate judgment; for people have begun to find out the charm of Botticelli's work, and his name, little known in the last century, is quietly becoming important. In the middle of the fifteenth century he had already anticipated much of that meditative subtlety, which is sometimes supposed peculiar to the great imaginative workmen of its close. Leaving the simple religion which had occupied the followers of Giotto for a century, and the simple naturalism which had grown out of it, a thing of birds and flowers only, he sought inspiration in what to him were works of the modern world, the writings of Dante and Boccaccio, and in new readings of his own of classical stories: or, if he painted religious incidents, painted them with an undercurrent of original sentiment, which touches you as the real matter of the picture through the veil of its ostensible subject. What is the peculiar sensation, what is the peculiar quality of pleasure, which his work has the property of exciting in us, and which we cannot get elsewhere? For this, especially when he has to speak of a comparatively unknown artist, is always the chief question which a critic has to answer.

In an age when the lives of artists were full of adventure, his life is almost colorless. Criticism, indeed, has cleared away much of the gossip which Vasari accumulated, has touched the legend of Lippo and Lucrezia, and rehabilitated the character of Andrea del Castagno. But in Botticelli's case there is no legend to dissipate. He did not even go by his true name: Sandro is a nickname, and his true name is Filipepi, Botticelli being only the name of the goldsmith who first taught him art. Only two things happened to him, two things which he shared with other artists: — he was invited to Rome to paint in the Sistine Chapel, and he fell in later life under the influence of Savonarola, passing apparently almost out of men's sight in a sort of religious melancholy, which lasted till his death in 1515, according to the received date. Vasari says that he plunged into the study of Dante, and even wrote a comment on the *Divine Comedy*. But it seems strange that he should have lived on inactive so long; and one almost wishes that some document might come to light, which fixing the date of his death earlier, might relieve one, in thinking of him, of his dejected old age.

He is before all things a poetical painter, blending the charm of story and sentiment the medium of the art of poetry, with the charm of line and color, the medium of abstract painting. So he becomes the illustrator of Dante. In a few rare examples of the edition of 1481, the blank spaces, left at the beginning of every canto for the hand of the illuminator, have been filled, as far as the nineteenth canto of the *Inferno*, with impressions of engraved plates, seemingly by way of experiment, for in the copy in the Bodleian Library, one of the three impressions it contains has been printed upside down, and much awry, in the midst of the luxurious printed page. Giotto, and the followers of Giotto, with their almost childish religious aim, had not learned to put that weight of meaning into outward things, light, color, everyday gesture, which the poetry of the *Divine Comedy* involves, and before the fifteenth century Dante could hardly have found an illustrator. Botticelli's illustrations are crowded with incident, blending with a naïve carelessness of pictorial propriety, three phases of the same scene into one plate. The grotesques, so often a stumbling-block to painters, who forget that the words of a poet, which only feebly present an image to the mind, must be lowered in key when translated into visible form, make one regret that he has not rather chosen for illustration the more subdued imagery of the *Purgatorio*. Yet in the scene of those who "go down quick into hell,' there is an inventive force about the fire taking hold on the upturned soles of the feet which proves that the design is no mere translation of Dante's words, but a true painter's vision; while the scene of the Centaurs wins one at once, for, forgetful of the actual circumstances of their appearance Botticelli has gone off with delight on the thought of the Centaurs themselves, bright, small creatures of the woodland, with arch baby faces and mignon forms, drawing tiny bows.

Botticelli lived in a generation of naturalists, and he might have been a mere naturalist among them. There are traces enough in his work of that alert sense of outward things, which, in the pictures of that period, fills the lawns with delicate living creatures, and the

hillsides with pools of water, and the pools of water with flowering reeds. But this was not enough for him; he is a visionary painter, and in his visionariness he resembles Dante. Giotto, the tried companion of Dante, Masaccio, Ghirlandajo even, do but transcribe, with more or less refining, the outward image; they are dramatic, not visionary painters; they are almost impassive spectators of the action before them. But the genius of which Botticelli is the type usurps the data before it as the exponent of ideas, moods, visions of its own; in this interest it plays fast and loose with those data, rejecting some and isolating others, and always combining them anew. To him, as to Dante, the scene, the color, the outward image or gesture, comes with all its incisive and importunate reality; but awakes in him, moreover, by some subtle law of his own structure, a mood which it awakes in no one else, of which it is the double or repetition, and which it clothes, that all may share it, with visible circumstance.

But he is far enough from accepting the conventional orthodoxy of Dante which, referring all human action to the simple formula of purgatory, heaven and hell, leaves an insoluble element of prose in the depths of Dante's poetry. One picture of his, with the portrait of the donor, Matteo Palmieri, below, had the credit or discredit of attracting some shadow of ecclesiastical censure. This Matteo Palmieri (two dim figures move under that name in contemporary history) was the reputed author of a poem, still unedited, "La Città Divina," which represented the human race as an incarnation of those angels who, in the revolt of Lucifer, were neither for Jehovah nor for His enemies, a fantasy of that earlier Alexandrian philosophy about which the Florentine intellect in that century was so curious. Botticelli's picture may have been only one of those familiar compositions in which religious reverie has recorded its impressions of the various forms of beatified existence — *Glorias*, as they were called, like that in which Giotto painted the portrait of Dante; but somehow it was suspected of embodying in a picture the wayward dream of Palmieri, and the chapel where it hung was closed. Artists so entire as Botticelli are usually careless about philosophical theories, even when the philosopher is a Florentine of the fifteenth century, and his work a poem in *terza rima*. But Botticelli, who wrote a commentary on Dante, and became the disciple of Savonarola, may well have let such theories come and go across him. True or false, the story interprets much of the peculiar sentiment with which he infuses his profane and sacred persons, comely, and in a certain sense like angels, but with a sense of displacement or loss about them — the wistfulness of exiles, conscious of a passion and energy greater than any known issue of them explains, which runs through all his varied work with a sentiment of ineffable melancholy.

So just what Dante scorns as unworthy alike of heaven and hell, Botticelli accepts, that middle world in which men take no side in great conflicts, and decide no great causes, and make great refusals. He thus sets for himself the limits within which art, undisturbed by any moral ambition, does its most sincere and surest work. His interest is neither in the untempered goodness of Angelico's saints, nor the untempered evil of Orcagna's *Inferno;* but with men and women, in their mixed and uncertain condition, always attractive, clothed sometimes by passion with a character of loveliness and energy, but saddened perpetually by the shadow upon them of the great things from which they shrink. His morality is all sympathy; and it is this sympathy, conveying into his work somewhat more than is usual of the true complexion of humanity, which makes him, visionary as he is, so forcible a realist.

It is this which gives to his Madonnas their unique expression and charm. He has worked out in them a distinct and peculiar type, definite enough in his own mind, for he has painted it over and over again, sometimes one might think almost mechanically, as a pastime during that dark period when his thoughts were so heavy upon him. Hardly any collection of note is without one of these circular pictures, into which the attendant angels depress their heads so naïvely. Perhaps you have sometimes wondered why those peevish-looking Madonnas, conformed to no acknowledged or obvious type of beauty, attract you more and more, and often come back to you when the Sistine Madonna and the Virgins of Fra Angelico are forgotten. At first, contrasting them with those, you may have thought that there was something in them mean or abject even, for the abstract lines of the face have little nobleness, and the color is wan. For with Botticelli she too, though she holds in her hands the "Desire of all nations," is one of those who are neither

for Jehovah nor for His enemies; and her choice is on her face. The white light on it is cast up hard and cheerless from below, as when snow lies upon the ground, and the children look up with surprise at the strange whiteness of the ceiling. Her trouble is in the very caress of the mysterious child, whose gaze is always far from her, and who has already that sweet look of devotion which men have never been able altogether to love, and which still makes the born saint an object almost of suspicion to his earthly brethren. Once, indeed, he guides her hand to transcribe in a book the words of her exaltation, the *Ave*, and the *Magnificat*, and the *Gaude Maria*, and the young angels, glad to rouse her for a moment from her dejection, are eager to hold the inkhorn and to support the book. But the pen almost drops from her hand, and the high cold words have no meaning for her, and her true children are those others, among whom, in her rude home, the intolerable honor came to her, with that look of wistful inquiry on their irregular faces which you see in startled animals — gipsy children, such as those who, in Apennine villages, still hold out their long, brown arms to beg of you, but on Sundays become *enfants du chœur*,[1] with their thick black hair nicely combed, and fair white linen on their sunburnt throats.

What is strangest is that he carries this sentiment into classical subjects, its most complete expression being a picture in the *Uffizii*, of Venus rising from the sea, in which the grotesque emblems of the middle age, and a landscape full of its peculiar feeling, and even its strange draperies, powdered all over in the Gothic manner with a quaint conceit of daisies, frame a figure that reminds you of the faultless nude studies of Ingres. At first, perhaps, you are attracted only by a quaintness of design, which seems to recall all at once whatever you have read of Florence in the fifteenth century; afterwards you may think that this quaintness must be incongruous with the subject, and that the color is cadaverous or at least cold. And yet, the more you come to understand what imaginative coloring really is, that all color is no mere delightful quality of natural things, but a spirit upon them by which they become expressive to the spirit, the better you will like this peculiar quality of color; and you will find that quaint design of Botticelli's a more direct inlet into the Greek temper than the works of the Greeks themselves even of the finest period. Of th Greeks as they really were, of their differenc from ourselves, of the aspects of their ou ward life, we know far more than Botticell or his most learned contemporaries; but fo us long familiarity has taken off the edge o the lesson, and we are hardly conscious o what we owe to the Hellenic spirit. But i pictures like this of Botticelli's you have record of the first impression made by it o minds turned back towards it, in almos painful aspiration, from a world in which had been ignored so long; and in the passion the energy, the industry of realization, wit which Botticelli carries out his intention, the exact measure of the legitimate influenc over the human mind of the imaginativ system of which this is perhaps the centra myth. The light is indeed cold — mere sun less dawn; but a later painter would hav cloyed you with sunshine; and you can se the better for that quietness in the mornin air each long promontory, as it slopes dow to the water's edge. Men go forth to the labors until the evening; but she is awak before them, and you might think that th sorrow in her face was at the thought of th whole long day of love yet to come. An em blematical figure of the wind blows har across the grey water, moving forward th dainty-lipped shell on which she sails, th sea "showing his teeth," as it moves, in thi lines of foam, and sucking in, one by one, th falling roses, each severe in outline, plucke off short at the stalk, but embrowned a littl as Botticelli's flowers always are. Botticel meant all this imagery to be altogethe pleasurable; and it was partly an incomplete ness of resources, inseparable from the ar of that time, that subdued and chilled it. Bu this predilection for minor tones counts also and what is unmistakable is the sadness wit which he has conceived the goddess o pleasure, as the depositary of a great powe over the lives of men.

I have said that the peculiar character o Botticelli is the result of a blending in him o a sympathy for humanity in its uncertai condition, its attractiveness, its investitur at rarer moments in a character of lovelines and energy, with his consciousness of th shadow upon it of the great things from whic it shrinks, and that this conveys into hi work somewhat more than painting usuall attains of the true complexion of humanity He paints the story of the goddess of pleasu in other episodes besides that of her birt from the sea, but never without some shado

1 choir boys.

of death in the grey flesh and wan flowers. He paints Madonnas, but they shrink from the pressure of the divine child, and plead in unmistakable undertones for a warmer, lower humanity. The same figure — tradition connects it with Simonetta, the Mistress of Giuliano de' Medici — appears again as Judith, returning home across the hill country, when the great deed is over, and the moment of revulsion come, when the olive branch in her hand is becoming a burthen; as *Justice*, sitting on a throne, but with a fixed look of self-hatred which makes the sword in her hand seem that of a suicide; and again as *Veritas*, in the allegorical picture of *Calumnia*, where one may note in passing the suggestiveness of an accident which identifies the image of Truth with the person of Venus. We might trace the same sentiment through his engravings; but his share in them is doubtful, and the object of this brief study has been attained, if I have defined aright the temper in which he worked.

But, after all, it may be asked, is a painter like Botticelli — a secondary painter, a proper subject for general criticism? There are a few great painters, like Michelangelo or Leonardo, whose work has become a force in general culture, partly for this very reason that they have absorbed into themselves all such workmen as Sandro Botticelli; and, over and above mere technical or antiquarian criticism, general criticism may be very well employed in that sort of interpretation which adjusts the position of these men to general culture, whereas smaller men can be the proper subjects only of technical or antiquarian treatment. But, besides those great men, there is a certain number of artists who have a distinct faculty of their own by which they convey to us a peculiar quality of pleasure which we cannot get elsewhere; and these, too, have their place in general culture, and must be interpreted to it by those who have felt their charm strongly, and are often the object of a special diligence and a consideration wholly affectionate, just because there is not about them the stress of a great name and authority. Of this select number Botticelli is one. He has the freshness, the uncertain and diffident promise, which belong to the earlier Renaissance itself, and make it perhaps the most interesting period in the history of the mind. In studying his work one begins to understand to how great a place in human culture the art of Italy had been called.

## THE CHILD IN THE HOUSE

1878

Published in *Macmillan's Magazine* for August, with the words "Imaginary Portrait" prefixed to the title. The sketch is generally assumed to be to some extent spiritually, though by no means literally, autobiographical.

As Florian Deleal walked, one hot afternoon, he overtook by the wayside a poor aged man, and, as he seemed weary with the road, helped him on with the burden which he carried, a certain distance. And as the man told his story, it chanced that he named the place, a little place in the neighborhood of a great city, where Florian had passed his earliest years, but which he had never since seen, and, the story told, went forward on his journey comforted. And that night, like a reward for his pity, a dream of that place came to Florian, a dream which did for him the office of the finer sort of memory, bringing its object to mind with a great clearness, yet, as sometimes happens in dreams, raised a little above itself, and above ordinary retrospect. The true aspect of the place, especially of the house there in which he had lived as a child, the fashion of its doors, its hearths, its windows, the very scent upon the air of it, was with him in sleep for a season; only, with tints more musically blent on wall and floor, and some finer light and shadow running in and out along its curves and angles, and with all its little carvings daintier. He awoke with a sigh at the thought of almost thirty years which lay between him and that place, yet with a flutter of pleasure still within him at the fair light, as if it were a smile, upon it. And it happened that this accident of his dream was just the thing needed for the beginning of a certain design he then had in view, the noting, namely, of some things in the story of his spirit — in that process of brain-building by which we are, each one of us, what we are. With the image of the place so clear and favorable upon him, he fell to thinking of himself therein, and how his thoughts had grown up to him. In that half-spiritualized house he could watch the better, over again, the gradual expansion of the soul which had come to be there — of which, indeed, through the law which makes the material objects about them so large an element in children's lives, it had actually become a part; inward and outward being woven through and through each other into one inextricable texture — half, tint and trace and accident of homely color and form,

from the wood and the bricks; half, mere soul-stuff, floated thither from who knows how far. In the house and garden of his dream he saw a child moving, and could divide the main streams at least of the winds that had played on him, and study so the first stage in that mental journey.

The *old house*, as when Florian talked of it afterwards he always called it (as all children do, who can recollect a change of home, soon enough but not too soon to mark a period in their lives), really was an old house; and an element of French descent in its inmates — descent from Watteau, the old court-painter, one of whose gallant pieces still hung in one of the rooms — might explain, together with some other things, a noticeable trimness and comely whiteness about everything there — the curtains, the couches, the paint on the walls with which the light and shadow played so delicately; might explain also the tolerance of the great poplar in the garden, a tree most often despised by English people, but which French people love, having observed a certain fresh way its leaves have of dealing with the wind, making it sound, in never so slight a stirring of the air, like running water.

The old-fashioned, low wainscoting went round the rooms, and up the staircase with carved balusters and shadowy angles, landing half-way up at a broad window, with a swallow's nest below the sill, and the blossom of an old pear-tree showing across it in late April, against the blue, below which the perfumed juice of the find of fallen fruit in autumn was so fresh. At the next turning came the closet which held on its deep shelves the best china. Little angel faces and reedy flutings stood out round the fireplace of the children's room. And on the top of the house, above the large attic, where the white mice ran in the twilight — an infinite, unexplored wonderland of childish treasures, glass beads, empty scent-bottles still sweet, thrum of colored silks, among its lumber — a flat space of roof, railed round, gave a view of the neighboring steeples; for the house, as I said, stood near a great city, which sent up heavenwards, over the twisting weather-vanes, not seldom, its beds of rolling cloud and smoke, touched with storm or sunshine. But the child of whom I am writing did not hate the fog because of the crimson lights which fell from it sometimes upon the chimneys, and the whites which gleamed through its openings, on summer mornings, on turret or pavement. For it is false to suppose that a child's sense of beaut is dependent on any choiceness of specia fineness in the objects which present them selves to it, though this indeed comes to b the rule with most of us in later life; earlier in some degree, we see inwardly; and th child finds for itself, and with unstinted de light, a difference for the sense, in thos whites and reds through the smoke on ver homely buildings, and in the gold of thedande lions at the roadside, just beyond the houses where not a handful of earth is virgin and un touched, in the lack of better ministries t its desire of beauty.

This house then stood not far beyond th gloom and rumors of the town, among hig garden-walls, bright all summer-time wit golden-rod and brown-and-golden wall-flowe — *flos parietis*, as the children's Latin reading father taught them to call it, while he was with them. Tracing back the threads of his complex spiritual habit, as he was usec in after years to do, Florian found that he owed to the place many tones of sentimen afterwards customary with him, certain inward lights under which things most naturally presented themselves to him. The coming and going of travellers to the town along the way, the shadow of the streets, the sudden breath of the neighboring gardens, the singular brightness of bright weather there, its singular darknesses which linked themselves in his mind to certain engraved illustrations in the old big Bible at home, the coolness of the dark, cavernous shops round the great church, with its giddy winding stair up to the pigeons and the bells — a citadel of peace in the heart of the trouble — all this acted on his childish fancy, so that ever afterwards the like aspects and incidents never failed to throw him into a well-recognized imaginative mood, seeming actually to have become a part of the texture of his mind. Also Florian could trace home to this point a pervading preference in himself for a kind of comeliness and dignity, an *urbanity* literally, in modes of life, which he connected with the pale people of towns, and which made him susceptible to a kind of exquisite satisfaction in the trimness and well-considered grace of certain things and persons he afterwards met with, here and there, in his way through the world.

So the child of whom I am writing lived on there quietly; things without ministering to him, as he sat daily at the window with the bird-cage hanging below it, and his mother taught him to read, wondering at the

ease with which he learned, and at the quickness of his memory. The perfume of the little flowers of the lime-tree fell through the air upon them like rain; while time seemed to move ever more slowly to the murmur of the bees in it, till it almost stood still on June afternoons. How insignificant, at the moment, seem the influences of the sensible things which are tossed and fall and lie about us, so, or so, in the environment of early childhood. How indelibly, as we afterwards discover, they affect us; with what capricious attractions and associations they figure themselves on the white paper, the smooth wax, of our ingenuous souls, as "with lead in the rock for ever," giving form and feature, and as it were assigned house-room in our memory, to early experiences of feeling and thought, which abide with us ever afterwards, thus, and not otherwise. The realities and passions, the rumors of the greater world without, steal in upon us, each by its own special little passage-way, through the wall of custom about us; and never afterwards quite detach themselves from this or that accident, or trick, in the mode of their first entrance to us. Our susceptibilities, the discovery of our powers, manifold experiences — our various experiences of the coming and going of bodily pain, for instance — belong to this or the other well-remembered place in the material habitation — that little white room with the window across which the heavy blossoms could beat so peevishly in the wind, with just that particular catch or throb, such a sense of teasing in it, on gusty mornings; and the early habitation thus gradually becomes a sort of material shrine or sanctuary of sentiment; a system of visible symbolism interweaves itself through all our thoughts and passions; and irresistibly, little shapes, voices, accidents — the angle at which the sun in the morning fell on the pillow — become parts of the great chain wherewith we are bound.

Thus far, for Florian, what all this had determined was a peculiarly strong sense of home — so forcible a motive with all of us — prompting to us our customary love of the earth, and the larger part of our fear of death, that revulsion we have from it, as from something strange, untried, unfriendly; though life-long imprisonment, they tell you, and final banishment from home is a thing bitterer still; the looking forward to but a short space, a mere childish *goûter* [1] and dessert of it, before the end, being so great a resource of effort to pilgrims and wayfarers, and the soldier in distant quarters, and lending, in lack of that, some power of solace to the thought of sleep in the home churchyard, at least — dead cheek by dead cheek, and with the rain soaking in upon one from above.

So powerful is this instinct, and yet accidents like those I have been speaking of so mechanically determine it; its essence being indeed the early familiar, as constituting our ideal, or typical conception, of rest and security. Out of so many possible conditions, just this for you and that for me, brings ever the unmistakable realization of the delightful *chez soi;* this for the Englishman, for me and you, with the closely drawn white curtain and the shaded lamp; that, quite other, for the wandering Arab, who folds his tent every morning, and makes his sleeping-place among haunted ruins or in old tombs.

With Florian then the sense of home became singularly intense, his good fortune being that the special character of his home was in itself so essentially homelike. As after many wanderings I have come to fancy that some parts of Surrey and Kent are, for Englishmen, the true landscape, true home-counties, by right, partly, of a certain earthy warmth in the yellow of the sand below their gorse-bushes, and of a certain gray-blue mist after rain, in the hollows of the hills there, welcome to fatigued eyes, and never seen farther south; so I think that the sort of house I have described, with precisely those proportions of red-brick and green, and with a just perceptible monotony in the subdued order of it, for its distinguishing note, is for Englishmen at least typically homelike. And so for Florian that general human instinct was reinforced by this special home-likeness in the place his wandering soul had happened to light on, as, in the second degree, its body and earthly tabernacle; the sense of harmony between his soul and its physical environment became, for a time at least, like perfectly played music, and the life led there singularly tranquil and filled with a curious sense of self-possession. The love of security, of an habitually undisputed standing-ground or sleeping-place, came to count for much in the generation and correcting of his thoughts, and afterwards as a salutary principle of restraint in all his wanderings of spirit. The wistful yearning towards home, in absence from it, as the shadows of evening deepened, and he followed in thought what was doing there from hour to hour, interpreted to him much of a yearning and regret he experienced

[1] lunch.

afterwards, towards he knew not what, out of strange ways of feeling and thought in which, from time to time, his spirit found itself alone; and in the tears shed in such absences there seemed always to be some soul-subduing foretaste of what his last tears might be.

And the sense of security could hardly have been deeper, the quiet of the child's soul being one with the quiet of its home, a place "inclosed" and "sealed." But upon this assured place, upon the child's assured soul which resembled it, there came floating in from the larger world without, as at windows left ajar unknowingly, or over the high garden walls, two streams of impressions, the sentiments of beauty and pain — recognitions of the visible, tangible, audible loveliness of things, as a very real and somewhat tyrannous element in them — and of the sorrow of the world, of grown people and children and animals, as a thing not to be put by in them. From this point he could trace two predominant processes of mental change in him — the growth of an almost diseased sensibility to the spectacle of suffering, and, parallel with this, the rapid growth of a certain capacity of fascination by bright color and choice form — the sweet curvings, for instance, of the lips of those who seemed to him comely persons, modulated in such delicate unison to the things they said or sang, — marking early the activity in him of a more than customary sensuousness, "the lust of the eye," as the Preacher says, which might lead him, one day, how far! Could he have foreseen the weariness of the way! In music sometimes the two sorts of impressions came together, and he would weep, to the surprise of older people. Tears of joy too the child knew, also to older people's surprise; real tears, once, of relief from long-strung, childish expectation, when he found returned at evening, with new roses in her cheeks, the little sister who had been to a place where there was a wood, and brought back for him a treasure of fallen acorns, and black crow's feathers, and his peace at finding her again near him mingled all night with some intimate sense of the distant forest, the rumor of its breezes, with the glossy blackbirds aslant and the branches lifted in them, and of the perfect nicety of the little cups that fell. So those two elementary apprehensions of the tenderness and of the color in things grew apace in him, and were seen by him afterwards to send their roots back into the beginnings of life.

Let me note first some of the occasions his recognition of the element of pain things — incidents, now and again, whic seemed suddenly to awake in him the who force of that sentiment which Goethe h called the *Weltschmerz*, and in which t concentrated sorrow of the world seemed su denly to lie heavy upon him. A book lay i an old book-case, of which he cared to r member one picture — a woman sitting, wit hands bound behind her, the dress, the ca the hair, folded with a simplicity whic touched him strangely, as if not by her ow hands, but with some ambiguous care at th hands of others — Queen Marie Antoinett on her way to execution — we all remembe David's drawing, meant merely to make he ridiculous. The face that had been so hig had learned to be mute and resistless; bu out of its very resistlessness seemed now t call on men to have pity, and forbear; and h took note of that, as he closed the book, as thing to look at again, if he should at an time find himself tempted to be cruel. Again he would never quite forget the appeal in th small sister's face, in the garden under th lilacs, terrified at a spider lighted on he sleeve. He could trace back to the look the noted a certain mercy he conceived alway for people in fear, even of little things, whic seemed to make him, though but for a mo ment, capable of almost any sacrifice of him self. Impressible, susceptible persons, indeed who had had their sorrows, lived about him and this sensibility was due in part to the tacit influence of their presence, enforcing upon him habitually the fact that there ar those who pass their days, as a matter o course, in a sort of "going quietly." Mos poignantly of all he could recall, in unfadin minutest circumstance, the cry on the stair sounding bitterly through the house, an struck into his soul for ever, of an age woman, his father's sister, come now to an nounce his death in distant India; how i seemed to make the aged woman like a chil again; and, he knew not why, but this fancy was full of pity to him. There were the lit tle sorrows of the dumb animals too — o the white angora, with a dark tail like a ermine's, and a face like a flower, who fel into a lingering sickness, and became quite delicately human in its valetudinarianism and came to have a hundred different ex pressions of voice — how it grew worse an worse, till it began to feel the light too much for it, and at last, after one wild morning o pain, the little soul flickered away from the

body, quite worn to death already, and now but feebly retaining it.

So he wanted another pet; and as there were starlings about the place, which could be taught to speak, one of them was caught, and he meant to treat it kindly; but in the night its young ones could be heard crying after it, and the responsive cry of the mother-bird towards them; and at last, with the first light, though not till after some debate with himself, he went down and opened the cage, and saw a sharp bound of the prisoner up to her nestlings; and therewith came the sense of remorse, — that he too was become an accomplice in moving, to the limit of his small power, the springs and handles of that great machine in things, constructed so ingeniously to play pain-fugues on the delicate nerve-work of living creatures.

I have remarked how, in the process of our brain-building, as the house of thought in which we live gets itself together, like some airy bird's-nest of floating thistle-down and chance straws, compact at last, little accidents have their consequence; and thus it happened that as he walked one evening, a garden gate, usually closed, stood open; and lo! within, a great red hawthorn in full flower, embossing heavily the bleached and twisted trunk and branches, so aged that there were but few green leaves thereon — a plumage of tender, crimson fire out of the heart of the dry wood. The perfume of the tree had now and again reached him, in the currents of the wind, over the wall, and he had wondered what might be behind it, and was now allowed to fill his arms with the flowers — flowers enough for all the old blue-china pots along the chimney-piece, making *fête* in the children's room. Was it some periodic moment in the expansion of soul within him, or mere trick of heat in the heavily laden summer air? But the beauty of the thing struck home to him feverishly; and in dreams at night he loitered along a magic roadway of crimson flowers, which seemed to open ruddily in thick, fresh masses about his feet, and fill softly all the little hollows in the banks on either side. Always afterwards, summer by summer, as the flowers came on, the blossom of the red hawthorn still seemed to him absolutely the reddest of all things; and the goodly crimson, still alive in the works of old Venetian masters or old Flemish tapestries, called out always from afar the recollection of the flame in those perishing little petals, as it pulsed gradually out of them, kept long in the drawers of an old cabinet. Also then, for the first time, he seemed to experience a passionateness in his relation to fair outward objects, an inexplicable excitement in their presence, which disturbed him, and from which he half longed to be free. A touch of regret or desire mingled all night with the remembered presence of the red flowers, and their perfume in the darkness about him: and the longing for some undivined, entire possession of them was the beginning of a revelation to him, growing ever clearer, with the coming of the gracious summer guise of fields and trees and persons in each succeeding year, of a certain, at times seemingly exclusive, predominance in his interests, of beautiful physical things, a kind of tyranny of the senses over him.

In later years he came upon philosophies which occupied him much in the estimate of the proportion of the sensuous and the ideal elements in human knowledge, the relative parts they bear in it; and, in his intellectual scheme, was led to assign very little to the abstract thought, and much to its sensible vehicle or occasion. Such metaphysical speculation did but reinforce what was instinctive in his way of receiving the world, and for him, everywhere, that sensible vehicle or occasion became, perhaps only too surely, the necessary concomitant of any perception of things, real enough to be of any weight or reckoning, in his house of thought. There were times when he could think of the necessity he was under of associating all thoughts to touch and sight, as a sympathetic link between himself and actual, feeling, living objects; a protest in favor of real men and women against mere grey, unreal abstractions; and he remembered gratefully how the Christian religion, hardly less than the religion of the ancient Greeks, translating so much of its spiritual verity into things that may be seen, condescends in part to sanction this infirmity, if so it be, of our human existence, wherein the world of sense is so much with us, and welcomed this thought as a kind of keeper and sentinel over his soul therein. But certainly he came more and more to be unable to care for or think of soul but as in an actual body, or of any world but that wherein are water and trees, and where men and women look so or so, and press actual hands. It was the trick even his pity learned, fastening those who suffered in any wise to his affections by a kind of sensible attachments. He would think of Julian, fallen into incurable sickness, as spoiled in the sweet blossom of his skin

like pale amber, and his honey-like hair; of Cecil, early dead, as cut off from the lilies, from golden summer days, from women's voices; and then what comforted him a little was the thought of the turning of the child's flesh to violets in the turf above him. And thinking of the very poor, it was not the things which most men care most for that he yearned to give them; but fairer roses, perhaps, and power to taste quite as they will, at their ease and not task-burdened, a certain desirable clear light in the new morning, through which sometimes he had noticed them, quite unconscious of it, on their way to their early toil.

So he yielded himself to these things, to be played upon by them like a musical instrument, and began to note with deepening watchfulness, but always with some puzzled, unutterable longing in his enjoyment, the phases of the seasons and of the growing or waning day, down even to the shadowy changes wrought on bare wall or ceiling — the light cast up from the snow, bringing out their darkest angles; the brown light in the cloud, which meant rain; that almost too austere clearness, in the protracted light of the lengthening day, before warm weather began, as if it lingered but to make a severer work-day, with the school-books opened earlier and later; that beam of June sunshine, at last, as he lay awake before the time, a way of gold-dust across the darkness; all the humming, the freshness, the perfume of the garden seemed to lie upon it — and coming in one afternoon in September, along the red gravel walk, to look for a basket of yellow crab-apples left in the cool, old parlor, he remembered it the more, and how the colors struck upon him, because a wasp on one bitten apple stung him, and he felt the passion of sudden, severe pain. For this too brought its curious reflections; and, in relief from it, he would wonder over it — how it had then been with him — puzzled at the depth of the charm or spell over him, which lay, for a little while at least, in the mere absence of pain; once, especially, when an older boy taught him to make flowers of sealing-wax, and he had burnt his hand badly at the lighted taper, and been unable to sleep. He remembered that also afterwards, as a sort of typical thing — a white vision of heat about him, clinging closely, through the languid scent of the ointments put upon the place to make it well.

Also, as he felt this pressure upon him of the sensible world, then, as often afterwards, there would come another sort of curi questioning how the last impressions of and ear might happen to him, how t would find him — the scent of the last flo the soft yellowness of the last morning, last recognition of some object of affect hand or voice; it could not be but that latest look of the eyes, before their final c ing, would be strangely vivid; one would with the hot tears, the cry, the touch of wistful bystander, impressed how deeply one! or would it be, perhaps, a mere frail tiring of all things, great or little, away fr one, into a level distance?

For with this desire of physical bea mingled itself early the fear of death — fear of death intensified by the desire beauty. Hitherto he had never gazed u dead faces, as sometimes, afterwards, at Morgue in Paris, or in that fair cemetery Munich, where all the dead must go and in state before burial, behind glass windo among the flowers and incense and h candles — the aged clergy with their sac ornaments, the young men in their danci shoes and spotless white linen — after wh visits, those waxen, resistless faces wo always live with him for many days, maki the broadest sunshine sickly. The child h heard indeed of the death of his father, a how, in the Indian station, a fever had tak him, so that though not in action he had y died as a soldier; and hearing of the "resu rection of the just," he could think of him still abroad in the world, somehow, for l protection — a grand though perhaps rath terrible figure, in beautiful soldier's thin like the figure in the picture of Joshua Vision in the Bible — and of that rou which the mourners moved so softly, a afterwards with such solemn singing, as bu worn-out garment left at a deserted lodgin So it was, until on a summer day he walk with his mother through a fair churchyar In a bright dress he rambled among t graves, in the gay weather, and so came, one corner, upon an open grave for a child a dark space on the brilliant grass — t black mould heaped up round it, weighin down the little jeweled branches of the dwa rosebushes in flower. And therewith cam full-grown, never wholly to leave him, wit the certainty that even children do som times die, the physical horror of death, wit its wholly selfish recoil from the associatio of lower forms of life, and the suffocati weight above. No benign, grave figure beautiful soldier's things any longer abro

in the world for his protection! only a few poor, piteous bones; and above them, possibly, a certain sort of figure he hoped not to see. For sitting one day in the garden below an open window, he heard people talking, and could not but listen, how, in a sleepless hour, a sick woman had seen one of the dead sitting beside her, come to call her hence; and from the broken talk evolved with much clearness the notion that not all those dead people had really departed to the churchyard, nor were quite so motionless as they looked, but led a secret, half-fugitive life in their old homes, quite free by night, though sometimes visible in the day, dodging from room to room, with no great goodwill towards those who shared the place with them. All night the figure sat beside him in the reveries of his broken sleep, and was not quite gone in the morning — an odd, irreconcilable new member of the household, making the sweet familiar chambers unfriendly and suspect by its uncertain presence. He could have hated the dead he had pitied so, for being thus. Afterwards he came to think of those poor, home-returning ghosts, which all men have fancied to themselves — the *revenants* — pathetically, as crying, or beating with vain hands at the doors, as the wind came, their cries distinguishable in it as a wilder inner note. But, always making death more unfamiliar still, that old experience would ever, from time to time, return to him; even in the living he sometimes caught its likeness; at any time or place, in a moment, the faint atmosphere of the chamber of death would be breathed around him, and the image with the bound chin, the quaint smile, the straight stiff feet, shed itself across the air upon the bright carpet, amid the gayest company, or happiest communing with himself.

To most children the sombre questionings to which impressions like these attach themselves, if they come at all, are actually suggested by religious books, which therefore they often regard with much secret distaste, and dismiss, as far as possible, from their habitual thoughts as a too depressing element in life. To Florian such impressions, these misgivings as to the ultimate tendency of the years, of the relationship between life and death, had been suggested spontaneously in the natural course of his mental growth by a strong innate sense for the soberer tones in things, further strengthened by actual circumstances; and religious sentiment, that system of biblical ideas in which he had been brought up, presented itself to him as a thing that might soften and dignify, and light up as with a "lively hope," a melancholy already deeply settled in him. So he yielded himself easily to religious impressions, and with a kind of mystical appetite for sacred things, the more as they came to him through a saintly person who loved him tenderly, and believed that this early preoccupation with them already marked the child out for a saint. He began to love, for their own sakes, church lights, holy days, all that belonged to the comely order of the sanctuary, the secrets of its white linen, and holy vessels, and fonts of pure water; and its hieratic purity and simplicity became the type of something he desired to have about him in actual life. He pored over the pictures in religious books, and knew by heart the exact mode in which the wrestling angel grasped Jacob, how Jacob looked in his mysterious sleep, how the bells and pomegranates were attached to the hem of Aaron's vestment, sounding sweetly as he glided over the turf of the holy place. His way of conceiving religion came then to be in effect what it ever afterwards remained — a sacred history indeed, but still more a sacred ideal, a transcendent version or representation, under intense and more expressive light and shade, of human life and its familiar or exceptional incidents, birth, death, marriage, youth, age, tears, joy, rest, sleep, waking — a mirror, towards which men might turn away their eyes from vanity and dullness, and see themselves therein as angels, with their daily meat and drink, even, become a kind of sacred transaction — a complementary strain or burden,[1] applied to our every-day existence, whereby the stray snatches of music in it re-set themselves, and fall into the scheme of some higher and more consistent harmony. A place adumbrated itself in his thoughts, wherein those sacred personalities, which are at once the reflex and the pattern of our nobler phases of life, housed themselves; and this region in his intellectual scheme all subsequent experience did but tend still further to realize and define. Some ideal, hieratic persons he would always need to occupy it and keep a warmth there. And he could hardly understand those who felt no such need at all, finding themselves quite happy without such heavenly companionship, and sacred double of their life, beside them.

Thus a constant substitution of the typical for the actual took place in his thoughts.

1 bass under-part.

Angels might be met by the way, under English elm or beech-tree; mere messengers seemed like angels, bound on celestial errands; a deep mysticity brooded over real meetings and partings; marriages were made in heaven; and deaths also, with hands of angels thereupon, to bear soul and body quietly asunder, each to its appointed rest. All the acts and accidents of daily life borrowed a sacred color and significance; the very colors of things became themselves weighty with meanings like the sacred stuffs of Moses' tabernacle, full of penitence or peace. Sentiment, congruous in the first instance only with those divine transactions, the deep, effusive unction of the House of Bethany, was assumed as the due attitude for the reception of our every-day existence; and for a time he walked through the world in a sustained, not unpleasurable awe, generated by the habitual recognition, beside every circumstance and event of life, of its celestial correspondent.

Sensibility — the desire of physical beauty — a strange biblical awe, which made any reference to the unseen act on him like solemn music — these qualities the child took away with him, when, at about the age of twelve years, he left the old house, and was taken to live in another place. He had never left his home before, and, anticipating much from this change, had long dreamed over it, jealously counting the days till the time fixed for departure should come; had been a little careless about others even, in his strong des for it — when Lewis fell sick, for instan and they must wait still two days long At last the morning came, very fine; and things — the very pavement with its dust, the roadside — seemed to have a whit pearl-like lustre in them. They were travel by a favorite road on which he ha often walked a certain distance, and on o of those two prisoner days, when Lewis w sick, had walked farther than ever before, his great desire to reach the new place. The had started and gone a little way when a p bird was found to have been left behind, an must even now — so it presented itself t him — have already all the appealing fierc ness and wild self-pity at heart of one left b others to perish of hunger in a closed hous and he returned to fetch it, himself in hardl less stormy distress. But as he passed i search of it from room to room, lying so pal with a look of meekness in their denudatio and at last through that little stripped whit room, the aspect of the place touched him lik the face of one dead; and a clinging bac towards it came over him, so intense that h knew it would last long, and spoiling all hi pleasure in the realization of a thing s eagerly anticipated. And so, with the bir found, but himself in an agony of home sickness, thus capriciously sprung up within him, he was driven quickly away, far into th rural distance, so fondly speculated on, o that favorite country road.

## ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–1894)

Robert Louis Stevenson, the son of Thomas Stevenson, a civil engineer, was born at Edinburgh November 13, 1850. He was educated at the University of Edinburgh and studied both engineering and law. His bent was strongly toward writing, and in the early seventies he began to contribute essays to the *Cornhill* and other magazines. He took two unconventional journeys, one by canoe through the rivers and canals of Belgium and France, and another by donkey through the Cévennes Mountains, which became the material of two books, *An Inland Voyage* (1878) and *Travels with a Donkey* (1879). In the latter year Stevenson journeyed to San Francisco to marry Mrs. Osbourne whom he had known at Fontainebleau. His health had been precarious from childhood, and now followed a number of years of invalidism at Davos, Hyères, and Bournemouth. In these years he made his literary reputation with *Treasure Island* (1882), *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), and *Kidnapped* (1886). In 1887 he returned to America, and, after a winter at Saranac Lake, he chartered a vessel for a cruise to the South Seas. This led him eventually to Samoa, where he settled in 1890 at Vailima. He died in 1894.

Stevenson was a versatile writer in fiction, essay, poetry, and drama. More than most English writers he was animated by sheer æsthetic enthusiasm for literature as a fine art. He held that romance was a necessary element in life, and that fiction was as necessary to grown people as play to children. The highest point of romance to him was fine conduct, springing from loyalty and a sense of duty. In the latter days of the nineteenth century, when men were driven to despair of a world in which faith had been killed by science and the joy of life by industrialism, Stevenson continued to uphold the principle of life as worth while for its own sake, and struggle as justifying itself without question of reward. He belongs among the neo-stoics, in opposition to Walter Pater, who represents the neo-epicurean position.

The chief edition of Stevenson's works is the Biographical in twenty-seven volumes. His letters were edited by Sidney Colvin (1900) and his life was written by his cousin, Graham Balfour, in 1901. There are brief studies by Lloyd Osbourne and Frank A. Swinnerton. Essays on Stevenson to be noted are those by Henry James in *Partial Portraits*, and by Leslie Stephen in *Studies of a Biographer*.

## A GOSSIP ON ROMANCE

1882

Published in *Longman's Magazine* for November, and later in the collection called *Memories and Portraits*. The essay is of special value as presenting the principles which underlay Stevenson's work as a reviver of the prose romance.

In anything fit to be called by the name of reading, the process itself should be absorbing and voluptuous; we should gloat over a book, be rapt clean out of ourselves, and rise from the perusal, our mind filled with the busiest kaleidoscopic dance of images, incapable of sleep or of continuous thought. The words, if the book be eloquent, should run thenceforward in our ears like the noise of breakers, and the story — if it be a story — repeat itself in a thousand colored pictures to the eye. It was for this last pleasure that we read so closely, and loved our books so dearly, in the bright, troubled period of boyhood. Eloquence and thought, character and conversation, were but obstacles to brush aside as we dug blithely after a certain sort of incident, like a pig for truffles. For my part, I liked a story to begin with an old wayside inn where, "towards the close of the year 17—," several gentlemen in three-cocked hats were playing bowls. A friend of mine preferred the Malabar coast in a storm, with a ship beating to westward, and a scowling fellow of herculean proportions striding along the beach; he, to be sure, was a pirate. This was further afield than my home-keeping fancy loved to travel, and designed altogether for a larger canvas than the tales that I affected. Give me a highwayman and I was full to the brim; a Jacobite would do, but the highwayman was my favorite dish. I can still hear that merry clatter of the hoofs along the moonlit lane; night and the coming of day are still related in my mind with the doings of John Rann or Jerry Abershaw;[1] and the words "postchaise," the "great North road," "ostler," and "nag," still sound in my ears like poetry. One and all, at least, and each with his particular fancy, we read story-books in childhood, not for eloquence or character or thought, but for some quality of the brute incident. That quality was not mere bloodshed or wonder. Although each of these was welcome in its place, the charm for the sake of which we read depended on something different from either. My elders used to read novels aloud; and I can still remember four different passages which I heard, before I was ten, with the same keen and lasting pleasure. One I discovered long afterwards to be the admirable opening of *What will he Do with It?*[1] It was no wonder that I was pleased with that. The other three still remain unidentified. One is a little vague; it was about a dark, tall house at night, and people groping on the stairs by the light that escaped from the open door of a sickroom. In another, a lover left a ball, and went walking in a cool, dewy park, whence he could watch the lighted windows and the figures of the dancers as they moved. This was the most sentimental impression I think I had yet received, for a child is somewhat deaf to the sentimental. In the last, a poet, who had been tragically wrangling with his wife, walked forth on the sea-beach on a tempestuous night and witnessed the horrors of a wreck.[2] Different as they are, all these early favorites have a common note — they have all a touch of the romantic.

Drama is the poetry of conduct, romance the poetry of circumstance. The pleasure that we take in life is of two sorts — the active and the passive. Now we are conscious of a great command over our destiny; anon we are lifted up by circumstance, as by a breaking wave, and dashed we know not how into the future. Now we are pleased by our conduct, anon merely pleased by our surroundings. It would be hard to say which of these modes of satisfaction is the more effective, but the latter is surely the more constant. Conduct is three parts of life, they say; but I think they put it high. There is a vast deal in life and letters both which is not immoral, but simply a-moral; which either does not regard the human will at all, or deals with it in obvious and healthy relations; where the interest turns, not upon

1 Outlaws.

1 By Bulwer-Lytton (1858).

2 Since traced by many obliging correspondents to the gallery of Charles Kingsley. (Stevenson's note.)

what a man shall choose to do, but on how he manages to do it; not on the passionate slips and hesitations of the conscience, but on the problems of the body and of the practical intelligence, in clean, open-air adventure, the shock of arms or the diplomacy of life. With such material as this it is impossible to build a play, for the serious theatre exists solely on moral grounds, and is a standing proof of the dissemination of the human conscience. But it is possible to build upon this ground the most joyous of verses, and the most lively, beautiful, and buoyant tales.

One thing in life calls for another; there is a fitness in events and places. The sight of a pleasant arbor puts it in our mind to sit there. One place suggests work, another idleness, a third early rising and long rambles in the dew. The effect of night, of any flowing water, of lighted cities, of the peep of day, of ships, of the open ocean, calls up in the mind an army of anonymous desires and pleasures. Something, we feel, should happen; we know not what, yet we proceed in quest of it. And many of the happiest hours of life fleet by us in this vain attendance on the genius of the place and moment. It is thus that tracts of young fir, and low rocks that reach into deep soundings, particularly torture and delight me. Something must have happened in such places, and perhaps ages back, to members of my race; and when I was a child I tried in vain to invent appropriate games for them, as I still try, just as vainly, to fit them with the proper story. Some places speak distinctly. Certain dank gardens cry aloud for a murder; certain old houses demand to be haunted; certain coasts are set apart for shipwreck. Other spots again seem to abide their destiny, suggestive and impenetrable, "miching mallecho."[1] The inn at Burford Bridge, with its arbors and green garden and silent, eddying river — though it is known already as the place where Keats wrote some of his *Endymion* and Nelson parted from his Emma — still seems to wait the coming of the appropriate legend. Within these ivied walls, behind these old green shutters, some further business smolders, waiting for its hour. The old Hawes Inn at the Queen's Ferry makes a similar call upon my fancy. There it stands, apart from the town, beside the pier, in a climate of its own, half inland, half marine — in front, the ferry bubbling with the tide and the guardship swinging to her anchor; behind, the old garden with the trees. Americans seek it already for the sake of Lovel and Oldbuck, who dined there at the beginning of *The Antiquary*. But you need not tell me — that is not all; there is some story, unrecorded or not yet complete, which must express the meaning of that inn more fully. So it is with names and faces; so it is with incidents that are idle and inconclusive in themselves, and yet seem like the beginning of some quaint romance, which the all careless author leaves untold. How many of these romances have we not seen determined at their birth; how many people have met us with a look of meaning in their eye, and sunk at once into trivial acquaintances; to how many places have we not drawn near, with express intimations — "here my destiny awaits me" — and we have but dined there and passed on! I have lived both at the Hawes and Burford in a perpetual flutter on the heels, as it seemed, of some adventure that should justify the place; but though the feeling had me to bed at night and called me again at morning in one unbroken round of pleasure and suspense, nothing befell me in either worth remark. The man of the hour had not yet come; but some day, I think, a boat shall put off from the Queen's Ferry fraught with a dear cargo, and some frosty night a horseman, on a tragic errand, rattle with his whip upon the green shutters of the inn at Burford.[1]

Now this is one of the natural appetites with which any lively literature has to count. The desire for knowledge, I had almost added the desire for meat, is not more deeply seated than this demand for fit and striking incident. The dullest of clowns tells, or tries to tell, himself a story, as the feeblest of children uses invention in his play; and even as the imaginative grown person, joining in the game, at once enriches it with many delightful circumstances, the great creative writer shows us the realization and the apotheosis of the day-dreams of common men. His stories may be nourished with the realities of life, but their true mark is to satisfy the nameless longings of the reader, and to obey the ideal laws of the day-dream. The right kind of thing should fall out in the right kind of place; the right kind of thing should follow; and not only the characters talk aptly and think naturally, but all the circumstances in a tale answer one to another like notes in music. The threads of a story

1 sneaking mischief (from *Hamlet*, III, II, 147).

1 Since the above was written I have tried to launch the boat with my own hand in *Kidnapped*. Some day, perhaps, I may try a rattle at the shutters. (Stevenson's note.)

come from time to time together, and make a picture in the web; the characters fall from time to time into some attitude to each other or to nature, which stamps the story home like an illustration. Crusoe recoiling from the footprint, Achilles shouting over against the Trojans, Ulysses bending the great bow, Christian running with his fingers in his ears, — these are each culminating moments in the legend, and each has been printed on the mind's eye forever. Other things we may forget; we may forget the words, although they are beautiful; we may forget the author's comment, although perhaps it was ingenious and true; but these epoch-making scenes, which put the last mark of truth upon a story and fill up at one blow our capacity for sympathetic pleasure, we so adopt into the very bosom of our mind that neither time nor tide can efface or weaken the impression. This, then, is the plastic part of literature: to embody character, thought, or emotion in some act or attitude that shall be remarkably striking to the mind's eye. This is the highest and hardest thing to do in words; the thing which, once accomplished, equally delights the schoolboy and the sage, and makes, in its own right, the quality of epics. Compared with this, all other purposes in literature, except the purely lyrical or the purely philosophic, are bastard in nature, facile of execution, and feeble in result. It is one thing to write about the inn at Burford, or to describe scenery with the word-painters; it is quite another to seize on the heart of the suggestion and make a country famous with a legend. It is one thing to remark and to dissect, with the most cutting logic, the complications of life and of the human spirit; it is quite another to give them body and blood in the story of Ajax or of Hamlet. The first is literature, but the second is something besides, for it is likewise art.

English people of the present day are apt, I know not why, to look somewhat down on incident, and reserve their admiration for the clink of teaspoons and the accents of the curate. It is thought clever to write a novel with no story at all, or at least with a very dull one. Reduced even to the lowest terms, a certain interest can be communicated by the art of narrative, a sense of human kinship stirred; and a kind of monotonous fitness, comparable to the words and air of "Sandy's Mull," preserved among the infinitesimal occurrences recorded. Some people work in this manner, with even a strong touch. Mr. Trollope's inimitable clergymen arise to the mind in this connection. But even Mr. Trollope does not confine himself to chronicling small beer. Mr. Crawley's collision with the bishop's wife, Mr. Melnotte dallying in the deserted banquet-room,[1] are typical incidents, epically conceived, fitly embodying a crisis. Or again look at Thackeray. If Rawdon Crawley's blow were not delivered, *Vanity Fair* would cease to be a work of art. That scene is the chief ganglion of the tale; and the discharge of energy from Rawdon's fist is the reward and consolation of the reader. The end of *Esmond* is a yet wider excursion from the author's customary fields; the scene at Castlewood is pure Dumas; the great and wily English borrower has here borrowed from the great unblushing French thief; as usual, he has borrowed admirably well, and the breaking of the sword rounds off the best of all his books with a manly, martial note. But perhaps nothing can more strongly illustrate the necessity for marking incident than to compare the living fame of *Robinson Crusoe* with the discredit of *Clarissa Harlowe*. *Clarissa* is a book of a far more startling import, worked out, on a great canvas, with inimitable courage and unflagging art. It contains wit, character, passion, plot, conversations full of spirit and insight, letters sparkling with unstrained humanity; and if the death of the heroine be somewhat frigid and artificial, the last days of the hero strike the only note of what we now call Byronism, between the Elizabethans and Byron himself. And yet a little story of a shipwrecked sailor, with not a tenth part of the style nor a thousandth part of the wisdom, exploring none of the arcana of humanity and deprived of the perennial interest of love, goes on from edition to edition, while *Clarissa* lies upon the shelves unread. A friend of mine, a Welsh blacksmith, was twenty-five years old and could neither read nor write, when he heard a chapter of *Robinson* read aloud in a farm kitchen. Up to that moment he had sat content, huddled in his ignoranee, but he left that farm another man. There were day-dreams, it appeared, divine day-dreams, written and printed and bound, and to be bought for money and enjoyed at pleasure. Down he sat that day, painfully learned to read Welsh, and returned to borrow the book. It had been lost, nor could he find another copy but one that was in English. Down he

[1] Crawley in *The Last Chronicle of Barset*, Melnotte in *The Way We Live Now*.

sat once more, learned English, and at length, and with entire delight, read *Robinson*. It is like the story of a love-chase. If he had heard a letter from *Clarissa*, would he have been fired with the same chivalrous ardor? I wonder. Yet *Clarissa* has every quality that can be shown in prose, one alone excepted — pictorial or picture-making romance. While *Robinson* depends, for the most part and with the overwhelming majority of its readers, on the charm of circumstance.

In the highest achievements of the art of words, the dramatic and the pictorial, the moral and romantic interest, rise and fall together by a common and organic law. Situation is animated with passion, passion clothed upon with situation. Neither exists for itself, but each inheres indissolubly with the other. This is high art; and not only the highest art possible in words, but the highest art of all, since it combines the greatest mass and diversity of the elements of truth and pleasure. Such are epics, and the few prose tales that have the epic weight. But as from a school of works, aping the creative, incident and romance are ruthlessly discarded, so may character and drama be omitted or subordinated to romance. There is one book, for example, more generally loved than Shakespeare, that captivates in childhood, and still delights in age — I mean the *Arabian Nights* — where you shall look in vain for moral or for intellectual interest. No human face or voice greets us among that wooden crowd of kings and genies, sorcerers and beggarmen. Adventure, in the most naked terms, furnishes forth the entertainment, and is found enough. Dumas approaches perhaps nearest of any modern to these Arabian authors, in the purely material charm of some of his romances. The early part of *Monte Cristo*, down to the finding of the treasure, is a piece of perfect story-telling; the man never breathed who shared these moving incidents without a tremor; and yet Faria is a thing of packthread and Dantès little more than a name. The sequel is one long-drawn error, gloomy, bloody, unnatural and dull; but as for these early chapters, I do not believe there is another volume extant where you can breathe the same unmingled atmosphere of romance. It is very thin and light, to be sure, as on a high mountain; but it is brisk and clear and sunny in proportion. I saw the other day, with envy, an old and very clever lady setting forth on a second or third voyage into *Monte Cristo*. Here are stories which powerfully affect th reader, which can be reperused at any ag and where the characters are no more tha puppets. The bony fist of the showman vi ibly propels them; their springs are an ope secret; their faces are of wood; their bellie filled with bran; and yet we thrillingly pa take of their adventures. And the poin may be illustrated still further. The las interview between Lucy and Richard Fev eril [1] is pure drama; more than that, it i the strongest scene, since Shakespeare, in th English tongue. Their first meeting by th river, on the other hand, is pure romance; i has nothing to do with character; it migh happen to any other boy and maiden, and b none the less delightful for the change. And yet I think he would be a bold man wh should choose between these passages. Thus in the same book we may have two scenes, each capital in its order: in the one, human passion, deep calling unto deep, shall utter its genuine voice; in the second, according circumstances, like instruments in tune, shall build up a trivial but desirable incident, such as we love to prefigure for ourselves; and in the end, in spite of the critics, we may hesitate to give the preference to either. The one may ask more genius — I do not say it does; but at least the other dwells as clearly in the memory.

True romantic art, again, makes a romance of all things. It reaches into the highest abstraction of the ideal; it does not refuse the most pedestrian realism. *Robinson Crusoe* is as realistic as it is romantic; both qualities are pushed to an extreme, and neither suffers. Nor does romance depend upon the material importance of the incidents. To deal with strong and deadly elements, banditti, pirates, war and murder, is to conjure with great names, and, in the event of failure, to double the disgrace. The arrival of Haydn and Consuelo at the Canon's villa [2] is a very trifling incident; yet we may read a dozen boisterous stories from beginning to end, and not receive so fresh and stirring an impression of adventure. It was the scene of Crusoe at the wreck, if I remember rightly, that so bewitched my blacksmith. Nor is the fact surprising. Every single article the castaway recovers from the hulk is "a joy for ever" to the man who reads of them. They are the things that should be found, and bare enumeration stirs the blood. I found a glimmer of the same interest the other day in a

1 In Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel.*
2 In George Sand's *Consuelo.*

new book, *The Sailor's Sweetheart*, by Mr. Clark Russell. The whole business of the brig *Morning Star* is very rightly felt and spiritedly written; but the clothes, the books, and the money satisfy the reader's mind like things to eat. We are dealing here with the old cut-and-dry, legitimate interest of treasure trove. But even treasure trove can be made dull. There are few people who have not groaned under the plethora of goods that fell to the lot of the Swiss Family Robinson, that dreary family. They found article after article, from milk kine to pieces of ordnance, a whole consignment; but no informing taste had presided over the selection, — there was no smack or relish in the invoice, and these riches left the fancy cold. The box of goods in Verne's *Mysterious Island* is another case in point: there was no gusto and no glamour about that; it might have come from a shop. But the two hundred and seventy-eight Australian sovereigns on board the *Morning Star* fell upon me like a surprise that I had expected; whole vistas of secondary stories, besides the one in hand, radiated forth from that discovery, as they radiate from a striking particular in life; and I was made for the moment as happy as a reader has a right to be.

To come at all at the nature of this quality of romance, we must bear in mind the peculiarity of our attitude to any art. No art produces illusion; in the theatre we never forget that we are in the theatre; and while we read a story, we sit wavering between two minds, now merely clapping our hands at the merit of the performance, now condescending to take an active part in fancy with the characters. This last is the triumph of romantic story-telling: when the reader consciously plays at being the hero, the scene is a good scene. Now in character studies the pleasure that we take is critical; we watch, we approve, we smile at incongruities, we are moved to sudden heats of sympathy for courage, suffering, or virtue. But the characters are still themselves, they are not us; the more clearly they are depicted, the more widely do they stand away from us, the more imperiously do they thrust us back into our place as a spectator. I cannot identify myself with Rawdon Crawley or with Eugène de Rastignac,[1] for I have scarce a hope or fear in common with them. It is not character but incident that woos us out of our reserve. Something happens as we desire to have it happen to ourselves; some situation, that we have long dallied with in fancy, is realized in the story with enticing and appropriate details. Then we forget the characters; then we push the hero aside; then we plunge into the tale in our own person and bathe in fresh experience; and then, and then only, do we say we have been reading a romance. It is not only pleasurable things that we imagine in our day-dreams; there are lights in which we are willing to contemplate even the idea of our own death, — ways in which it seems as if it would amuse us to be cheated, wounded, or calumniated. It is thus possible to construct a story, even of tragic import, in which every incident, detail, and trick of circumstance shall be welcome to the reader's thoughts. Fiction is to the grown man what play is to the child; it is there that he changes the atmosphere and tenor of his life; and when the game so chimes with his fancy that he can join in it with all his heart, when it pleases him at every turn, when he loves to recall it and dwells upon its recollection with entire delight, fiction is called romance.

Walter Scott is out and away the king of the romantics. *The Lady of the Lake* has no indisputable claim to be a poem beyond the inherent fitness and desirability of the tale. It is just such a story as a man would make up for himself, walking, in the best health and temper, through just such scenes as it is laid in. Hence it is that a charm dwells undefinable among these slovenly verses, as the unseen cuckoo fills the mountains with his note; hence, even after we have flung the book aside, the scenery and adventures remain present to the mind, a new and green possession, not unworthy of that beautiful name, *The Lady of the Lake*, or that direct, romantic opening — one of the most spirited and poetical in literature — "The stag at eve had drunk his fill." The same strength and the same weaknesses adorn and disfigure the novels. In that ill-written, ragged book, *The Pirate*, the figure of Cleveland — cast up by the sea on the resounding foreland of Dunrossness — moving, with the blood on his hands and the Spanish words on his tongue, among the simple islanders — singing a serenade under the window of his Shetland mistress — is conceived in the very highest manner of romantic invention. The words of his song, "Through groves of palm," sung in such a scene and by such a lover, clench, as in a nutshell, the emphatic contrast upon which the tale is built. In *Guy Mannering*,

[1] Crawley in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*; Rastignac in Balzac's *Père Goriot* and other tales

again, every incident is delightful to the imagination; and the scene when Harry Bertram lands at Ellangowan is a model instance of romantic method.

"'I remember the tune well,' he says, 'though I cannot guess what should at present so strongly recall it to my memory.' He took his flageolet from his pocket and played a simple melody. Apparently the tune awoke the corresponding associations of a damsel. . . . She immediately took up the song —

"'Are these the links of Forth,' she said;
'Or are they the crooks of Dee,
Or the bonny woods of Warroch Head
That I so fain would see?'

"'By heaven!' said Bertram, 'it is the very ballad.'"

On this quotation two remarks fall to be made. First, as an instance of modern feeling for romance, this famous touch of the flageolet and the old song is selected by Miss Braddon for omission. Miss Braddon's idea of a story, like Mrs. Todgers's idea of a wooden leg, were something strange to have expounded. As a matter of personal experience, Meg's appearance to old Mr. Bertram on the road, the ruins of Derncleugh, the scene of the flageolet, and the Dominie's recognition of Harry, are the four strong notes that continue to ring in the mind after the book is laid aside. The second point is still more curious. The reader will observe a mark of excision in the passage as quoted by me. Well, here is how it runs in the original: "A damsel who, close behind a fine spring about half-way down the descent, and which had once supplied the castle with water, was engaged in bleaching linen." A man who gave in such copy would be discharged from the staff of a daily paper. Scott has forgotten to prepare the reader for the presence of the "damsel"; he has forgotten to mention the spring and its relation to the ruin; and now, face to face with his omission, instead of trying back and starting fair, crams all this matter, tail foremost, into a single shambling sentence. It is not merely bad English, or bad style; it is abominably bad narrative besides.

Certainly the contrast is remarkable; and it is one that throws a strong light upon the subject of this paper. For here we have a man of the finest creative instinct touching with perfect certainty and charm the romantic junctures of his story; and we find him utterly careless, almost, it would seem, incapable, in the technical matter of style, and not only frequently weak, but frequen wrong in points of drama. In charac parts, indeed, and particularly in the Scot he was delicate, strong, and truthful; but t trite, obliterated features of too many of heroes have already wearied two generatic of readers. At times his characters w speak with something far beyond proprie with a true heroic note; but on the next pa they will be wading wearily forward with ungrammatical and undramatic rigmarole words. The man who could conceive ar write the character of Elspeth of the Crai burnfoot, as Scott has conceived and writte it, had not only splendid romantic, bu splendid tragic gifts. How comes it, the that he could so often fob us off with langui inarticulate twaddle?

It seems to me that the explanation is to l found in the very quality of his surprisin merits. As his books are play to the reade so were they play to him. He conjured u the romantic with delight, but he had hardl patience to describe it. He was a great day dreamer, a seer of fit and beautiful an humorous visions, but hardly a great artist hardly, in the manful sense, an artist at al He pleased himself, and so he pleases us. C the pleasures of his art he tasted fully; but c its toils and vigils and distresses never ma knew less. A great romantic — an idl child.

## THE LANTERN-BEARERS

1888

Published in *Scribner's Magazine* for Feb ruary, 1888, and reprinted in *Across the Plains* 1892. It contains an amplification of Steven son's doctrine of romance, and his attitud toward the realistic school of fiction.

I

These boys congregated every autum about a certain easterly fisher-village, wher they tasted in a high degree the glory of ex istence. The place was created seemingl on purpose for the diversion of young gentle men. A street or two of houses, mostly re and many of them tiled; a number of fin trees clustered about the manse and the kirk yard, and turning the chief street into shady alley; many little gardens more tha usually bright with flowers; nets a-drying and fisher-wives scolding in the backwar parts; a smell of fish, a genial smell of sea weed; whiffs of blowing sand at the stree corners; shops with golf-balls and bottle

lollipops; another shop with penny pickwicks (that remarkable cigar) and the *London Journal*, dear to me for its startling pictures, and a few novels, dear for their suggestive names: such, as well as memory serves me, were the ingredients of the town. These, you are to conceive posted on a spit between two sandy bays, and sparsely flanked with villas — enough for the boys to lodge in with their subsidiary parents, not enough (not yet enough) to cocknify the scene: a haven in the rocks in front: in front of that, a file of grey islets: to the left, endless links and sand-wreaths, a wilderness of hiding-holes, alive with popping rabbits and soaring gulls; to the right, a range of seaward crags, one rugged brow beyond another; the ruins of a mighty and ancient fortress on the brink of one; coves between — now charmed into sunshine quiet, now whistling with wind and clamorous with bursting surges; the dens and sheltered hollows redolent of thyme and southernwood, the air at the cliff's edge brisk and clean and pungent of the sea— in front of all, the Bass Rock, tilted seaward like a doubtful bather, the surf ringing it with white, the solan-geese hanging round its summit like a great and glittering smoke. This choice piece of sea-board was sacred, besides, to the wrecker; and the Bass, in the eye of fancy, still flew the colors of King James; and in the ear of fancy the arches of Tantallon still rang with horse-shoe iron, and echoed to the commands of Bell-the-Cat.[1]

There was nothing to mar your days, if you were a boy summering in that part, but the embarrassment of pleasure. You might golf if you wanted; but I seem to have been better employed. You might secrete yourself in the Lady's Walk, a certain sunless dingle of elders, all mossed over by the damp as green as grass, and dotted here and there by the stream-side with roofless walls, the cold homes of anchorites. To fit themselves for life, and with a special eye to acquire the art of smoking, it was even common for the boys to harbor there; and you might have seen a single penny pickwick, honestly shared in lengths with a blunt knife, bestrew the glen with these apprentices. Again, you might join our fishing-parties, where we sat perched as thick as solan-geese, a covey of little anglers, boy and girl, angling over each other's heads, to the much entanglement of lines and loss of podleys and consequent shrill recrimination — shrill as the geese themselves. Indeed, had that been all, you might have done this often; but though fishing be a fine pastime, the podley is scarce to be regarded as a dainty for the table; and it was a point of honor that a boy should eat all that he had taken. Or again, you might climb the Law, where the whale's jawbone stood landmark in the buzzing wind, and behold the face of many counties, and the smoke and spires of many towns, and the sails of distant ships. You might bathe, now in the flaws of fine weather, that we pathetically call our summer, now in a gale of wind, with the sand scourging your bare hide, your clothes thrashing abroad from underneath their guardian stone, the froth of the great breakers casting you headlong ere it had drowned your knees. Or you might explore the tidal rocks, above all in the ebb of spring, when the very roots of the hills were for the nonce discovered; following my leader from one group to another, groping in slippery tangle for the wreck of ships, wading in pools after the abominable creatures of the sea, and ever with an eye cast backward on the march of the tide and the menaced line of your retreat. And then you might go Crusoeing, a word that covers all extempore eating in the open air: digging perhaps a house under the margin of the links, kindling a fire of the sea-ware, and cooking apples there — if they were truly apples, for I sometimes suppose the merchant must have played us off with some inferior and quite local fruit, capable of resolving, in the neighborhood of fire, into mere sand and smoke and iodine; or perhaps pushing to Tantallon, you might lunch on sandwiches and visions in the grassy court, while the wind hummed in the crumbling turrets; or clambering along the coast, eat geans[1] (the worst, I must suppose, in Christendom) from an adventurous gean-tree that had taken root under a cliff, where it was shaken with an ague of east wind, and silvered after gales with salt, and grew so foreign among its bleak surroundings that to eat of its produce was an adventure in itself.

There are mingled some dismal memories with so many that were joyous. Of the fisher-wife, for instance, who had cut her throat at Canty Bay; and of how I ran with the other children to the top of the Quadrant, and beheld a posse of silent people escorting a cart, and on the cart, bound in a chair, her throat bandaged, and the bandage all bloody — horror! — the fisher-wife her-

1 The nickname of Archibald Douglas, fifth Earl of Angus, died 1514. He entertained Marmion, in Scott's poem, at his castle of Tantallon.

1 wild cherries.

self, who continued thenceforth to hag-ride my thoughts, and even to-day (as I recall the scene) darkens daylight. She was lodged in the little old jail in the chief street; but whether or no she died there, with a wise terror of the worst, I never inquired. She had been tippling; it was but a dingy tragedy; and it seems strange and hard that, after all these years, the poor crazy sinner should be still pilloried on her cart in the scrap-book of my memory. Nor shall I readily forget a certain house in the Quadrant where a visitor died, and a dark old woman continued to dwell alone with the dead body; nor how this old woman conceived a hatred to myself and one of my cousins, and in the dread hour of the dusk, as we were clambering on the garden-walls, opened a window in that house of mortality and cursed us in a shrill voice and with a marrowy choice of language. It was a pair of very colorless urchins that fled down the lane from this remarkable experience! But I recall with a more doubtful sentiment, compounded out of fear and exultation, the coil of equinoctial tempests; trumpeting squalls, scouring flaws of rain; the boats with their reefed lug-sails scudding for the harbor mouth, where danger lay, for it was hard to make when the wind had any east in it; the wives clustered with blowing shawls at the pierhead, where (if fate was against them) they might see boat and husband and sons — their whole wealth and their whole family — engulfed under their eyes; and (what I saw but once) a troop of neighbors forcing such an unfortunate homeward, and she squalling and battling in their midst, a figure scarcely human, a tragic Mænad.

These are things that I recall with interest; but what my memory dwells upon the most I have been all this while withholding. It was a sport peculiar to the place, and indeed to a week or so of our two months' holiday there. Maybe it still flourishes in its native spot; for boys and their pastimes are swayed by periodic forces inscrutable to man; so that tops and marbles reappear in their due season, regular like the sun and moon; and the harmless art of knucklebones has seen the fall of the Roman Empire and the rise of the United States. It may still flourish in its native spot, but nowhere else, I am persuaded; for I tried myself to introduce it on Tweedside, and was defeated lamentably; its charm being quite local, like a country wine that cannot be exported.

The idle manner of it was this:

Toward the end of September, when school-time was drawing near and the nights were already black, we would begin to sally from our respective villas, each equipped with a tin bull's-eye lantern. The thing was so well known that it had worn a rut in the commerce of Great Britain; and the grocers, about the due time, began to garnish their windows with our particular brand of lumi nary. We wore them buckled to the waist upon a cricket belt, and over them, such was the rigor of the game, a buttoned top-coat. They smelled noisomely of blistered tin; they never burned aright, though they would always burn our fingers; their use was naught; the pleasure of them merely fanciful; and yet a boy with a bull's-eye under his top-coat asked for nothing more. The fishermen used lanterns about their boats, and it was from them, I suppose, that we had got the hint; but theirs were not bull's-eyes, nor did we ever play at being fishermen. The police carried them at their belts, and we had plainly copied them in that; yet we did not pretend to be policemen. Burglars, indeed, we may have had some haunting thoughts of; and we had certainly an eye to past ages when lanterns were more common, and to certain story-books in which we had found them to figure very largely. But take it for all in all, the pleasure of the thing was substantive; and to be a boy with a bull's-eye under his top-coat was good enough for us.

When two of these asses met, there would be an anxious "Have you got your lantern?" and a gratified "Yes!" That was the shibboleth, and very needful too; for, as it was the rule to keep our glory contained, none could recognize a lantern-bearer, unless (like the pole-cat) by the smell. Four or five would sometimes climb into the belly of a ten-man lugger, with nothing but the thwarts above them — for the cabin was usually locked; or choose out some hollow of the links where the wind might whistle overhead. There the coats would be unbuttoned and the bull's-eye discovered; and in the chequering glimmer, under the huge windy hall of the night, and cheered by a rich steam of toasting tinware, these fortunate young gentlemen would crouch together in the cold sand of the links or on the scaly bilges of the fishing-boat, and delight themselves with inappropriate talk. Woe is me that I may not give some specimens — some of their foresights of life, or deep inquiries into the rudiments of man and nature, these were so fiery and so innocent, they were so

richly silly, so romantically young. But the talk, at any rate, was but a condiment; and these gatherings themselves only accidents in the career of the lantern-bearer. The essence of this bliss was to walk by yourself in the black night; the slide shut, the top-coat buttoned; not a ray escaping, whether to conduct your footsteps or to make your glory public; a mere pillar of darkness in the dark; and all the while, deep down in the privacy of your fool's heart, to know you had a bull's-eye at your belt, and to exult and sing over the knowledge.

2

It is said that a poet has died young in the breast of the most stolid. It may be contended, rather, that this (somewhat minor) bard in almost every case survives, and is the spice of life to his possessor. Justice is not done to the versatility and the unplumbed childishness of man's imagination. His life from without may seem but a rude mound of mud; there will be some golden chamber at the heart of it, in which he dwells delighted; and for as dark as his pathway seems to the observer, he will have some kind of a bull's-eye at his belt.

It would be hard to pick out a career more cheerless than that of Dancer, the miser, as he figures in the "Old Bailey[1] Reports," a prey to the most sordid persecutions, the butt of his neighborhood, betrayed by his hired man, his house beleaguered by the impish school-boy, and he himself grinding and fuming and impotently fleeing to the law against these pin-pricks. You marvel at first that anyone should willingly prolong a life so destitute of charm and dignity; and then you call to memory that had he chosen, had he ceased to be a miser, he could have been freed at once from these trials, and might have built himself a castle and gone escorted by a squadron. For the love of more recondite joys, which we cannot estimate, which, it may be, we should envy, the man had willingly forgone both comfort and consideration. "His mind to him a kingdom was"; and sure enough, digging into that mind, which seems at first a dust-heap, we unearth some priceless jewels. For Dancer must have had the love of power and the disdain of using it, a noble character in itself; disdain of many pleasures, a chief part of what is commonly called wisdom; disdain of the inevitable end, that finest trait of mankind; scorn of men's opinions, another element of virtue; and at the back of all, a conscience just like yours and mine, whining like a cur, swindling like a thimble-rigger, but still pointing (there or thereabout) to some conventional standard. Here were a cabinet portrait to which Hawthorne perhaps had done justice; and yet not Hawthorne either, for he was mildly minded, and it lay not in him to create for us that throb of the miser's pulse, his fretful energy of gusto, his vast arms of ambition clutching in he knows not what: insatiable, insane, a god with a muck-rake. Thus, at least, looking in the bosom of the miser, consideration detects the poet in the full tide of life, with more, indeed, of the poetic fire than usually goes to epics; and tracing that mean man about his cold hearth, and to and fro in his discomfortable house, spies within him a blazing bonfire of delight. And so with others, who do not live by bread alone, but by some cherished and perhaps fantastic pleasure; who are meat salesmen to the external eye, and possibly to themselves are Shakespeares, Napoleons, or Beethovens; who have not one virtue to rub against another in the field of active life, and yet perhaps, in the life of contemplation, sit with the saints. We see them on the street, and we can count their buttons; but Heaven knows in what they pride themselves! Heaven knows where they have set their treasure!

There is one fable that touches very near the quick of life; the fable of the monk who passed into the woods, heard a bird break into song, hearkened for a trill or two, and found himself on his return a stranger at his convent gates; for he had been absent fifty years, and of all his comrades there survived but one to recognize him. It is not only in the woods that this enchanter carols, though perhaps he is native there. He sings in the most doleful places. The miser hears him and chuckles, and the days are moments. With no more apparatus than an ill-smelling lantern I have evoked him on the naked links. All life that is not merely mechanical is spun out of two strands: seeking for that bird and hearing him. And it is just this that makes life so hard to value, and the delight of each so incommunicable. And just a knowledge of this, and a remembrance of those fortunate hours in which the bird has sung to us, that fills us with such wonder when we turn the pages of the realist. There, to be sure, we find a picture of life in so far as it consists of mud and of old iron, cheap desires and cheap fears, that which we are

[1] A jail in London.

ashamed to remember and that which we are careless whether we forget; but of the note of that time-devouring nightingale we hear no news.

The case of these writers of romance is most obscure. They have been boys and youths; they have lingered outside the window of the beloved, who was then most probably writing to someone else; they have sat before a sheet of paper, and felt themselves mere continents of congested poetry, not one line of which would flow; they have walked alone in the woods, they have walked in cities under the countless lamps; they have been to sea, they have hated, they have feared, they have longed to knife a man, and maybe done it; the wild taste of life has stung their palate. Or, if you deny them all the rest, one pleasure at least they have tasted to the full — their books are there to prove it — the keen pleasure of successful literary composition. And yet they fill the globe with volumes, whose cleverness inspires me with despairing admiration, and whose consistent falsity to all I care to call existence, with despairing wrath. If I had no better hope than to continue to revolve among the dreary and petty businesses, and to be moved by the paltry hopes and fears with which they surround and animate their heroes, I declare I would die now. But there has never an hour of mine gone quite so dully yet; if it were spent waiting at a railway junction, I would have some scattering thoughts, I could count some grains of memory, compared to which the whole of one of these romances seems but dross.

These writers would retort (if I take them properly) that this was very true; that it was the same with themselves and other persons of (what they call) the artistic temperament; that in this we were exceptional, and should apparently be ashamed of ourselves; but that our works must deal exclusively with (what they call) the average man, who was a prodigious dull fellow, and quite dead to all but the paltriest considerations. I accept the issue. We can only know others by ourselves. The artistic temperament (a plague on the expression!) does not make us different from our fellowmen, or it would make us incapable of writing novels; and the average man (a murrain on the word!) is just like you and me, or he would not be average. It was Whitman who stamped a kind of Birmingham sacredness upon the latter phrase; but Whitman knew very well, and showed very nobly, that the average man was full of joys and full of poetry of his own. And this har ing on life's dulness and man's meanness is loud profession of incompetence; it is one two things: the cry of the blind eye, *I cann see*, or the complaint of the dumb tongue, *cannot utter*. To draw a life without deligh is to prove I have not realized it. To pictu a man without some sort of poetry — well, goes near to prove my case, for it shows a author may have little enough. To s Dancer only as a dirty, old, small-minde impotently fuming man, in a dirty house, b sieged by Harrow boys, and probably bes by small attorneys, is to show myself as ke an observer as . . . the Harrow boys. B these young gentlemen (with a more becon ing modesty) were content to pluck Danc by the coat-tails; they did not suppose the had surprised his secret or could put hi living in a book: and it is there my err would have lain. Or say that in the san romance — I continue to call these books r mances, in the hope of giving pain — sa that in the same romance, which now begi really to take shape, I should leave to spea of Dancer, and follow instead the Harro boys; and say that I came on some such bus ness as that of my lantern-bearers on th links, and described the boys as very col spat upon by flurries of rain, and drearily su rounded, all of which they were; and the talk as silly and indecent, which it certainl was. I might upon these lines, and had Zola's genius, turn out, in a page or so, a ge of literary art, render the lantern-light wit the touches of a master, and lay on the i decency with the ungrudging hand of lov and when all was done, what a triumph woul my picture be of shallowness and dulnes how it would have missed the point! how would have belied the boys! To the ear of th stenographer, the talk is merely silly and i decent; but ask the boys themselves, an they are discussing (as it is highly proper the should) the possibilities of existence. To th eye of the observer they are wet and cold an drearily surrounded; but ask themselves, an they are in the heaven of recondite pleasur the ground of which is an ill-smelling lanter

3

For, to repeat, the ground of a man's joy often hard to hit. It may hinge at time upon a mere accessory, like the lantern, may reside, like Dancer's in the mysterio inwards of psychology. It may consist wit perpetual failure, and find exercise in the co tinued chase. It has so little bond with e

ernals (such as the observer scribbles in his note-book) that it may even touch them not; and the man's true life, for which he consents o live, lie altogether in the field of fancy. The clergyman, in his spare hours, may be winning battles, the farmer sailing ships, the banker reaping triumph in the arts: all leading another life, plying another trade from that they chose; like the poet's house-builder, who, after all, is cased in stone,

"By his fireside, as impotent fancy prompts,
Rebuilds it to his liking."

n such a case the poetry runs underground. The observer (poor soul, with his documents!) s all abroad. For to look at the man is but o court deception. We shall see the trunk rom which he draws his nourishment; but ie himself is above and abroad in the green lome of foliage, hummed through by winds and nested in by nightingales. And the true ealism were that of the poets, to climb up ifter him like a squirrel, and catch some glimpse of the heaven for which he lives. And the true realism, always and everywhere, s that of the poets to find out where joy reides, and give it a voice far beyond singing.

For to miss the joy is to miss all. In the oy of the actors lies the sense of any action. That is the explanation, that the excuse. To one who has not the secret of the lanterns, the scene upon the links is meaningless. And hence the haunting and truly spectral unreality of realistic books. Hence, when we read the English realists, the incredulous wonder with which we observe the hero's constancy under the submerging tide of dulness, and how he bears up with his jibbing sweetheart, and endures the chatter of idiot girls, and stands by his whole unfeatured wilderness of an existence, instead of seeking relief n drink or foreign travel. Hence in the French, in that meat-market of middle-aged sensuality, the disgusted surprise with which we see the hero drift sidelong, and practically quite untempted, into every description of misconduct and dishonor. In each, we miss the personal poetry, the enchanted atmosphere, that rainbow work of fancy that clothes what is naked and seems to ennoble what is base; in each, life falls dead like dough, instead of soaring away like a balloon into the colors of the sunset; each is true, each inconceivable; for no man lives in the external truth, among salts and acids, but in the warm, phantasmagoric chamber of his brain, with the painted windows and the storied walls.

Of this falsity we have had a recent example from a man who knows far better — Tolstoy's *Powers of Darkness*. Here is a piece full of force and truth, yet quite untrue. For before Mikita was led into so dire a situation he was tempted, and temptations are beautiful at least in part; and a work which dwells on the ugliness of crime and gives no hint of any loveliness in the temptation, sins against the modesty of life, and even when a Tolstoy writes it, sinks to melodrama. The peasants are not understood; they saw their life in fairer colors; even the deaf girl was clothed in poetry for Mikita, or he had never fallen. And so, once again, even an Old Bailey melodrama, without some brightness of poetry and lustre of existence, falls into the inconceivable and ranks with fairy tales.

4

In nobler books we are moved with something like the emotions of life; and this emotion is very variously provoked. We are so moved when Levine labors in the field,[1] when André[2] sinks beyond emotion, when Richard Feverel and Lucy Desborough meet beside the river,[3] when Antony, "not cowardly, puts off his helmet,"[4] when Kent has infinite pity on the dying Lear, when, in Dostoieffsky's *Despised and Rejected*, the uncomplaining hero drains his cup of suffering and virtue. These are notes that please the great heart of man. Not only love, and the fields, and the bright face of danger, but sacrifice and death and unmerited suffering humbly supported, touch in us the vein of the poetic. We love to think of them, we long to try them, we are humbly hopeful that we may prove heroes also.

We have heard, perhaps, too much of lesser matters. Here is the door, here is the open air.

*Itur in antiquam silvam.*[5]

## PULVIS ET UMBRA

1888

Published in *Scribner's Magazine* for April, 1888, and reprinted in the 1892 collection called *Across the Plains*. The title ("Dust and a Shadow") is from an ode of Horace's (IV, 7): "When we descend where father Æneas, rich

1 In Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*.
2 In Tolstoy's *War and Peace*.
3 In Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*.
4 In Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*.
5 Let us go into the ancient wood.

Tullus, and Ancus abide, we become dust and a shade." This essay, like Pater's Conclusion to *Studies in the Renaissance*, suggests a reconstruction of ethical thought in the light of the discoveries of science, but along very different lines.

We look for some reward of our endeavors and are disappointed; not success, not happiness, not even peace of conscience, crowns our ineffectual efforts to do well. Our frailties are invincible, our virtues barren; the battle goes sore against us to the going down of the sun. The canting moralist tells us of right and wrong; and we look abroad, even on the face of our small earth, and find them change with every climate, and no country where some action is not honored for a virtue and none where it is not branded for a vice; and we look in our experience, and find no vital congruity in the wisest rules, but at the best a municipal fitness. It is not strange if we are tempted to despair of good. We ask too much. Our religions and moralities have been trimmed to flatter us, till they are all emasculate and sentimentalized, and only please and weaken. Truth is of a rougher strain. In the harsh face of life, faith can read a bracing gospel. The human race is a thing more ancient than the Ten Commandments; and the bones and revolutions of the Kosmos, in whose joints we are but moss and fungus, more ancient still.

Of the Kosmos in the last resort, science reports many doubtful things and all of them appalling. There seems no substance to this solid globe on which we stamp, — nothing but symbols and ratios. Symbols and ratios carry us and bring us forth and beat us down; gravity, that swings the incommensurable suns and worlds through space, is but a figment varying inversely as the squares of distances; and the suns and worlds themselves, imponderable figures of abstraction — $NH_3$ and $H_2O$. Consideration dares not dwell upon this view; that way madness lies; science carries us into zones of speculation where there is no habitable city for the mind of man.

But take the Kosmos with a grosser faith, as our senses give it us. We behold space sown with rotatory islands, suns and worlds and the shards and wrecks of systems; some, like the sun, still blazing; some rotting, like the earth; others, like the moon, stable in desolation. All of these we take to be made of something we call matter — a thing which no analysis can help us to conceive, to whose incredible properties no familiarities can reconcile our minds. This stuff, when r purified by the lustration of fire, rots u cleanly into something we call life; seiz through all its atoms with a pediculous m ady; swelling in tumors that become inc pendent, sometimes even (by an abhorre prodigy) locomotory; one splitting into m lions, millions cohering into one, as the m ady proceeds through varying stages. Tl vital putrescence of the dust, used as we a to it, yet strikes us with occasional disgu and the profusion of worms in a piece ancient turf, or the air of a marsh darken with insects, will sometimes check o breathing so that we aspire for cleaner place But none is clean: the moving sand is i fected with lice; the pure spring, where bursts out of the mountain, is a mere issue worms; even in the hard rock the crystal forming.

In two main shapes this eruption cove the countenance of the earth: the animal an the vegetable: one in some degree the inve sion of the other: the second rooted to th spot; the first coming detached out of i natal mud, and scurrying abroad with th myriad feet of insects, or towering into th heavens on the wings of birds — a thing s incomprehensible that, if it be well consid ered, the heart stops. To what passes wit the anchored vermin, we have little clue doubtless they have their joys and sorrows their delights and killing agonies — it ap pears not how. But of the locomotory, t which we ourselves belong, we can tell more These share with us a thousand miracles the miracles of sight, of hearing, of the pro jection of sound, things that bridge space the miracles of memory and reason, by whic the present is conceived, and when it is gon its image kept living in the brains of man an brute; the miracle of reproduction, with it imperious desires and staggering conse quences. And to put the last touch upo this mountain mass of the revolting and th inconceivable, all these prey upon each othe lives tearing other lives in pieces, crammin them inside themselves, and by that sum mary process growing fat: the vegetarian, th whale, perhaps the tree, not less than th lion of the desert — for the vegetarian is onl the eater of the dumb.

Meanwhile our rotary island loaded wit predatory life, and more drenched wit blood, both animal and vegetable, than eve mutinied ship, scuds through space with un imaginable speed, and turns alternate cheek

to the reverberation of a blazing world ninety million miles away.

What a monstrous spectre is this man, the disease of the agglutinated dust, lifting alternate feet or lying drugged with slumber; killing, feeding, growing, bringing forth small copies of himself; grown upon with hair like grass, fitted with eyes that move and glitter in his face; a thing to set children screaming; — and yet looked at nearlier, known as his fellows know him, how surprising are his attributes! Poor soul, here for so little, cast among so many hardships, filled with desires so incommensurate and so inconsistent, savagely surrounded, savagely descended, irremediably condemned to prey upon his fellow lives: who should have blamed him had he been of a piece with his destiny and a being merely barbarous? And we look and behold him instead filled with imperfect virtues: infinitely childish, often admirably valiant, often touchingly kind; sitting down, amidst his momentary life, to debate of right and wrong and the attributes of the deity; rising up to do battle for an egg or die for an idea; singling out his friends and his mate with cordial affection; bringing forth in pain, rearing with long-suffering solicitude, his young. To touch the heart of his mystery, we find in him one thought, strange to the point of lunacy: the thought of duty; the thought of something owing to himself, to his neighbor, to his God; an ideal of decency, to which he would rise if it were possible; a limit of shame below which, if it be possible, he will not stoop. The design in most men is one of conformity; here and there, in picked natures, it transcends itself and soars on the other side, arming martyrs with independence; but in all, in their degrees, it is a bosom thought: — not in man alone, for we trace it in dogs and cats whom we know fairly well, and doubtless some similar point of honor sways the elephant, the oyster, and the louse, of whom we know so little: — but in man, at least, it sways with so complete an empire that merely selfish things come second, even with the selfish; that appetites are starved, fears are conquered, pains supported; that almost the dullest shrinks from the reproof of a glance, although it were a child's; and all but the most cowardly stand amid the risks of war; and the more noble, having strongly conceived an act as due to their ideal, affront and embrace death. Strange enough if, with their singular origin and perverted practice, they think they are to be rewarded in some future life; stranger still, if they are persuaded of the contrary, and think this blow which they solicit will strike them senseless for eternity. I shall be reminded what a tragedy of misconception and misconduct man at large presents — of organized injustice, cowardly violence, and treacherous crime, and of the damning imperfections of the best. They cannot be too darkly drawn. Man is indeed marked for failure in his efforts to do right. But where the best consistently miscarry, how tenfold more remarkable that all should continue to strive; and surely we should find it both touching and inspiriting, that in a field from which success is banished, our race should not cease to labor.

If the first view of this creature, stalking in his rotatory isle, be a thing to shake the courage of the stoutest, on this nearer sight he startles us with an admiring wonder. It matters not where we look, under what climate we observe him, in what state of society, in what depth of ignorance, burthened with what erroneous morality; by campfires in Assiniboia, the snow powdering his shoulders, the wind plucking his blanket, as he sits, passing the ceremonial calumet and uttering his grave opinions like a Roman senator; in ships at sea, a man inured to hardship and vile pleasures, his brightest hope a fiddle in a tavern and a bedizened trull who sells herself to rob him, and he for all that simple, innocent, cheerful, kindly like a child, constant to toil, brave to drown, for others; in the slums of cities, moving among indifferent millions to mechanical employments, without hope of change in the future, with scarce a pleasure in the present, and yet true to his virtues, honest up to his lights, kind to his neighbors, tempted perhaps in vain by the bright gin-palace, perhaps long suffering with the drunken wife that ruins him; in India (a woman this time) kneeling with broken cries and streaming tears, as she drowns her child in the sacred river; in the brothel, the discard of society, living mainly on strong drink, fed with affronts, a fool, a thief, the comrade of thieves, and even here keeping the point of honor and the touch of pity, often repaying the world's scorn with service, often standing firm upon a scruple, and at a certain cost rejecting riches: — everywhere some virtue cherished or affected, everywhere some decency of thought and carriage, everywhere the ensign of man's ineffectual goodness: — ah! if I could show you this! If I could show you these men and

women, all the world over, in every stage of history, under every abuse of error, under every circumstance of failure, without hope, without help, without thanks, still obscurely fighting the lost fight of virtue, still clinging, in the brothel or on the scaffold, to some rag of honor, the poor jewel of their souls! They may seek to escape, and yet they cannot; it is not alone their privilege and glory, but their doom; they are condemned to some nobility, all their lives long, the desire of good is at their heels, the implacable hunter.

Of all earth's meteors, here at least is the most strange and consoling: that this ennobled lemur, this hair-crowned bubble of the dust, this inheritor of a few years and sorrows, should yet deny himself his rare delights, and add to his frequent pains, and live for an ideal, however misconceived. Nor can we stop with man. He stands no longer like a thing apart. Close at his heels we see the dog, prince of another genus; and in him too we see dumbly testified the same cultus of an unattainable ideal, the same constancy in failure. Does it stop with the dog? We look at our feet where the ground is blackened with the swarming ant; a creature so small, so far from us in the hierarchy of brutes, that we can scarce trace and scarce comprehend his doings; and here also, in his ordered polities and rigorous justice, we see confessed the law of duty and the fact of individual sin. Does it stop, then, with the ant? Rather this desire of well-doing and this doom of frailty run through all the grades of life: rather is this earth, from the frosty top of Everest to the next margin of the internal fire, one stage of ineffectual virtues and one temple of pious tears and perseverance. The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together. It is the common and the god-like law of life. The browsers, the biters, the barkers, the hairy coats of field and forest, the squirrel in the oak, the thousand-footed creeper in the dust, as they share with us the gift of life, share with us the love of an ideal; strive like us — like us are tempted to grow weary of the struggle — to do well; like us receive at times unmerited refreshment, visitings of support, returns of courage; and are condemned like us to be crucified between that double law of the members and the will. Are they like us, I wonder, in the timid hope of some reward, some sugar with the drug? do they, too, stand aghast at unrewarded virtues, at the sufferings of those whom, in our partiality, we take to be just, and the prosperity of such as in our blindness we call wicked? It may b and yet God knows what they should loc for. Even while they look, even while the repent, the foot of man treads them b thousands in the dust, the yelping hounc burst upon their trail, the bullet speeds, th knives are heating in the den of the viv sectionist; or the dew falls, and the genera tion of a day is blotted out. For these ar creatures compared with whom our weaknes is strength, our ignorance wisdom, our brie span eternity.

And as we dwell, we living things, in ou isle of terror and under the imminent hanc of death, God forbid it should be man th erected, the reasoner, the wise in his own eyes — God forbid it should be man tha wearies in well-doing, that despairs of un rewarded effort, or utters the language o complaint. Let it be enough for faith, that the whole creation groans in mortal frailty strives with unconquerable constancy: surely not all in vain.

## A CHRISTMAS SERMON

1888

Published in *Scribner's Magazine* for December, 1888. As a statement of philosophy of life, it may be taken as in the highest sense autobiographical.

By the time this paper appears, I shall have been talking for twelve months; and it is thought I should take my leave in a formal and seasonable manner. Valedictory eloquence is rare, and death-bed sayings have not often hit the mark of the occasion. Charles Second, wit and skeptic, a man whose life had been one long lesson in human incredulity, an easy-going comrade, a maneuvering king — remembered and embodied all his wit and skepticism along with more than his usual good-humor in the famous "I am afraid, gentlemen, I am an unconscionable time a-dying."

### I

An unconscionable time a-dying — there is the picture ("I am afraid, gentlemen,") of your life and of mine. The sands run out, and the hours are "numbered and imputed," and the days go by; and when the last of these finds us, we have been a long time dying, and what else? The very length is something, if we reach that hour of separation undishonored; and to have lived at all is

doubtless (in the soldierly expression) to have served. There is a tale in Tacitus of how the veterans mutinied in the German wilderness; of how they mobbed Germanicus, clamoring to go home; and of how, seizing their general's hand, these old war-worn exiles passed his finger along their toothless gums. *Sunt lacrymæ rerum:*[1] this was the most eloquent of the songs of Simeon. And when a man has lived to a fair age, he bears his marks of service. He may have never been remarked upon the breach at the head of the army; at least he shall have lost his teeth on the camp bread.

The idealism of serious people in this age of ours is of a noble character. It never seems to them that they have served enough; they have a fine impatience of their virtues. It were perhaps more modest to be singly thankful that we are no worse. It is not only our enemies, those separate characters — it is we ourselves who know not what we do; — thence springs the glimmering hope that perhaps we do better than we think: that to scramble through this random business with hands reasonably clean, to have played the part of a man or woman with some reasonable fulness, to have often resisted the diabolic, and at the end to be still resisting it, is for the poor human soldier to have done right well. To ask to see some fruit of our endeavor is but a transcendental way of serving for reward; and what we take to be contempt of self is only greed of hire.

And again if we require so much of ourselves, shall we not require much of others? If we do not genially judge our own deficiencies, is it not to be feared we shall be even stern to the trespasses of others? And he who (looking back upon his own life) can see no more than that he has been unconscionably long a-dying, will he not be tempted to think his neighbor unconscionably long of getting hanged? It is probable that nearly all who think of conduct at all, think of it too much; it is certain we all think too much of sin. We are not damned for doing wrong, but for not doing right; Christ would never hear of negative morality; *thou shalt* was ever his word, with which he superseded *thou shalt not*. To make our idea of morality centre on forbidden acts is to defile the imagination and to introduce into our judgments of our fellow-men a secret element of gusto. If a thing is wrong for us, we should not dwell upon the thought of it; or we shall soon dwell upon it with inverted pleasure.

If we cannot drive it from our minds — one thing of two: either our creed is in the wrong and we must more indulgently remodel it; or else, if our morality be in the right, we are criminal lunatics and should place our persons in restraint. A mark of such unwholesomely divided minds is the passion for interference with others: the Fox without the Tail was of this breed, but had (if his biographer is to be trusted) a certain antique civility now out of date. A man may have a flaw, a weakness, that unfits him for the duties of life, that spoils his temper, that threatens his integrity, or that betrays him into cruelty. It has to be conquered; but it must never be suffered to engross his thoughts. The true duties lie all upon the farther side, and must be attended to with a whole mind so soon as this preliminary clearing of the decks has been effected. In order that he may be kind and honest, it may be needful he should become a total abstainer; let him become so then, and the next day let him forget the circumstance. Trying to be kind and honest will require all his thoughts; a mortified appetite is never a wise companion; in so far as he has had to mortify an appetite, he will still be the worse man; and of such an one a great deal of cheerfulness will be required in judging life, and a great deal of humility in judging others.

It may be argued again that dissatisfaction with our life's endeavor springs in some degree from dulness. We require higher tasks, because we do not recognize the height of those we have. Trying to be kind and honest seems an affair too simple and too inconsequential for gentlemen of our heroic mold; we had rather set ourselves to something bold, arduous, and conclusive; we had rather found a schism or suppress a heresy, cut off a hand or mortify an appetite. But the task before us, which is to co-endure with our existence, is rather one of microscopic fineness, and the heroism required is that of patience. There is no cutting of the Gordian knots of life; each must be smilingly unravelled.

To be honest, to be kind — to earn a little and to spend a little less, to make upon the whole a family happier for his presence, to renounce when that shall be necessary and not be embittered, to keep a few friends but these without capitulation — above all, on the same grim condition, to keep friends with himself — here is a task for all that a man has of fortitude and delicacy. He has an ambitious soul who would ask more: he has a

[1] Our history has its tragedies (literally, tears).

hopeful spirit who should look in such an enterprise to be successful. There is indeed one element in human destiny that not blindness itself can controvert: whatever else we are intended to do, we are not intended to succeed; failure is the fate allotted. It is so in every art and study; it is so above all in the continent art of living well. Here is a pleasant thought for the year's end or for the end of life: Only self-deception will be satisfied, and there need be no despair for the despairer.

2

But Christmas is not only the mile-mark of another year, moving us to thoughts of self-examination: it is a season, from all its associations, whether domestic or religious, suggesting thoughts of joy. A man dissatisfied with his endeavors is a man tempted to sadness. And in the midst of the winter, when his life runs lowest and he is reminded of the empty chairs of his beloved, it is well he should be condemned to this fashion of the smiling face. Noble disappointment, noble self-denial are not to be admired, not even to be pardoned, if they bring bitterness. It is one thing to enter the kingdom of heaven maim; another to maim yourself and stay without. And the kingdom of heaven is of the childlike, of those who are easy to please, who love and who give pleasure. Mighty men of their hands, the smiters and the builders and the judges, have lived long and done sternly and yet preserved this lovely character; and among our carpet interests and twopenny concerns, the shame were indelible if *we* should lose it. Gentleness and cheerfulness, these come before all morality; they are the perfect duties. And it is the trouble with moral men that they have neither one nor other. It was the moral man, the Pharisee, whom Christ could not away with. If your morals make you dreary, depend upon it they are wrong. I do not say "give them up," for they may be all you have; but conceal them like a vice, lest they should spoil the lives of better and simpler people.

A strange temptation attends upon man: to keep his eye on pleasures, even when he will not share in them; to aim all his morals against them. This very year a lady (singular iconoclast!) proclaimed a crusade against dolls; and the racy sermon against lust is a feature of the age. I venture to call such moralists insincere. At any excess or perversion of a natural appetite, their lyre sounds of itself with relishing denunciatic but for all displays of the truly diabolic envy, malice, the mean lie, the mean sile the calumnious truth, the backbiter, petty tyrant, the peevish poisoner of fan life — their standard is quite differe These are wrong, they will admit, yet sor how not so wrong; there is no zeal in th assault on them, no secret element of gu warms up the sermon; it is for things wrong in themselves that they reserve choicest of their indignation. A man m naturally disclaim all moral kinship with t Reverend Mr. Zola or the hobgoblin old la of the dolls; for these are gross and naked stances. And yet in each of us some simi element resides. The sight of a pleasure which we cannot or else will not share mo us to a particular impatience. It may because we are envious, or because we a sad, or because we dislike noise and rompi — being so refined, or because — being philosophic — we have an overweighi sense of life's gravity: at least, as we go on years, we are all tempted to frown upon o neighbor's pleasures. People are nowada so fond of resisting temptations; here is one be resisted. They are fond of self-deni here is a propensity that cannot be too pe emptorily denied. There is an idea abro among moral people that they should ma their neighbors good. One person I ha to make good: myself. But my duty to n neighbor is much more nearly expressed saying that I have to make him happy — il may.

3

Happiness and goodness, according canting moralists, stand in the relation effect and cause. There was never anythi less proved or less probable: our happine is never in our own hands; we inherit our co stitution; we stand buffet among friends a enemies; we may be so built as to feel a sne or an aspersion with unusual keenness, a so circumstanced as to be unusually expos to them; we may have nerves very sensiti to pain, and be afflicted with a disease ve painful. Virtue will not help us, and it is n meant to help us. It is not even its own r ward, except for the self-centred and — had almost said — the unamiable. No ma can pacify his conscience; if quiet be what h want, he shall do better to let that organ peri from disuse. And to avoid the penalties the law, and the minor *capitis diminutio* [1]

1 loss of prestige.

ocial ostracism, is an affair of wisdom — of unning, if you will — and not of virtue.

In his own life, then, a man is not to expect appiness, only to profit by it gladly when it hall arise; he is on duty here; he knows not ow or why, and does not need to know; he nows not for what hire, and must not ask. omehow or other, though he does not know hat goodness is, he must try to be good; omehow or other, though he cannot tell hat will do it, he must try to give happi- ess to others. And no doubt there comes n here a frequent clash of duties. How far s he to make his neighbor happy? How far nust he respect that smiling face, so easy to loud, so hard to brighten again? And how ar, on the other side, is he bound to be his rother's keeper and the prophet of his own norality? How far must he resent evil?

The difficulty is that we have little guid- nce; Christ's sayings on the point being ard to reconcile with each other, and (the ost of them) hard to accept. But the ruth of his teaching would seem to be this: n our own person and fortune, we should be eady to accept and to pardon all; it is *our* heek we are to turn, *our* coat that we are to ive away to the man who has taken *our* loak. But when another's face is buffeted, erhaps a little of the lion will become us est. That we are to suffer others to be njured, and stand by, is not conceivable and urely not desirable. Revenge, says Bacon, s a kind of wild justice; its judgments at east are delivered by an insane judge; and n our own quarrel we can see nothing truly nd do nothing wisely. But in the quarrel f our neighbor, let us be more bold. One erson's happiness is as sacred as another's; hen we cannot defend both, let us defend ne with a stout heart. It is only in so far s we are doing this, that we have any right o interfere: the defence of B is our only round of action against A. A has as good a ight to go to the devil, as we to go to glory; nd neither knows what he does.

The truth is that all these interventions nd denunciations and militant mongerings f moral half-truths, though they be some- imes needful, though they are often enjoy- ble, do yet belong to an inferior grade of uties. Ill-temper and envy and revenge nd here an arsenal of pious disguises; this is he playground of inverted lusts. With a ttle more patience and a little less temper, a entler and wiser method might be found in lmost every case; and the knot that we cut y some fine heady quarrel-scene in private life, or, in public affairs, by some denunci- atory act against what we are pleased to call our neighbor's vices, might yet have been unwoven by the hand of sympathy.

4

To look back upon the past year, and see how little we have striven and to what small purpose; and how often we have been cow- ardly and hung back, or temerarious and rushed unwisely in; and how every day and all day long we have transgressed the law of kindness: — it may seem a paradox, but in the bitterness of these discoveries, a certain consolation resides. Life is not designed to minister to a man's vanity. He goes upon his long business most of the time with a hanging head, and all the time like a blind child. Full of rewards and pleasures as it is — so that to see the day break or the moon rise, or to meet a friend, or to hear the dinner- call when he is hungry, fills him with surpris- ing joys — this world is yet for him no abid- ing city. Friendships fall through, health fails, weariness assails him; year after year, he must thumb the hardly varying record of his own weakness and folly. It is a friendly process of detachment. When the time comes that he should go, there need be few illusions left about himself. *Here lies one who meant well, tried a little, failed much:* — surely that may be his epitaph, of which he need not be ashamed. Nor will he complain at the summons which calls a defeated soldier from the field: defeated, ay, if he were Paul or Marcus Aurelius! — but if there is still one inch of fight in his old spirit, undishonored. The faith which sustained him in his life- long blindness and life-long disappointment will scarce even be required in this last formality of laying down his arms. Give him a march with his old bones; there, out of the glorious sun-colored earth, out of the day and the dust and the ecstasy — there goes another Faithful Failure!

From a recent book of verse, where there is more than one such beautiful and manly poem, I take this memorial piece: it says bet- ter than I can, what I love to think; let it be our parting word:

"A late lark twitters from the quiet skies;
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended,
Lingers as in content,
There falls on the old, grey city
An influence luminous and serene.
A shining peace.

"The smoke ascends
In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires
Shine, and are changed. In the valley
Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The sun,
Closing his benediction,
Sinks, and the darkening air
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing night—
Night, with her train of stars
And her great gift of sleep.

"So be my passing!
My task accomplished and the long day do
My wages taken, and in my heart
Some late lark singing,
Let me be gathered to the quiet west,
The sundown splendid and serene,
Death." [1]

1 From *A Book of Verses*, by William Ernest Her
D. Nutt, 1888. (Stevenson's note.)

## JAMES THOMSON (1834–1882)

Thomson was at different times army-schoolmaster, general agent in Colorado for a mine, c
respondent in Spain for the New York *World*, and contributor to various magazines. He is g
erally known by the initials 'B. V.,' which stand for Bysshe, Shelley's name, and Vanolis, an a
gram of Novalis, the pen name of the German romanticist von Hardenberg.

The epithet "pessimistic" is regularly attached to the writings of James Thomson. His b
poems, the product of a life harassed by poverty and disease, are assuredly despairing in subje
matter, but illuminated by the imagination of a genius. He has, however, written delight
poems in a lighter vein, and some discriminating literary studies in prose.

Selections from Thomson have been made and excellently edited by G. T. Gerould (Holt). T
standard biography is by H. S. Salt.

### MATER TENEBRARUM [1]

In the endless nights, from my bed, where sleepless in anguish I lie,
I startle the stillness and gloom with a bitter and strong cry:
O Love! O Beloved long lost! come down from thy Heaven above,
For my heart is wasting and dying in uttermost famine for love!
Come down for a moment! oh, come! Come serious and mild
And pale, as thou wert on this earth, thou adorable Child!
Or come as thou art, with thy sanctitude, triumph and bliss,
For a garment of glory about thee; and give me one kiss,
One tender and pitying look of thy tenderest eyes,
One word of solemn assurance and truth that the soul with its love never dies!

In the endless nights, from my bed, where sleepless in frenzy I lie,
I cleave through the crushing gloom with a bitter and deadly cry:
Oh! where have they taken my Love from our Eden of bliss on this earth,
Which now is a frozen waste of sepulchral and horrible dearth?
Have they killed her indeed? Is her soul
her body, which long
Has moldered away in the dust where t
foul worms throng?
O'er what abhorrent Lethes, to what rem
est star,
Is she rapt away from my pursuit throu
cycles and systems far?
She is dead, she is utterly dead; for her
would hear and speed
To the wild imploring cry of my heart th
cries in its dreadful need.

In the endless nights, on my bed, whe
sleeplessly brooding I lie,
I burden the heavy gloom with a bitter a
weary sigh:
No hope in this worn-out world, no hope b
yond the tomb;
No living and loving God, but blind a
stony Doom.
Anguish and grief and sin, terror, disease, a
despair:
Why throw not off this life, this garment
torture I wear,
And go down to sleep in the grave in eve
lasting rest?
What keeps me yet in this life, what spark
my frozen breast?
A fire of dread, a light of hope, kindled,
Love, by thee;
For thy pure and gentle and beautiful soul,
must immortal be.

1 Mother of darkness.

1859.

## *From* SUNDAY AT HAMPSTEAD

I

This is the Heath of Hampstead,[1]
There is the dome of Saint Paul's;
Beneath, on the serried house-tops,
A chequered lustre falls:

And the mighty city of London,
Under the clouds and the light,
Seems a low wet beach, half shingle,[2]
With a few sharp rocks upright.

Here will we sit, my darling,
And dream an hour away:
The donkeys are hurried and worried,
But we are not donkeys today:

Through all the weary week, dear,
We toil in the murk down there,
Tied to a desk and a counter,
A patient stupid pair!

But on Sunday we slip our tether,
And away from the smoke and the smirch;
Too grateful to God for His Sabbath
To shut its hours in a church.

Away to the green, green country,
Under the open sky;
Where the earth's sweet breath is incense
And the lark sings psalms on high.

On Sunday we're Lord and Lady,
With ten times the love and glee
Of those pale and languid rich ones
Who are always and never free.

They drawl and stare and simper,
So fine and cold and staid,
Like exquisite waxwork figures
That must be kept in the shade:

We can laugh out loud when merry,
We can romp at kiss-in-the-ring,
We can take our beer at a public,
We can loll on the grass and sing. . . .

Would you grieve very much, my darling,
If all yon low wet shore
Were drowned by a mighty flood-tide,
And we never toiled there more?

Wicked? — There is no sin, dear,
In an idle dreamer's head;
He turns the world topsy-turvy
To prove that his soul's not dead.

I am sinking, sinking, sinking;
It is hard to sit upright!
Your lap is the softest pillow!
Good night, my love, good night!

1863–65.

[1] Hampstead Heath, on the edge of London and part of the city, is a favorite playground of the working people of London, especially on bank holidays.
[2] coarse gravel.

## *From* THE CITY OF DREADFUL NIGHT

4

He stood alone within the spacious square
Declaiming from the central grassy mound,
With head uncovered and with streaming hair,
As if large multitudes were gathered round:
A stalwart shape, the gestures full of might,
The glances burning with unnatural light: —

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: All was black,
In heaven no single star, on earth no track;
A brooding hush without a stir or note,
The air so thick it clotted in my throat;
And thus for hours; then some enormous things
Swooped past with savage cries and clanking wings:
But I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Eyes of fire
Glared at me throbbing with a starved desire;
The hoarse and heavy and carnivorous breath
Was hot upon me from deep jaws of death;
Sharp claws, swift talons, fleshless fingers cold
Plucked at me from the bushes, tried to hold:
But I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Lo you, there,
That hillock burning with a brazen glare;
Those myriad dusky flames with points a-glow
Which writhed and hissed and darted to and fro;
A Sabbath of the Serpents, heaped pell-mell
For Devil's roll-call and some fête of Hell:
Yet I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Meteors ran
And crossed their javelins on the black sky-span;
The zenith opened to a gulf of flame,
The dreadful thunderbolts jarred earth's fixed frame;
The ground all heaved in waves of fire that surged
And weltered round me sole there unsubmerged:
Yet I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Air once more,
And I was close upon a wild sea-shore;
Enormous cliffs arose on either hand,
The deep tide thundered up a league-broad strand;
White foambelts seethed there, wan spray swept and flew;
The sky broke, moon and stars and clouds and blue:
And I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: On the left,
The sun arose and crowned a broad crag-cleft;
There stopped and burned out black, except a rim,
A bleeding eyeless socket, red and dim;
Whereon the moon fell suddenly south-west,
And stood above the right-hand cliffs at rest:
Still I strode on austere;
No hope could have no fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: From the right
A shape came slowly with a ruddy light;
A woman with a red lamp in her hand,
Bareheaded and barefooted on that strand;
O desolation moving with such grace!
O anguish with such beauty in thy face!
I fell as on my bier,
Hope travailed with such fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was
As I came through the desert: I was twa
Two selves distinct that cannot join agai
One stood apart and knew but could not s
And watched the other stark in swoon a
her;
And she came on, and never turned aside,
Between such sun and moon and roar
tide:
And as she came more near
My soul grew mad with fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: Hell is mild
And piteous matched with that accurs
wild;
A large black sign was on her breast th
bowed,
A broad black band ran down her snow-wh
shroud;
That lamp she held was her own burni
heart,
Whose blood-drips trickled step by st
apart:
The mystery was clear:
Mad rage had swallowed fear.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: By the sea
She knelt and bent above that senseless m
Those lamp-drops fell upon my white bro
there,
She tried to cleanse them with her tears an
hair;
She murmured words of pity, love, and wo
She heeded not the level rushing flow:
And mad with rage and fear,
I stood stonebound so near.

As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert: When the ti
Swept up to her there kneeling by my sid
She clasped that corpse-like me, and the
were borne
Away, and this vile me was left forlorn;
I know the whole sea cannot quench tha
heart,
Or cleanse that brow, or wash those tw
apart:
They love; their doom is drear,
Yet they nor hope nor fear;
But I, what do I here?

1870–74.

# FRANCIS THOMPSON (1860–1907)

Francis Thompson is the great Roman Catholic poet of the nineteenth century. He was educated at Ushaw College, a Catholic college near Durham, and later studied medicine at Owens College, Manchester. He never practiced, however. During a life made painful by disease and personal sorrows, he was befriended and encouraged by Wilfred and Alice Meynell, who, after his death, edited his poems.

Thompson is usually regarded as a literary descendant of the metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century, especially Crashaw. This is only partly true. In his religious mysticism, his delight in conceits and in strange words, many of which he coined himself, he does resemble them; but he has an originality all his own. His literary idol was Shelley, about whom he wrote a now-famous essay. Besides his poems, he has written critical and familiar essays, which for freshness and charm rank among the best of the century.

## THE HOUND OF HEAVEN

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him down the arches of the years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
Up vistaed hopes I sped;
And shot, precipitated,
Adown Titanic glooms of chasmèd fears,
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.
But with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
They beat — and a Voice beat
More instant than the Feet —
"All things betray thee, who betrayest Me."

I pleaded, outlaw-wise,
By many a hearted casement, curtained red,
Trellised with intertwining charities;
(For, though I knew His love Who followèd,
Yet was I sore adread
Lest, having Him, I must have naught beside);
But, if one little casement parted wide,
The gust of His approach would clash it to.
Fear wist not to evade, as Love wist to pursue.
Across the margent of the world I fled,
And troubled the gold gateways of the stars,
Smiting for shelter on their clangèd bars;
Fretted to dulcet jars
And silvern chatter the pale ports o' the moon.
I said to dawn, Be sudden; to eve, Be soon;
With thy young skiey blossoms heap me over
From this tremendous Lover!
Float thy vague veil about me, lest He see!
I tempted all His servitors, but to find
My own betrayal in their constancy,
In faith to Him their fickleness to me,
Their traitorous trueness, and their loyal deceit.
To all swift things for swiftness did I sue;
Clung to the whistling mane of every wind.
But whether they swept, smoothly fleet,
The long savannahs of the blue;
Or whether, Thunder-driven,
They clanged his chariot 'thwart a heaven

Plashy with flying lightnings round the spurn o' their feet: —
Fear wist not to evade as Love wist to pursue.
Still with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
Came on the following Feet,
And a Voice above their beat —
"Naught shelters thee, who wilt not shelter Me."

I sought no more that after which I strayed
In face of man or maid;
But still within the little children's eyes
Seems something, something that replies;
*They* at least are for me, surely for me!
I turned me to them very wistfully;
But, just as their young eyes grew sudden fair
With dawning answers there,
Their angel plucked them from me by the hair.
"Come then, ye other children, Nature's — share
With me" (said I) "your delicate fellowship;
Let me greet you lip to lip,

Let me twine with you caresses,
Wantoning
With our Lady-Mother's vagrant tresses,
Banqueting
With her in her wind-walled palace,
Underneath her azured daïs,
Quaffing, as your taintless way is,
From a chalice
Lucent-weeping out of the dayspring."
So it was done:
*I* in their delicate fellowship was one —
Drew the bolt of Nature's secrecies.
*I* knew all the swift importings
On the wilful face of skies;
I knew how the clouds arise
Spumèd of the wild sea-snortings;
All that's born or dies
Rose and drooped with — made them shapers
Of mine own moods, or wailful or divine —
With them joyed and was bereaven.
I was heavy with the even,
When she lit her glimmering tapers
Round the day's dead sanctities.
I laughed in the morning's eyes.
I triumphed and I saddened with all weather,
Heaven and I wept together,
And its sweet tears were salt with mortal mine;
Against the red throb of its sunset-heart
I laid my own to beat,
And share commingling heat;
But not by that, by that, was eased my human smart.
In vain my tears were wet on Heaven's grey cheek.
For ah! we know not what each other says,
These things and I; in sound *I* speak—
*Their* sound is but their stir, they speak by silences.
Nature, poor stepdame, cannot slake my drouth;
Let her, if she would owe me,
Drop yon blue bosom-veil of sky, and show me
The breasts o' her tenderness:
Never did any milk of hers once bless
My thirsting mouth.
Nigh and nigh draws the chase,
With unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy;
And past those noisèd Feet
A voice comes yet more fleet —
"Lo! naught contents thee, who content'st not Me."
Naked I wait Thy love's uplifted stroke!
My harness piece by piece Thou hast hew
from me,
And smitten me to my knee;
I am defenceless utterly.
I slept, methinks, and woke,
And, slowly gazing, find me stripped in slee
In the rash lustihead of my young powers,
I shook the pillaring hours
And pulled my life upon me; grimed wit
smears,
I stand amid the dust o' the mounde
years —
My mangled youth lies dead beneath th
heap
My days have crackled and gone up i
smoke,
Have puffed and burst as sun-starts on
stream.
Yea, faileth now even dream
The dreamer, and the lute the lutanist;
Even the linked fantasies, in whose blossom
twist
I swung the earth a trinket at my wrist,
Are yielding; cords of all too weak account
For earth with heavy griefs so overplussed.
Ah! is Thy love indeed
A weed, albeit an amaranthine weed,
Suffering no flowers except its own to mount
Ah! must —
Designer infinite! —
Ah! must Thou char the wood ere Thou
canst limn with it?
My freshness spent its wavering shower i
the dust;
And now my heart is as a broken fount,
Wherein tear-drippings stagnate, spilt dowr
ever
From the dank thoughts that shiver
Upon the sighful branches of my mind.
Such is; what is to be?
The pulp so bitter, how shall taste the rind
I dimly guess what Time in mists confounds
Yet ever and anon a trumpet sounds
From the hid battlements of Eternity;
Those shaken mists a space unsettle, then
Round the half-glimpsèd turrets slowly wash
again.
But not ere him who summoneth
I first have seen, enwound
With glooming robes purpureal, cypress-
crowned;
His name I know, and what his trumpet
saith.
Whether man's heart or life it be which
yields
Thee harvest, must Thy harvest fields
Be dunged with rotten death?

Now of that long pursuit
Comes on at hand the bruit;
That Voice is round me like a bursting sea:
"And is thy earth so marred,
Shattered in shard on shard?
Lo, all things fly thee, for thou fliest Me!
Strange, piteous, futile thing,
Wherefore should any set thee love apart?
Seeing none but I makes much of naught"
(He said),
"And human love needs human meriting:
How hast thou merited —
Of all man's clotted clay the dingiest clot?
Alack, thou knowest not
How little worthy of any love thou art!
Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee
Save Me, save only Me?
All which I took from thee I did but take,
Not for thy harms,
But just that thou might'st seek it in My arms.
All which thy child's mistake
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:
Rise, clasp My hand, and come!"

Halts by me that footfall:
Is my gloom, after all,
Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly?

"Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,
I am He Whom thou seekest!
Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me."

## ENVOY

Go, songs, for ended is our brief, sweet play;
Go, children of swift joy and tardy sorrow:
And some are sung, and that was yesterday,
And some unsung, and that may be to-morrow.

Go forth; and if it be o'er stony way,
Old joy can lend what newer grief must borrow:
And it was sweet, and that was yesterday,
And sweet is sweet, though purchased with sorrow.

Go, songs, and come not back from your far way;
And if men ask you why ye smile and sorrow,
Tell them ye grieve, for your hearts know To-day,
Tell them ye smile, for your eyes know To-morrow.

# GEORGE MEREDITH (1828–1909)

George Meredith was born in Portsmouth, February 12, 1828. He was educated at Neuwied, on the Rhine. On his return to England he was articled as clerk to a solicitor, but his passion was for literature. He lived for a while by journalism, and later for many years acted as reader of manuscripts for a London publisher. He began his literary career with a volume of poetry in 1851. His first marriage was unhappy and ended in separation, and the suicide of his wife — a situation which suggests the subject of his longest poem, a sequence of poems of sixteen lines called *Modern Love* published in 1862. Meanwhile Meredith, while not abandoning poetry, had begun to produce that remarkable series of novels which are among the chief glories of English fiction, some of them being *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* (1859), *Evan Harrington* (1861), *Beauchamp's Career* (1875), *The Egoist* (1879), *Diana of the Crossways* (1885). He died in 1909.

Meredith's prose is marked by certain eccentricities of style which make his novels difficult reading. Still more is this true of his poetry. The extreme concentration, rapid changes of subject, and unusual use of words call for the closest attention. But both Meredith's novels and poetry repay this effort. Meredith is one of the writers who have given to the chief intellectual concept of the age, the theory of evolution, a genuine imaginative treatment. Meredith's philosophy is one of optimism. He sees the long evolution of physical life continuing into higher forms of intellectual life. To this result the work of Nature is directed and to it hardship and trial constitute a discipline. He is like Browning, both in his difficulty of style and in the energy and hopefulness of his message. Added to this, Meredith had a sense of the communion between man and his mother Nature and likewise a perception of the external phenomena of Nature which puts him among the greatest of Nature poets.

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## MODERN LOVE

The fifty poems that make up *Modern Love* are regarded by some critics as a sonnet-sequence. Note, however, that the poems have sixteen lines (a length not unusual in the early history of the sonnet), and that, unlike most sonnet-sequences, they tell a connected, complex story.

### 1

By this he knew she wept with waking eyes:
That, at his hand's light quiver by her head,
The strange low sobs that shook their common bed,
Were called into her with a sharp surprise,
And strangled mute, like little gaping snakes,
Dreadfully venomous to him. She lay
Stone-still, and the long darkness flowed away
With muffled pulses. Then, as midnight makes
Her giant heart of Memory and Tears
Drink the pale drug of silence, and so beat
Sleep's heavy measure, they from head to feet
Were moveless, looking through their dead black years,
By vain regret scrawled over the blank wall.
Like sculptured effigies they might be seen
Upon their marriage-tomb, the sword between;
Each wishing for the sword that severs all.

### 2

It ended, and the morrow brought the task.
Her eyes were guilty gates, that let him in
By shutting all too zealous for their sin:
Each sucked a secret, and each wore a mask.
But, oh, the bitter taste her beauty had!
He sickened as at breath of poison-flowers:
A languid humor stole among the hours,
And if their smiles encountered, he went mad,
And raged deep inward, till the light was brown
Before his vision, and the world forgot,
Looked wicked as some old dull murder-spot.
A star with lurid beams, she seemed to crown
The pit of infamy: and then again
He fainted on his vengefulness, and strove
To ape the magnanimity of love,
And smote himself, a shuddering heap of pain.

### 48

Their sense is with their senses all mixed in,
Destroyed by subtleties these women are!
More brain, O Lord, more brain! or we shall mar
Utterly this fair garden we might win.
Behold! I looked for peace, and thought near.
Our inmost hearts had opened, each to each!
We drank the pure daylight of honest speech!
Alas! that was the fatal draught, I fear.
For when of my lost Lady[1] came the word
This woman, O this agony of flesh!
Jealous devotion bade her break the mesh,
That I might seek that other like a bird.
I do adore the nobleness! despise
The act! She has gone forth, I know not where.
Will the hard world my sentience of her share?
I feel the truth; so let the world surmise.

### 49

He[2] found her[3] by the ocean's moaning verge,
Nor any wicked change in her discerned;
And she believed his old love had returned,
Which was her exultation, and her scourge.
She took his hand, and walked with him, and seemed
The wife he sought, though shadow-like and dry.
She had one terror, lest her heart should sigh,
And tell her loudly she no longer dreamed.
She dared not say, "This is my breast: look in."
But there's a strength to help the desperate weak.
That night he learned how silence best can speak
The awful things when Pity pleads for Sin.
About the middle of the night her call
Was heard, and he came wondering to the bed.
"Now kiss me, dear! it may be, now!" she said.
Lethe had passed those lips,[4] and he knew all.

### 50

Thus piteously Love closed what he begat:
The union of this ever-diverse pair!
These two were rapid falcons in a snare,
Condemned to do the flitting of the bat.
Lovers beneath the singing sky of May,
They wandered once; clear as the dew on flowers:
But they fed not on the advancing hours:
Their hearts held cravings for the buried day.

1 The woman with whom the husband has been carrying on a flirtation.
2 The husband. 3 The wife.
4 i.e., she had killed herself.

Then each applied to each that fatal knife,
Deep questioning, which probes to endless dole.
Ah, what a dusty answer gets the soul
When hot for certainties in this our life!—
In tragic hints here see what evermore
Moves dark as yonder midnight ocean's force,
Thundering like ramping hosts of warrior horse,
To throw that faint thin line upon the shore!

## LUCIFER IN STARLIGHT

On a starred night Prince Lucifer uprose.
Tired of his dark dominion swung the fiend
Above the rolling ball in cloud part screened,
Where sinners hugged their spectre of repose.
Poor prey to his hot fit of pride were those.
And now upon his western wing he leaned,
Now his huge bulk o'er Afric's sands careened,
Now the black planet shadowed Arctic snows.
Soaring through wider zones that pricked his scars
With memory of the old revolt from Awe,
He reached a middle height, and at the stars,
Which are the brain of heaven, he looked, and sank.
Around the ancient track marched, rank on rank,
The army of unalterable law.

## A CERTAIN PEOPLE

As Puritans they prominently wax,
And none more kindly gives and takes hard knocks.
Strong psalmic chanting, like to nasal cocks,
They join to thunderings of their hearty thwacks.
But naughtiness, with hoggery, not lacks
When Peace another door in them unlocks,
Where conscience shows the eyeing of an ox
Grown dully apprehensive of an Axe.
Graceless they are when gone to frivolousness,
Fearing the God they flout, the God they glut.
They need their pious exercises less
Than schooling in the Pleasures: fair belief
That these are devilish only to their thief,
Charged with an Axe nigh on the occiput.

## A STAVE OF ROVING TIM

The wind is East, the wind is West,
Blows in and out of haven;
The wind that blows is the wind that's best,
And croak, my jolly raven!
If here awhile we jigged and laughed,
The like we will do yonder;
For he's the man who masters a craft,
And light as a lord can wander.
So, foot the measure, Roving Tim,
And croak, my jolly raven!
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven.

You live in rows of snug abodes,
With gold, maybe, for counting;
And mine's the beck of the rainy roads
Against the sun a-mounting.
I take the day as it behaves,
Nor shiver when 'tis airy;
But comes a breeze, all you are on waves,
Sick chickens o' Mother Carey!
So, now for next, cries Roving Tim,
And croak, my jolly raven!
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven.

Sweet lass, you screw a lovely leer,
To make a man consider.
If you were up with the auctioneer,
I'd be a handsome bidder.
But wedlock clips the rover's wing;
She tricks him fly to spider;
And when we get to fights in the Ring,
It's trumps when you play outsider.
So, wrench and split, cries Roving Tim,
And croak, my jolly raven!
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven.

Along my winding way I know
A shady dell that's winking;
The very corner for Self and Co
To do a world of thinking.
And shall I this? and shall I that?
Till Nature answers, n'ether!
Strike match and light your pipe in your hat,
Rejoicing in sound shoe-leather!
So, lead along, cries Roving Tim,
And croak, my jolly raven!
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven.

A cunning hand 'll hand you bread,
With freedom for your capers.
I'm not so sure of a cunning head;
It steers to pits or vapors.

But as for Life, we'll hear in sight
The lesson Nature teaches;
Regard it in a sailoring light,
And treat it like thirsty leeches.
So fly your jib, cries Roving Tim,
And top your boom, old raven!
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven.

She'll take, to please her dame and dad,
The shopman nicely shaven.
She'll learn to think o' the marching lad
When perchers show they're craven.
You say the shopman piles a heap,
While I perhaps am fasting;
And bless your wits, it haunts him in sleep,
His tin-kettle chance of lasting!
So hail the road, cried Roving Tim,
And hail the rain, old raven!
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven.

He's half a wife, yon pecker bill;
A book and likewise preacher.
With any soul, in a game of skill,
He'll prove your over-reacher.
The reason is, his brains are bent
On doing things right single.
You'd wish for them when pitching your tent
At night in a whirly dingle!
So, off we go, cries Roving Tim,
And on we go, old raven!
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven.

Lord, no, man's lot is not for bliss;
To call it woe is blindness:
It's here a kick, and it's there a kiss,
And here and there a kindness.
He starts a hare and calls her joy;
He runs her down to sorrow:
The dogs within him bother the boy,
But 'tis a new day to-morrow.
So, I at helm, cries Roving Tim,
And you at bow, old raven!
The wind according to its whim
Is in and out of haven.

## HARD WEATHER

Bursts from a rending East in flaws
The young green leaflet's harrier, sworn
To strew the garden, strip the shaws,[1]
And show our Spring with banner torn.
Was ever such virago morn?
The wind has teeth, the wind has claws.

1 The tops of potatoes and similar tubers or roots.

All the wind's wolves through woods are loose
The wild wind's falconry aloft.
Shrill underfoot the grassblade shrews,
At gallop, clumped, and down the croft
Bestrid by shadows, beaten, tossed;
It seems a scythe, it seems a rod.
The howl is up at the howl's accost;
The shivers greet and the shivers nod.

Is the land ship? we are rolled, we drive
Tritonly, cleaving hiss and hum;
Whirl with the dead, or mount or dive,
Or down in dregs, or on in scum.
And drums the distant, pipes the near,
And vale and hill are grey in grey,
As when the surge is crumbling sheer,
And sea-mews wing the haze of spray.
Clouds — are they bony witches? — swarms
Darting swift on the robber's flight,
Hurry an infant sky in arms:
It peeps, it becks; 'tis day, 'tis night.
Black while over the loop of blue
The swathe is closed, like shroud on corse.
Lo, as if swift the Furies flew,
The Fates at heel at a cry to horse!

Interpret me the savage whirr:
And is it Nature scourged, or she,
Her offspring's executioner,
Reducing land to barren sea?
But is there meaning in a day
When this fierce angel of the air,
Intent to throw, and haply slay,
Can, for what breath of life we bear,
Exact the wrestle? Call to mind
The many meanings glistening up
When Nature to her nurslings kind,
Hands them the fruitage and the cup!
And seek we rich significance
Not otherwhere than with those tides
Of pleasure on the sunned expanse,
Whose flow deludes, whose ebb derides?

Look in the face of men who fare
Lock-mouthed, a match in lungs and thews
For this fierce angel of the air,
To twist with him and take his bruise.
That is the face beloved of old
Of Earth, young mother of her brood:
Nor broken for us shows the mold
When muscle is in mind renewed:
Though farther from her nature rude,
Yet nearer to her spirit's hold.
And though of gentler mood serene,
Still forceful of her fountain-jet.
So shall her blows be shrewdly met,
Be luminously read the scene

Where Life is at her grindstone set,
That she may give us edgeing keen,
String us for battle, till as play
The common strokes of fortune shower.
Such meaning in a dagger-day
Our wits may clasp to wax in power.
Yea, feel us warmer at her breast,
By spin of blood in lusty drill,
Than when her honeyed hands caressed,
And Pleasure, sapping, seemed to fill.

Behold the life at ease; it drifts.
The sharpened life commands its course.
She winnows, winnows roughly; sifts,
To dip her chosen in her source:
Contention is the vital force,
Whence pluck they brain, her prize of gifts,
Sky of the senses! on which height,
Not disconnected, yet released,
They see how spirit comes to light,
Through conquest of the inner beast,
Which Measure tames to movement sane,
In harmony with what is fair.
Never is Earth misread by brain:
That is the welling of her, there
The mirror: with one step beyond,
For likewise is it voice; and more,
Benignest kinship bids respond,
When wail the weak, and then restore
Whom days as fell as this may rive.
While Earth sits ebon in her gloom,
Us atomies of life alive
Unheeding, bent on life to come.
Her children of the laboring brain,
These are the champions of the race,
True parents, and the sole humane,
With understanding for their base.
Earth yields the milk, but all her mind
Is vowed to thresh for stouter stock.
Her passion for old giantkind,
That scaled the mount, uphurled the rock,
Devolves on them who read aright
Her meaning and devoutly serve;
Nor in her starlessness of night
Peruse her with the craven nerve:
But even as she from grass to corn,
To eagle high from grubbing mole,
Prove in strong brain her noblest born,
The station for the flight of soul.

## ODE TO THE COMIC SPIRIT

This poem must be read thoughtfully, and allowance should be made for abruptness and circumlocution in both the ideas and imagery. Compare also Meredith's *Essay on Comedy*.

Sword of Common Sense! —
Our surest gift: the sacred chain
Of man to man: firm earth for trust
In structures vowed to permanence: —
Thou guardian issue of the harvest brain!
Implacable perforce of just;
With that good treasure in defence,
Which is our gold crushed out of joy and pain
Since first men planted foot and hand was king:
Bright, nimble of the marrow-nerve
To wield thy double edge, retort
Or hold the deadlier reserve,
And through thy victim's weapon sting:
Thine is the service, thine the sport
This shifty heart of ours to hunt
Across its webs and round the many a ring
Where fox it is, or snake, or mingled seeds
Occasion heats to shape, or the poor smoke
Struck from a puff-ball, or the troughster's grunt;
Once lion of our desert's trodden weeds;
And but for thy straight finger at the yoke,
Again to be the lordly paw,
Naming his appetites his needs,
Behind a decorative cloak:
Thou, of the highest, the unwritten Law
We read upon that building's architrave
In the mind's firmament, by men upraised
With sweat of blood when they had quitted cave
For fellowship, and rearward looked amazed,
Where the prime motive gapes a lurid jaw,
Thou, soul of wakened heads, art armed to warn,
Restrain, lest we backslide on whence we sprang,
Scarce better than our dwarf beginning shoot,
Of every gathered pearl and blossom shorn;
Through thee, in novel wiles to win disguise,
Seen are the pits of the disruptor, seen
His rebel agitation at our root:
Thou hast him out of hawking eyes;
Nor ever morning of the clang
Young Echo sped on hill from horn
In forest blown when scent was keen
Off earthly dews besprinkling blades
Of covert grass more merrily rang
The yelp of chase down alleys green,
Fourth of the headlong-pouring glades,
Over the dappled fallows wild away,
Than thy fine unaccented scorn
At sight of man's old secret brute,
Devout for pasture on his prey,
Advancing, yawning to devour;
With step of deer, with voice of flute,
Haply with visage of the lily flower.

Let the cock crow and ruddy morn
His handmaiden appear! Youth claims his hour.
The generously ludicrous
Espouses it. But see we sons of day,
On whom Life leans for guidance in our fight,
Accept the throb for lord of us;
For lord, for the main central light
That gives direction, not the eclipse; —
Or dost thou look where niggard Age,
Demanding reverence for wrinkles, whips
A tumbled top to grind a wolf's worn tooth; —
Hoar despot on our final stage,
In dotage of a stunted Youth; —
Or it may be some venerable sage,
Not having thee awake in him, compact
Of wisdom else, the breast's old tempter trips;
Or see we ceremonial state,
Robing the gilded beast, exact
Abjection, while the crackskull name of Fate
Is used to stamp and hallow printed fact;
A cruel corner lengthens up thy lips;
These are thy game wherever men engage:
These and, majestic in a borrowed shape,
The major and the minor potentate,
Creative of their various ape; —
The tiptoe mortals triumphing to write
Upon a perishable page
An inch above their fellows' height; —
The criers of foregone wisdom, who impose
Its slough on live conditions, much for the greed
Of our first hungry figure wide agape; —
Call up thy hounds of laughter to their run.
These, that would have men still of men be foes,
Eternal fox to prowl and pike to feed;
Would keep our life the whirly pool
Of turbid stuff dishonoring History;
The herd the drover's herd, the fool the fool,
Ourself our slavish self's infernal sun;
These are the children of the heart untaught
By thy quick founts to beat abroad, by thee
Untamed to tone its passions under thought,
The rich humaneness reading in thy fun.
Of them a world of coltish heels for school,
We have; a world with driving wrecks bestrewn.

'Tis written of the Gods of human mold,
Those Nectar Gods, of glorious stature hewn
To quicken hymns, that they did hear incensed,
Satiric comments overbold,
From one whose part was by decree
The jester's; but they boiled to feel him bite.
Better for them had they with Reason fenced
Or smiled corrected! They in the great Gods' might,
Their prober crushed, as fingers flea.
Crumbled Olympus when the sovereign sire
His fatal kick to Momus gave, albeit
Men could behold the sacred Mount aspire,
The Satirist pass by on limping feet.
Those Gods who saw the ejected laugh alight
Below, had then their last of airy glee;
They in the cup sought Laughter's drownèd sprite,
Fed to dire fatness off uncurbed conceit.
Eyes under saw them waddle on their Mount,
And drew them down; to flattest earth they rolled.
This know we veritable. O Sage of Mirth!
Can it be true, the story men recount
Of the fall'n plight of the great Gods on earth?
How they being deathless, though of human mold,
With human cravings, undecaying frames,
Must labor for subsistence; are a band
Whom a loose-cheeked, wide-lipped gay cripple leads
At haunts of holiday on summer sand:
And lightly he will hint to one that heeds,
Names in pained designation of them, names
Ensphered on blue skies and on black, which twirl
Our hearing madly from our seeing dazed,
Add Bacchus unto both; and he entreats
(His baby dimples in maternal chaps
Running wild labyrinths of line and curl)
Compassion for his masterful Trombone,
Whose thunder is the brass of how he blazed
Of old: for him of the mountain-muscle feats,
Who guts a drum to fetch a snappish groan:
For his fierce bugler horning onset, whom
A truncheon-battered helmet caps. . . .
The creature is of earnest mien
To plead a sorrow darker than the tomb.
His Harp and Triangle, in tone subdued,
He names; they are a rayless red and white;
The dawn-hued libertine, the gibbous prude.
And, if we recognize his Tambourine,
He asks; exhausted names her: she has become
A globe in cupolas; the blowsiest queen
Of overflowing dome on dome;
Redundancy contending with the tight,
Leaping the dam! He fondly calls, his girl,
The buxom tripper with the goblet-smile,

Refreshful. O but now his brows are dun,
Bunched are his lips, as when distilling guile,
To drop his venomous: the Dame of dames,
Flower of the world, that honey one,
She of the earthly rose in the sea-pearl,
To whom the world ran ocean for her kiss;
He names her, as a worshipper he names,
And indicates with a contemptuous thumb.
The lady meanwhile lures the mob, alike
Ogles the bursters of the horn and drum.
Curtain her close! her open arms
Have suckers for beholders: she to this?
For that she could not, save in fury, hear
A sharp corrective utterance flick
Her idle manners, for the laugh to strike
Beauty so breeding beauty, without peer
Above the snows, among the flowers? She reaps
This moldy garner of the fatal kick?
Gross with the sacrifice of Circe-swarms,
Astarte[1] of vile sweets that slay, malign,
From Greek resplendent to Phoenician foul,
The trader in attractions sinks, all brine
To thoughts of taste; is 't love? — bark, dog! hoot, owl!
And she is blushless: ancient worship weeps.
Suicide Graces dangle down the charms
Sprawling like gourds on outer garden-heaps.
She stands in her unholy oily leer
A statue losing feature, weather-sick
Mid draggled creepers of twined ivy sere.
The curtain cried for magnifies to see! —
We cannot quench our one corrupting glance:
The vision of the rumor will not flee.
Doth the Boy own such Mother? — shoot his dart
To bring her, countless as the crested deeps,
Her subjects of the uncorrected heart?
False is that vision, shrieks the devotee;
Incredible, we echo; and anew
Like a far growling lightning-cloud it leaps.
Low humorist this leader seems; perchance
Pitched from his University career,
Adept at classic fooling. Yet of mold
Human those Gods were: deathless too:
On high they not as meditatives paced:
Prodigiously they did the deeds of flesh:
Descending, they would touch the lowest here:
And she, that lighted form of blue and gold,
Whom the seas gave, all earth, all earth embraced;
Exulting in the great hauls of her mesh;
Desired and hated, desperately dear;
Most human of them was. No more pursue!
Enough that the black story can be told.

[1] The Phœnician goddess of love.

It preaches to the eminently placed:
For whom disastrous wreckage is nigh due,
Paints omen. Truly they our throbber had;
The passions plumping, passions playing leech,
Cunning to trick us for the day's good cheer.
Our uncorrected human heart will swell
To notions monstrous, doings mad
As billows on a foam-lashed beach;
Borne on the tides of alternating heats,
Will drug the brain, will doom the soul as well;
Call the closed mouth of that harsh final Power
To speak in judgement: Nemesis, the fell:
Of those bright Gods assembled, offspring sour;
The last surviving on the upper seats;
As with men Reason when their hearts rebel.

Ah, what a fruitless breeder is this heart,
Full of the mingled seeds, each eating each.
Not wiser of our mark than at the start,
It surges like the wrath-faced father Sea
To countering winds; a force blind-eyed,
On endless rounds of aimless reach;
Emotion for the source of pride,
The grounds of faith in fixity
Above our flesh; its cravings urging speech,
Inspiring prayer; by turns a lump
Swung on a time-piece, and by turns
A quivering energy to jump
For seats angelical: it shrinks, it yearns,
Loves, loathes; is flame or cinders; lastly cloud
Capping a sullen crater: and mankind
We see cloud-capped, an army of the dark,
Because of thy straight leadership declined;
At heels of this or that delusive spark:
Now when the multitudinous races press
Elbow to elbow hourly more,
A thickened host; when now we hear aloud
Life for the very life implore
A signal of a visioned mark;
Light of the mind, the mind's discourse,
The rational in graciousness,
Thee by acknowledgement enthroned,
To tame and lead that blind-eyed force
In harmony of harness with the crowd,
For payment of their dues; as yet disowned,
Save where some dutiful lone creature, vowed
To holy work, deems it the heart's intent;
Or where a silken circle views it cowled,
The seeming figure of concordance, bent

On satiating tyrant lust
Or barren fits of sentiment.

Thou wilt not have our paths befouled
By simulation; are we vile to view,
The heavens shall see us clean of our own dust,
Beneath thy breezy flitting wing:
They make their mirror upon faces true;
And where they win reflection, lucid heave
The under tides of this hot heart seen through.
Beneficently wilt thou clip
All oversteppings of the plumed,
The puffed, and bid the masker strip,
And into the crowned windbag thrust,
Tearing the mortal from the vital thing,
A lightning o'er the half-illumed,
Who to base brute-dominion cleave,
Yet mark effects, and shun the flash,
Till their drowsed wits a beam conceive,
To spy a wound without a gash,
The magic in a turn of wrist,
And how are wedded heart and head regaled
When Wit o'er Folly blows the mort,
And their high note of union spreads
Wide from the timely word with conquest charged;
Victorious laughter, of no loud report,
If heard; derision as divinely veiled
As terrible Immortals in rose-mist,
Given to the vision of arrested men:
Whereat they feel within them weave
Community its closer threads,
And are to our fraternal state enlarged;
Like warm fresh blood is their enlivened ken;
They learn that thou art not of alien sort,
Speaking the tongue by vipers hissed,
Or of the frosty heights unscaled,
Or of the vain who simple speech distort,
Or of the vapors pointing on to nought
Along cold skies; though sharp and high thy pitch:
As when sole homeward the belated treads,
And hears aloft a clamor wailed,
That once had seemed the broomstick witch
Horribly violating cloud for drought:
He from the rub of minds dispersing fears,
Hears migrants marshalling their midnight train;
Homeliest order in black sky appears,
Not less than in the lighted village steads.
So do those half-illumed wax clear to share
A cry that is our common voice; the note
Of fellowship upon a loftier plane,
Above embattled castle-wall and moat;
And toning drops as from pure heaven it sheds.
So thou for washing a phantasmal air,
For thy sweet singing keynote of the wise,

Laughter — the joy of Reason seeing fade
Obstruction into Earth's renewing beds,
Beneath the stroke of her good servant blade —
Thenceforth art as their earth-star hailed;
Gain of the years, conjunction's prize.
The greater heart in thy appeal to heads,
They see, thou Captain of our civil Fort!
By more elusive savages assailed
On each ascending stage; untired
Both inner foe and outer to cut short,
And blow to chaff pretenders void of grist:
Showing old tiger's claws, old crocodile's
Yard-grin of eager grinders, slim to sight,
Like forms in running water, oft when smiles
When pearly tears, when fluent lips de light:
But never with the slayer's malice fired:
As little as informs an infant's fist
Clenched at the sneeze! Thou would'st bu have us be
Good sons of mother soil, whereby to grow
Branching on fairer skies, one stately tree;
Broad of the tilth for flowering at the Court
Which is the tree bound fast to wave it tress;
Of strength controlled sheer beauty to be stow.
Ambrosial heights of possible acquist,
Where souls of men with soul of man cor sort,
And all look higher to new loveliness
Begotten of the look: thy mark is there;
While on our temporal ground alive,
Rightly though fearfully thou wielde sword,
Of finer temper now a numbered learn
That they resisting thee themselves resist;
And not thy bigger joy to smite and drive,
Prompt the dense herd to butt, and set th snare
Witching them into pitfalls for hoarse shout
More now, and hourly more, and of th Lord
Thou lead'st to, doth this rebel heart di cern,
When pinched ascetic and red sensualist
Alternately recurrent freeze or burn,
And of its old religions it has doubts.
It fears thee less when thou hast shown bare;
Less hates, part understands, nor muc resents,
When the prized objects it has raised fc prayer,
For fitful prayer; — repentance dreading fir
Impelled by aches; the blindness which re pents

Like the poor trampled worm that writhes in mire; —
Are sounded by thee, and thou darest probe
Old Institutions and Establishments,
Once fortresses against the floods of sin,
For what their worth; and questioningly prod
For why they stand upon a racing globe,
Impeding blocks, less useful than the clod;
Their angel out of them, a demon in.

This half-enlightened heart, still doomed to fret,
To hurl at vanities, to drift in shame
Of gain or loss, bewailing the sure rod,
Shall of predestination wed thee yet.
Something it gathers of what things should drop
At entrance on new times; of how thrice broad
The world of minds communicative; how
A straggling Nature classed in school, and scored
With stripes admonishing, may yield to plough
Fruitfullest furrows, nor for waxing tame
Be feeble on an Earth whose gentler crop
Is its most living, in the mind that steers,
By Reason led, her way of tree and flame,
Beyond the genuflexions and the tears;
Upon an Earth that cannot stop,
Where upward is the visible aim,
And ever we espy the greater God,
For simple pointing at a good adored:
Proof of the closer neighbourhood. Head on,
Sword of the many, light of the few! untwist
Or cut our tangles till fair space is won
Beyond a briared wood of austere brow,
Relieved of discord by thy timely word
At intervals refreshing life: for thou
Art verily Keeper of the Muse's Key;
Thyself no vacant melodist;
On lower land elective even as she;
Holding, as she, all dissonance abhorred;
Advising to her measured steps in flow;
And teaching how for being subjected free
Past thought of freedom we may come to know
The music of the meaning of Accord.

## LOVE IN THE VALLEY

Under yonder beech-tree single on the green-sward,
Couched with her arms behind her golden head,
Knees and tresses folded to slip and ripple idly,
Lies my young love sleeping in the shade.

Had I the heart to slide an arm beneath her,
Press her parting lips as her waist I gather slow,
Waking in amazement she could not but embrace me:
Then would she hold me and never let me go?

. . . . . .

Shy as the squirrel and wayward as the swallow,
Swift as the swallow along the river's light
Circleting the surface to meet his mirrored winglets,
Fleeter she seems in her stay than in her flight.
Shy as the squirrel that leaps among the pine-tops,
Wayward as the swallow overhead at set of sun,
She whom I love is hard to catch and conquer,
Hard, but O the glory of the winning were she won!

. . . . . .

When her mother tends her before the laughing mirror,
Tying up her laces, looping up her hair,
Often she thinks, were this wild thing wedded,
More love should I have, and much less care.
When her mother tends her before the lighted mirror,
Loosening her laces, combing down her curls,
Often she thinks, were this wild thing wedded,
I should miss but one for many boys and girls.

. . . . . .

Heartless she is as the shadow in the meadows
Flying to the hills on a blue and breezy noon.
No, she is athirst and drinking up her wonder:
Earth to her is young as the slip of the new moon.
Deals she an unkindness, 'tis but her rapid measure,
Even as in a dance; and her smile can heal no less:
Like the swinging May-cloud that pelts the flowers with hailstones
Off a sunny border, she was made to bruise and bless.

. . . . . .

Lovely are the curves of the white owl sweeping
Wavy in the dusk lit by one large star.
Lone on the fir-branch, his rattle-note unvaried,
Brooding o'er the gloom, spins the brown eve-jar.
Darker grows the valley, more and more forgetting:
So were it with me if forgetting could be willed.
Tell the grassy hollow that holds the bubbling well-spring,
Tell it to forget the source that keeps it filled.
. . . . . .
Stepping down the hill with her fair companions,
Arm in arm, all against the raying West,
Boldly she sings, to the merry tune she marches,
Brave in her shape, and sweeter unpossessed.
Sweeter, for she is what my heart first awaking
Whispered the world was; morning light is she.
Love that so desires would fain keep her changeless;
Fain would fling the net, and fain have her free.
. . . . . .
Happy happy time, when the white star hovers
Low over dim fields fresh with bloomy dew,
Near the face of dawn, that draws athwart the darkness,
Threading it with color, like yewberries the yew.
Thicker crowd the shades as the grave East deepens
Glowing, and with crimson a long cloud swells.
Maiden still the morn is; and strange she is, and secret;
Strange her eyes; her cheeks are cold as cold sea-shells.
. . . . . .
Sunrays, leaning on our southern hills and lighting
Wild cloud-mountains that drag the hills along,
Oft ends the day of your shifting brilliant laughter
Chill as a dull face frowning on a song.

Ay, but shows the South-West a ripp
feathered bosom
Blown to silver while the clouds are shal
and ascend
Scaling the mid-heavens as they strea
there comes a sunset
Rich, deep like love in beauty without e
. . . . . .
When at dawn she sighs, and like an infa
to the window
Turns grave eyes craving light, releas
from dreams,
Beautiful she looks, like a white water-lily
Bursting out of bud in havens of t
streams.
When from bed she rises clothed from ne
to ankle
In her long nightgown sweet as boughs
May,
Beautiful she looks, like a tall garden lily
Pure from the night, and splendid for t
day.
. . . . . .
Mother of the dews, dark eye-lashed tw
light,
Low-lidded twilight, o'er the valley's bri
Rounding on thy breast sings the de
delighted skylark,
Clear as though the dewdrops had th
voice in him.
Hidden where the rose-flush drinks the ra
less planet,
Fountain-full he pours the sprayi
fountain-showers.
Let me hear her laughter, I would have h
ever
Cool as dew in twilight, the lark above t
flowers.
. . . . . .
All the girls are out with their baskets f
the primrose;
Up lanes, woods through, they troop
joyful bands.
My sweet leads: she knows not why, but nc
she loiters,
Eyes the bent anemones, and hangs h
hands.
Such a look will tell that the violets a
peeping,
Coming the rose: and unaware a cry
Springs in her bosom for odors and for colc
Covert and the nightingale; she knows n
why.
. . . . . .
Kerchiefed head and chin she darts betwe
her tulips,
Streaming like a willow gray in arrow
rain:

Some bend beaten cheek to gravel, and their angel
She will be; she lifts them, and on she speeds again.
Black the driving raincloud breasts the iron gateway:
She is forth to cheer a neighbor lacking mirth.
So when sky and grass met rolling dumb for thunder
Saw I once a white dove, sole light of earth.
. . . . . .
Prim little scholars are the flowers of her garden,
Trained to stand in rows, and asking if they please.
I might love them well but for loving more the wild ones.
O my wild ones! they tell me more than these.
You, my wild one, you tell of honeyed field-rose,
Violet, blushing eglantine in life; and even as they,
They by the wayside are earnest of your goodness,
You are of life's, on the banks that line the way.
. . . . . .
Peering at her chamber the white crowns the red rose,
Jasmine winds the porch with stars two and three.
Parted is the window; she sleeps; the starry jasmine
Breathes a falling breath that carries thoughts of me.
Sweeter unpossessed, have I said of her my sweetest?
Not while she sleeps: while she sleeps the jasmine breathes,
Luring her to love; she sleeps; the starry jasmine
Bears me to her pillow under white rose-wreaths.
. . . . . .
Yellow with birdfoot-trefoil are the grass-glades;
Yellow with cinquefoil of the dew-gray leaf;
Yellow with stonecrop; the moss-mounds are yellow;
Blue-necked the wheat sways, yellowing to the sheaf.
Green-yellow bursts from the copse the laughing yaffle;
Sharp as a sickle is the edge of shade and shine:
Earth in her heart laughs looking at the heavens,
Thinking of the harvest: I look and think of mine.
. . . . . .
This I may know: her dressing and undressing
Such a change of light shows as when the skies in sport
Shift from cloud to moonlight; or edging over thunder
Slips a ray of sun; or sweeping into port
White sails furl; or on the ocean borders
White sails lean along the waves leaping green.
Visions of her shower before me, but from eyesight
Guarded she would be like the sun were she seen.
. . . . . .
Front door and back of the mossed old farm-house
Open with the morn, and in a breezy link
Freshly sparkles garden to stripe-shadowed orchard,
Green across a rill where on sand the minnows wink.
Busy in the grass the early sun of summer
Swarms, and the blackbird's mellow fluting notes
Call my darling up with round and roguish challenge:
Quaintest, richest carol of all the singing throats!
Cool was the woodside; cool as her white dairy
Keeping sweet the cream-pan; and there the boys from school,
Cricketing below, rushed brown and red with sunshine;
O the dark translucence of the deep-eyed cool!
Spying from the farm, herself she fetched a pitcher
Full of milk, and tilted for each in turn the beak.
Then a little fellow, mouth up and on tip-toe,
Said, "I will kiss you": she laughed and leaned her cheek.
. . . . . .
Doves of the fir-wood walling high our red roof
Through the long noon coo, crooning through the coo.

Loose droop the leaves, and down the sleepy roadway
Sometimes pipes a chaffinch; loose droops the blue.
Cows flap a slow tail knee-deep in the river,
Breathless, given up to sun and gnat and fly.
Nowhere is she seen; and if I see her nowhere,
Lightning may come, straight rains and tiger sky.
. . . . . .
O the golden sheaf, the rustling treasure-armful!
O the nutbrown tresses nodding interlaced!
O the treasure-tresses one another over
Nodding! O the girdle slack about the waist!
Slain are the poppies that shot their random scarlet
Quick amid the wheatears: wound about the waist,
Gathered, see these brides of Earth one blush of ripeness!
O the nutbrown tresses nodding interlaced!
. . . . . .
Large and smoky red the sun's cold disk drops,
Clipped by naked hills, on violet shaded snow:
Eastward large and still lights up a bower of moonrise,
Whence at her leisure steps the moon aglow.
Nightlong on black print-branches our beech-tree
Gazes in this whiteness: nightlong could I.
Here may life on death or death on life be painted.
Let me clasp her soul to know she cannot die!
. . . . . .
Gossips count her faults; they scour a narrow chamber
Where there is no window, read not heaven or her.
"When she was tiny," one aged woman quavers,
Plucks at my heart and leads me by the ear.
Faults she had once as she learned to run and tumbled:
Faults of feature some see, beauty not complete.
Yet, good gossips, beauty that makes holy
Earth and air, may have faults from head to feet.
. . . . . .
Hither she comes; she comes to me; she lingers,
Deepens her brown eyebrows, while in new surprise
High rise the lashes in wonder of a stranger
Yet am I the light and living of her eyes.
Something friends have told her fills her heart to brimming,
Nets her in her blushes, and wounds her and tames. —
Sure of her haven, O like a dove alighting,
Arms up, she dropped: our souls were in our names.
. . . . . .
Soon will she lie like a white-frost sunrise.
Yellow oats and brown wheat, barley pale as rye,
Long since your sheaves have yielded to the thresher,
Felt the girdle loosened, seen the tresses fly.
Soon will she lie like a blood-red sunset.
Swift with the to-morrow, green-winged Spring!
Sing from the South-West, bring her back the truants,
Nightingale and swallow, song and dipping wing.
Soft new beech-leaves, up to beamy April
Spreading bough on bough a primrose mountain, you,
Lucid in the moon, raise lilies to the sky fields,
Youngest green transfused in silver shining through:
Fairer than the lily, than the wild white cherry:
Fair as in image my seraph love appears
Borne to me by dreams when dawn is at my eyelids:
Fair as in the flesh she swims to me on tears.
. . . . . .
Could I find a place to be alone with heaven
I would speak my heart out: heaven is my need.
Every woodland tree is flushing like the dogwood,
Flashing like the whitebeam, swaying like the reed.
Flushing like the dogwood crimson in October;
Streaming like the flag-reed South-West blown;
Flashing as in gusts the sudden-lighted whitebeam:
All seem to know what is for heaven alone.

# THOMAS HARDY (1840–1928)

Thomas Hardy forms with George Meredith one of the most interesting contrasts of modern literature. He was born in Dorchester, and there spent most of his life. He was apprenticed to an architect, but like Meredith broke away into literature. Although he wrote verse as a boy, his first publications were novels, among the most important of which are: *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), *The Return of the Native* (1878), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), *Jude the Obscure* (1895). After the last mentioned of these Hardy gave himself for years to the production of a vast drama in verse based on the Napoleonic wars, called *The Dynasts*. In later years he has written a large body of miscellaneous verse. Hardy's contrast with Meredith is seen both in his novels and in his poetry. Meredith believes above all in conscious intelligence. The characters of his novels are drawn from the walks of life where consciousness is clearest. Hardy, on the contrary, deals with life where it is least intelligent, most instinctive. Both Meredith and Hardy are poets of nature, but to the former nature is a kind if stern mother; to the latter a symbol of the crass indifference of the universe. In his fiction Hardy is fond of dwelling on the accidents and coincidences of life which seem the result of a stupid or malevolent power at work behind the scenes. Many of his poems are based on episodes of the same sort. Above all Hardy is a stern realist in his poetry with none of the radiant hope which Meredith displays. The two writers represent two different phases of the effect of science upon the human spirit in the later nineteenth century.

The complete works of Thomas Hardy are published by The Macmillan Company, through whose kindness the following poems are reprinted.

## HER DILEMMA

(IN —— CHURCH)

The two were silent in a sunless church,
Whose mildewed walls, uneven paving-stones,
And wasted carvings passed antique research;
And nothing broke the clock's dull monotones.

Leaning against a wormy poppy-head,
So wan and worn that he could scarcely stand,
— For he was soon to die, — he softly said,
"Tell me you love me!" — holding long her hand.

She would have given a world to breathe "yes" truly,
So much his life seemed hanging on her mind,
And hence she lied, her heart persuaded throughly
'Twas worth her soul to be a moment kind.

But the sad need thereof, his nearing death,
So mocked humanity that she shamed to prize
A world conditioned thus, or care for breath
Where Nature such dilemmas could devise.

1866.

## REVULSION

Though I waste watches framing words to fetter
Some unknown spirit to mine in clasp and kiss,
Out of the night there looms a sense 'twere better
To fail obtaining whom one fails to miss.

For winning love we win the risk of losing,
And losing love is as one's life were riven;
It cuts like contumely and keen ill-using
To cede what was superfluously given.

Let me then never feel the fateful thrilling
That devastates the love-worn wooer's frame,
The hot ado of fevered hopes, the chilling
That agonizes disappointed aim!
So may I live no junctive law fulfilling,
And my heart's table bear no woman's name.

1866.

## HER INITIALS

Upon a poet's page I wrote
Of old two letters of her name;
Part seemed she of the effulgent thought
Whence that high singer's rapture came.
— When now I turn the leaf the same
Immortal light illumes the lay,
But from the letters of her name
The radiance has waned away!

1869.

## ROME

AT THE PYRAMID OF CESTIUS NEAR THE GRAVES OF SHELLEY AND KEATS

(1887)

Who, then, was Cestius,
And what is he to me? —
Amid thick thoughts and memories multitudinous
One thought alone brings he.

I can recall no word
Of anything he did;
For me he is a man who died and was interred
To leave a pyramid

Whose purpose was exprest
Not with its first design,
Nor till, far down in Time, beside it found their rest
Two countrymen of mine.

Cestius in life, maybe,
Slew, breathed out threatening;
I know not. This I know: in death all silently
He does a finer thing,

In beckoning pilgrim feet
With marble finger high
To where, by shadowy wall and history-haunted street,
Those matchless singers lie. . . .

— Say, then, he lived and died
That stones which bear his name
Should mark, through Time, where two immortal Shades abide;
It is an ample fame.

## LAUSANNE

IN GIBBON'S OLD GARDEN: 11–12 P.M.

*June* 27, 1897

(*The* 110*th anniversary of the completion of the "Decline and Fall" at the same hour and place*)

A spirit seems to pass,
Formal in pose, but grave withal and grand:
He contemplates a volume in his hand,
And far lamps fleck him through the thin acacias.

Anon the book is closed,
With "It is finished!" And at the alley's end
He turns, and when on me his glance bend
As from the Past comes speech — small muted, yet composed.

"How fares the Truth now? — Ill — Do pens but slily further her advance?
May one not speed her but in phras askance?
Do scribes aver the Comic to be Reveren still?

"Still rule those minds on earth
At whom sage Milton's wormwood words were hurled:
*'Truth like a bastard comes into the world Never without ill-fame to him who gives her birth'?"*

## AN AUGUST MIDNIGHT

1

A shaded lamp and a waving blind,
And the beat of a clock from a distant floor:
On this scene enter — winged, horned, and spined —
A longlegs, a moth, and a dumbledore;
While 'mid my page there idly stands
A sleepy fly, that rubs its hands . . .

2

Thus meet we five, in this still place,
At this point of time, at this point in space.
— My guests besmear my new-penned line,
Or bang at the lamp and fall supine.
"God's humblest, they!" I muse. Yet why?
They know Earth-secrets that know not I.

MAX GATE, 1899.

## EMBARCATION

(SOUTHAMPTON DOCKS: OCTOBER 1899)

Here, where Vespasian's legions struck the sands,
And Cerdic with his Saxons entered in,
And Henry's army leapt afloat to win
Convincing triumphs over neighbor lands,

Vaster battalions press for further strands,
To argue in the selfsame bloody mode
Which this late age of thought, and pact, and code,
Still fails to mend. — Now deckward tramp the bands,

Yellow as autumn leaves, alive as spring;
And as each host draws out upon the sea
Beyond which lies the tragical To-be,
None dubious of the cause, none murmuring,

Wives, sisters, parents, wave white hands and smile,
As if they knew not that they weep the while.

## A CHRISTMAS GHOST-STORY

South of the Line, inland from far Durban,
A moldering soldier lies — your countryman.
Awry and doubled up are his gray bones,
And on the breeze his puzzled phantom moans
Nightly to clear Canopus: "I would know
By whom and when the All-Earth-gladdening Law
Of Peace, brought in by that Man Crucified,
Was ruled to be inept, and set aside?
And what of logic or of truth appears
In tacking 'Anno Domini' to the years?
Near twenty-hundred liveried thus have hied,
But tarries yet the Cause for which He died."

*Christmas-eve* 1899.

## "I SAID TO LOVE"

I said to Love,
It is not now as in old days
When men adored thee and thy ways
All else above;
Named thee the Boy, the Bright, the One
Who spread a heaven beneath the sun,"
I said to Love.

I said to him,
We now know more of thee than then;
We were but weak in judgment when,
With hearts abrim,
We clamored thee that thou would'st please
Inflict on us thine agonies,"
I said to him.

I said to Love,
Thou art not young, thou art not fair,
No elfin darts, no cherub air,
Nor swan, nor dove
Are thine; but features pitiless,
And iron daggers of distress,"
I said to Love.

"Depart then, Love! . . .
— Man's race shall perish, threatenest thou,
Without thy kindling coupling-vow?
The age to come the man of now
Know nothing of? —
We fear not such a threat from thee;
We are too old in apathy!
*Mankind shall cease.* — So let it be,"
I said to Love.

Pub. 1901.

## TO LIFE

O Life with the sad seared face,
I weary of seeing thee,
And thy draggled cloak, and thy hobbling pace,
And thy too-forced pleasantry!

I know what thou would'st tell
Of Death, Time, Destiny —
I have known it long, and know, too, well
What it all means for me.

But canst thou not array
Thyself in rare disguise,
And feign like truth, for one mad day,
That Earth is Paradise?

I'll tune me to the mood,
And mumm with thee till eve;
And maybe what as interlude
I feign, I shall believe!

Pub. 1901.

## AT CASTERBRIDGE FAIR

### I

#### THE BALLAD-SINGER

Sing, Ballad-singer, raise a hearty tune;
Make me forget that there was ever a one
I walked with in the meek light of the moon
When the day's work was done.

Rhyme, Ballad-rhymer, start a country song;
Make me forget that she whom I loved well
Swore she would love me dearly, love me long,
Then — what I cannot tell!

Sing, Ballad-singer, from your little book;
Make me forget those heart-breaks, achings, fears;
Make me forget her name, her sweet sweet look —
Make me forget her tears.

## II

### FORMER BEAUTIES

These market-dames, mid-aged, with lips thin-drawn,
And tissues sere,
Are they the ones we loved in years agone,
And courted here?

Are these the muslined pink young things to whom
We vowed and swore
In nooks on summer Sundays by the Froom,
Or Budmouth shore?

Do they remember those gay tunes we trod
Clasped on the green;
Aye; trod till moonlight set on the beaten sod
A satin sheen?

They must forget, forget! They cannot know
What once they were,
Or memory would transfigure them, and show
Them always fair.

## III

### AFTER THE CLUB-DANCE

Black'on frowns east on Maidon,
And westward to the sea,
But on neither is his frown laden
With scorn, as his frown on me!

At dawn my heart grew heavy,
I could not sip the wine,
I left the jocund bevy
And that young man o' mine.

The roadside elms pass by me, —
Why do I sink with shame
When the birds a-perch there eye me?
They, too, have done the same!

## IV

### THE MARKET-GIRL

Nobody took any notice of her as she stood on the causey kerb,
All eager to sell her honey and apples and bunches of garden herb;
And if she had offered to give her wares and herself with them too that day,
I doubt if a soul would have cared to take a bargain so choice away.

But chancing to trace her sunburnt g
that morning as I passed nigh,
I went and I said "Poor maidy dear
and will none of the people buy?'
And so it began; and soon we knew what
end of it all must be,
And I found that though no others had l
a prize had been won by me.

## V

### THE INQUIRY

And are ye one of Hermitage —
Of Hermitage, by Ivel Road,
And do ye know, in Hermitage
A thatch-roofed house where sengreens gro
And does John Waywood live there still -
He of the name that there abode
When father hurdled on the hill
Some fifteen years ago?

Does he now speak o' Patty Beech,
The Patty Beech he used to — see,
Or ask at all if Patty Beech
Is known or heard of out this way?
— Ask if ever she's living yet,
And where her present home may be,
And how she bears life's fag and fret
After so long a day?

In years agone at Hermitage
This faded face was counted fair,
None fairer; and at Hermitage
We swore to wed when he should thrive.
But never a chance had he or I,
And waiting made his wish outwear,
And Time, that dooms man's love to die,
Preserves a maid's alive.

## VI

### A WIFE WAITS

Will's at the dance in the Club-room belo
Where the tall liquor-cups foam;
I on the pavement up here by the Bow,[1]
Wait, wait, to steady him home.

Will and his partner are treading a tune,
Loving companions they be;
Willy, before we were married in June,
Said he loved no one but me;

Said he would let his old pleasures all go
Ever to live with his Dear.
Will's at the dance in the Club-room belo
Shivering I wait for him here.

1 The old name for the curved corner by the cro
streets in the middle of Casterbridge. (Hardy.)

VII

AFTER THE FAIR

The singers are gone from the Cornmarket-place
With their broadsheets of rhymes,
The street rings no longer in treble and bass
With their skits on the times,
And the Cross, lately thronged, is a dim naked space
That but echoes the stammering chimes.[1]

From Clock-corner steps, as each quarter ding-dongs,
Away the folk roam
By the "Hart" and Grey's Bridge into by-ways and "drongs,"
Or across the ridged loam;

The younger ones shrilling the lately heard songs,
The old saying, "Would we were home."

The shy-seeming maiden so mute in the fair
Now rattles and talks,
And that one who looked the most swaggering there
Grows sad as she walks,
And she who seemed eaten by cankering care
In statuesque sturdiness stalks.

And midnight clears High Street of all but the ghosts
Of its buried burghees,
From the latest far back to those old Roman hosts
Whose remains one yet sees,
Who loved, laughed, and fought, hailed their friends, drank their toasts
At their meeting-times here, just as these!
1902.

[1] "The Chimes" will be listened for in vain here at midnight now, having been abolished some years ago. (Hardy.)

## RUDYARD KIPLING (1865–

Rudyard Kipling was born in Bombay, India, in 1865; and in India, while a young newspaper man, he burst into world-wide fame with his short stories of Indian life and his songs of the British army, *Barrack Room Ballads*. From that time on, until a score of years ago when his steady, vigorous production slowed down, he was the most prominent, as he has been among the ablest, of British writers, as a poet, a novelist, and a master of the short story.

Kipling is the singer of the widespread British Empire. He is also the singer of Tommy Atkins, and as such has not hesitated to have a good-natured fling at the Crown. Nor did he refrain, during the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897, to sound a warning, in his *Recessional*, against an unsound imperialism.

All of Kipling is good reading. No student should miss his novel *Kim*, the poetry in *Barrack Room Ballads* and *The Seven Seas*, the beast tales in the *Jungle Books*, and the masterful short stories in *The Day's Work*. In them he will see Kipling's originality and extraordinary skill, both in technique and in insight into the souls of men.

### A BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come from the ends of the earth!

Kamal is out with twenty men to raise the Border side,
And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that is the Colonel's pride:
He has lifted her out of the stable-door between the dawn and the day,
And turned the calkins upon her feet, and ridden her far away.
Then up spoke the Colonel's son that led a troop of the Guides:
"Is there never a man of all my men can say where Kamal hides?"
Then up and spoke Mohammed Khan, the son of the Ressaldar,
"If ye know the track of the morning-mist, ye know where his pickets are.
At dusk he harries the Abazai — at dawn he is into Bonair,
But he must go by Fort Bukloh to his own place to fare,
So if ye gallop to Fort Bukloh as fast as a bird can fly,
By the favor of God ye may cut him off ere he win to the Tongue of Jagai.

But if he be passed the Tongue of Jagai, right
swiftly turn ye then,
For the length and the breadth of that grisly
plain is sown with Kamal men.
There is rock to the left, and rock to the right,
and low lean thorn between,
And ye may hear a breech-bolt snick where
never a man is seen."
The Colonel's son has taken a horse, and a
raw rough dun was he,
With a mouth of a bell and the heart of Hell,
and the head of the gallows-tree.
The Colonel's son to the Fort has won, they
bid him stay to eat —
Who rides at the tail of a Border thief, he
sits not long at his meat.
He's up and away from Fort Bukloh as fast
as he can fly.
Till he was aware of his father's mare in the
gut of the Tongue of Jagai.
Till he was aware of his father's mare with
Kamal upon her back.
And when he could spy the white of her eye,
he made the pistol crack.
He has fired once, he has fired twice, but the
whistling ball went wide.
"Ye shoot like a soldier," Kamal said, "show
now if ye can ride."
It's up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as
blown dust-devils go;
The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the
mare like a barren doe.
The dun he leaned against the bit and
slugged his head above,
But the red mare played with snaffle-bars, as
a maiden plays with a glove.
There was rock to the left and rock to the
right, and low lean thorn between
And thrice he heard a breech-bolt snick tho'
never a man was seen.
They had ridden the low moon out of the sky,
their hoofs drum up the dawn;
The dun he went like a wounded bull, but the
mare like a new-roused fawn.
The dun he fell at a water-course — in a woe-
ful heap fell he,
And Kamal has turned the red mare back,
and pulled the rider free.
He has knocked the pistol out of his hand —
small room was there to strive,
"'Twas only by favor of mine," quoth he,
"ye rode so long alive:
There was not a rock for twenty mile, there
was not a clump of tree,
But covered a man of my own men with his
rifle cocked on his knee.
If I had raised my bridle-hand, as I have held
it low,
The little jackals that flee so fast, were feas
ing all in a row:
If I had bowed my head on my breast, as
have held it high,
The kite that whistles above us now wer
gorged till she could not fly."
Lightly answered the Colonel's son: — "D
good to bird and beast,
But count who come from the broken meat
before thou makest a feast.
If there should follow a thousand swords t
carry my bones away,
Belike the price of a jackal's meal were mor
than a thief could pay.
They will feed their horse on the standin
crop, their men on the garnered grai
The thatch of the byres will serve their fire
when all the cattle are slain.
But if thou thinkest the price be fair, — th
brethren wait to sup,
The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn, –
howl, dog, and call them up!
And if thou thinkest the price be high, i
steer and gear and stack,
Give me my father's mare again, and I'
fight my own way back!"
Kamal has gripped him by the hand and s
him upon his feet.
"No talk shall be of dogs," said he, "whe
wolf and gray wolf meet.
May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in dee
or breath;
What dam of lances brought thee forth to jes
at the dawn with Death?"
Lightly answered the Colonel's son, "I hol
by the blood of my clan:
Take up the mare for my father's gift — b
God, she has carried a man!"
The red mare ran to the Colonel's son, an
nuzzled against his breast,
"We be two strong men," said Kamal ther
"but she loveth the younger best.
So she shall go with a lifter's dower, m
turquoise-studded rein,
My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, an
silver stirrups twain."
The Colonel's son a pistol drew, and held i
muzzle-end;
"Ye have taken the one from a foe," said he
"will ye take the mate from a friend?
"A gift for a gift," said Kamal straight; "
limb for the risk of a limb.
Thy father has sent his son to me; I'll sen
my son to him!
With that he whistled his only son, tha
dropped from a mountain-crest —
He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and h
looked like a lance in rest.

"Now here is thy master," Kamal said,
"who leads a troop of the Guides,
And thou must ride at his left side as shield
on shoulder rides.
Till Death or I cut loose the tie, at camp and
board and bed
Thy life is his — thy fate it is to guard him
with thy head.
So thou must eat the White Queen's meat,
and all her foes are thine,
And thou must harry any father's hold for the
peace of the Border-line,
And thou must make a trooper tough and
hack thy way to power —
Belike they will raise thee to Ressaldar when
I am hanged in Peshawur."
They have looked each other between the
eyes, and there they have found no
fault;
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-
Blood on leavened bread and salt:
They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-
Blood on fire and fresh-cut sod,
On the hilt and haft of the Khyber knife,
and the wondrous names of God.
The Colonel's son he rides the mare and
Kamal's boy the dun,
And two have come to Fort Bukloh where
there went forth but one.
And when they drew to the Quarter-guard,
full twenty swords flew clear —
There was not a man but carried his feud
with the blood of the mountaineer.
"Ha' done, Ha' done!" said the Colonel's
son. "Put up the steel at your sides!
Last night ye had struck at a Border thief —
tonight 'tis a man of the Guides!"

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and
never the two shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at
God's great Judgment Seat;
But there is neither East nor West,
Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face,
tho' they come from the ends of the
earth.

## FUZZY-WUZZY

(SOUDAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE)

We've fought with many men acrost the
seas,
An' some of 'em was brave an' some was
not:
The Paythan an' the Zulu an' Burmese;
But the Fuzzy was the finest o' the lot.

We never got a ha'porth's change of 'im:
'E squatted in the scrub an' 'ocked our
'orses,
'E cut our sentries up at Sua*kim*,
An' 'e played the cat an' banjo with our
forces.

So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your
'ome in the Sowdan;
You're a poor benighted 'eathen, but a
first-class fightin' man;
We gives you your certifikit, an' if you
want it signed,
We'll come an' 'ave a romp with you
whenever you're inclined.

We took our chanst among the Khyber hills,
The Boers knocked us silly at a mile,
The Burman guv us Irriwaddy chills,
An' a Zulu *impi* dished us up in style;
But all we ever got from such as they
Was pop to what the Fuzzy made us
swaller;
We 'eld our bloomin' own, the papers say,
But man for man the Fuzzy knocked us
'oller.

Then 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' the
missis an' the kid,
Our orders was to break you, an' of
course we went an' did.
We sloshed you with Martinis, an' it
wasn't 'ardly fair;
But for all the odds agin you, Fuzzy
Wuz, you bruk the square.

'E 'asn't got no papers of 'is own,
'E' asn't got no medals nor rewards,
So we must certify the skill 'e's shown
In usin' of 'is long two-'anded swords;
When 'e's 'oppin' in an' out among the bush
With 'is coffin-headed shield an' shovel-
spear,
A 'appy day with Fuzzy on the rush
Will last a 'ealthy Tommy for a year.

So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' your
friends which is no more,
If we 'adn't lost some messmates we
would 'elp you to deplore;
But give an' take 's the gospel, an' we'll
call the bargain fair,
For if you 'ave lost more than us, you
crumpled up the square!

'E rushes at the smoke, when we let drive,
An', before we know, 'e's 'ackin' at our
'ead;

'E's all 'ot sand an ginger when alive,
An' 'e's generally shammin' when 'e's dead.
'E's a daisy, 'e's a duck, 'e's a lamb!
'E's a Injun-rubber idiot on the spree,
'E's the on'y thing that doesn't care a clam
For the Regiment o' British Infantree.

So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome in the Sowdan;
You're a pore benighted 'eathen, but a first-class fightin' man;
An' 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, with your 'ayrick 'ead of 'air —
You big black boundin' beggar — for you bruk a British square.

## GUNGA DIN

You may talk o' gin an' beer
When you're quartered safe out 'ere,
An' you're sent to penny-fights an' Aldershot it:
But if it comes to slaughter,
You will do your work on water,
An' you'll lick the bloomin' boots of 'im that's got it.
Now in Injia's sunny clime,
Where I used to spend my time
A-servin' of 'Er Majesty the Queen,
Of all them black-faced crew
The finest man I knew
Was our regimental Bhisti, Gunga Din,
He was "Din! Din! Din!
You limping lump o' brick-dust, Gunga Din!
Hi! slippy hitherao!
Water! Get it! Panee lao!
You squidgy-nosed old idol, Gunga Din!"

The uniform 'e wore
Was nothin' much before,
An' rather less than 'arf o' that be'ind;
For a twisty piece o' rag
An' a goatskin water-bag
Was all the field-equipment 'e could find.
When the sweatin' troop-train lay
In a sidin' through the day,
Where the 'eat would make your bloomin' eyebrows crawl.
We shouted "Harry By!"
Till our throats were bricky-dry,
Then we wopped 'in cause 'e couldn't serve us all.
It was "Din! Din! Din!
You 'eathen, where the mischief 'ave you been?
You put some juldee in it,
Or I'll marrow you this minute
If you don't fill up my helmet, Gunga Din!"

'E would dot an' carry one
Till the longest day was done,
An' 'e didn't seem to know the use o' fear.
If we charged or broke or cut,
You could bet your bloomin' nut,
'E'd be waitin' fifty paces right flank rear.
With 'is mussick on 'is back,
'E would skip with our attack,
An' watch us till the bugles made "Retire,'
An' for all 'is dirty 'ide
'E was white, clear white, inside,
When 'e went to tend the wounded unde fire!
It was "Din! Din! Din!"
With the bullets kickin' dust-spots on the green.
When the cartridges ran out,
You could 'ear the front-files shout:
"Hi! ammunition mules an' Gunga Din!"

I sha'n't forgit the night
When I dropped be'ind the fight
With a bullet where my belt-plate should a been.
I was chokin' mad with thirst,
An' the man that spied me first
Was our good old grinnin', gruntin' Gunga Din.
'E lifted up my 'ead,
An' 'e guv me 'arf a pint o' water — green:
It was crawlin' and it stunk,
But of all the drinks I've drunk,
I'm gratefullest to one from Gunga Din.
It was "Din! Din! Din!
'Ere's a beggar with a bullet through 'is spleen;
'E's chawin' up the ground an' 'e's kickin' all around:
For Gawd's sake git the water, Gunga Din!"

'E carried me away
To where a dooli lay,
An' a bullet come an' drilled the beggar clean.
'E put me safe inside,
An' just before 'e died:
"I 'ope you liked your drink," sez Gunga Din.
So I'll meet 'im later on
In the place where 'e is gone —
Where it's always double drill and no canteen;
'E'll be squattin' on the coals
Givin' drink to pore damned souls,
An' I'll get a swig in Hell from Gunga Din.
Din! Din! Din!
You Lazarushian-leather Gunga Din!
Tho' I've belted you an' flayed you,
By the livin' God that made you,
You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din.

## L'ENVOI

When Earth's last picture is painted, and the tubes are twisted and dried,
When the oldest colors have faded, and the youngest critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it — lie down for an æon or two,
Till the Master of All Good Workmen shall set us to work anew!

And those who were good shall be happy: they shall sit in a golden chair;
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas with brushes of comet's hair;
They shall find real saints to draw from — Magdalene, Peter, and Paul;
They shall work for an age at a sitting and never be tired at all!

And only the Master shall praise us, and only the Master shall blame;
And no one shall work for money, and no one shall work for fame;
But each for the joy of the working, and each, in his separate star,
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of Things as They Are!

## RECESSIONAL

"Reverence is the master-key of knowledge."

God of our fathers, known of old —
Lord of our far-flung battle-line —
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine —
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies —
The captains and the kings depart —
Still stands Thine ancient Sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

Far-called our navies melt away —
On dune and headland sinks the fire —
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe —
Such boasting as the Gentiles use
Or lesser breeds without the Law —
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard —
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not Thee to guard —
For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy mercy on Thy People, Lord!
Amen.

# ALFRED EDWARD HOUSMAN (1859– )

Housman was born in 1859, graduated from Oxford, and is at present Professor of Latin in Cambridge University. He won high recognition as a poet in 1896, with a small volume of poems, *A Shropshire Lad*. Not until 1924 did he publish any more verse, when another thin volume, *Last Poems*, appeared. The poems below are from *A Shropshire Lad*.

Housman's poems have a simplicity that defies analysis, a simplicity that we find in the best of Wordsworth and of Heine. They deal mainly with the life of Ludlow. They are at times pessimistic or fatalistic, but genial, always lyrical, with an evasive quality that is Housman's alone.

## OH, WHEN I WAS IN LOVE WITH YOU

Oh, when I was in love with you,
Then I was clean and brave,
And miles around the wonder grew
How well did I behave.

And now the fancy passes by,
And nothing will remain,
And miles around they'll say that I
Am quite myself again.

## TO AN ATHLETE DYING YOUNG

The time you won your town the race
We chaired you through the market-place;
Man and boy stood cheering by,
And home we brought you shoulder-high.

To-day, the road all runners come,
Shoulder-high we bring you home.
And set you at your threshold down,
Townsman of a stiller town.

Smart lad, to slip betimes away
From fields where glory does not stay,
And early though the laurel grows
It withers quicker than the rose.

Eyes the shady night has shut
Cannot see the record cut,
And silence sounds no worse than cheers
After earth has stopped the ears.

Now you will not swell the rout
Of lads that wore their honors out,
Runners whom renown outran
And the name died before the man.

So set, before its echoes fade,
The fleet foot on the sill of shade.
And hold to the low lintel up
The still-defended challenge-cup.

And round that early-laurelled head
Will flock to gaze the strengthless dead,
And find unwithered on its curls
The garland briefer than a girl's.

## WHITE IN THE MOON THE LONG ROAD LIES

White in the moon the long road lies,
The moon stands blank above;
White in the moon the long road lies
That leads me from my love.

Still hangs the hedge without a gust,
Still, still the shadows stay:
My feet upon the moonlit dust
Pursue the ceaseless way.

The world is round, so travellers tell,
And straight though reach the track,
Trudge on, trudge on, 'twill all be well,
The way will guide one back.

But ere the circle homeward hies
Far, far must it remove:
White in the moon the long road lies
That leads me from my love.

## INTO MY HEART AN AIR THAT KILLS

Into my heart an air that kills
From yon far country blows:
What are those blue remembered hills,
What spires, what farms are those?

That is the land of lost content,
I see it shining plain,
The happy highways where I went
And cannot come again.

## THINK NO MORE, LAD; LAUGH, BE JOLLY

Think no more, lad; laugh, be jolly:
Why should men make haste to die?
Empty heads and tongues a-talking
Make the rough road easy walking,
And the feather pate of folly
Bears the falling sky.

Oh, 'tis jesting, dancing, drinking
Spins the heavy world around.
If young hearts were not so clever,
Oh, they would be young for ever:
Think no more; 'tis only thinking
Lays lads underground.

## WHEN I CAME LAST TO LUDLOW

When I came last to Ludlow
Amidst the moonlight pale,
Two friends kept step beside me,
Two honest lads and hale.

Now Dick lies long in the churchyard,
And Ned lies long in jail,
And I come home to Ludlow
Amidst the moonlight pale.

## THE CARPENTER'S SON

"Here the hangman stops his cart:
Now the best of friends must part.
Fare you well, for ill fare I:
Live, lads, and I will die.

"Oh, at home had I but stayed
'Prenticed to my father's trade,
Had I stuck to plane and adze
I had not been lost, my lads.

"Then I might have built perhaps
Gallows-trees for other chaps,
Never dangled on my own,
Had I but left ill alone.

"Now, you see, they hang me high,
And the people passing by
Stop to shake their fists and curse;
So 'tis come from ill to worse.

"Here hang I, and right and left
Two poor fellows hang for theft:
All the same's the luck we prove,
Though the midmost hangs for love.

"Comrades all, that stand and gaze,
Walk henceforth in other ways;
See my neck and save your own:
Comrades all, leave ill alone.

"Make some day a decent end,
Shrewder fellows than your friend.
Fare you well, for ill fare I:
Live, lads, and I will die."

## JOHN MASEFIELD (1874– )

John Masefield was born in 1874. He went to sea at fourteen, and later was a worker in a factory and a general assistant in a New York City barroom. These facts are not so important as the statement ascribed to him that on a Sunday afternoon, during his factory period, he read Chaucer and was inflamed with the desire to be a poet. Whether or not this statement is literally true, it is obvious that Masefield has been greatly influenced by Chaucer.

Masefield stands high among British poets, not only of to-day, but of all time. He writes in the old tradition, but achieves remarkable freshness and life within accepted forms like the sonnet and rime royal. Many of his lyrics, particularly those in *Salt Water Ballads*, have almost become classic. As a story-teller in verse he has few equals. Especially vivid and at the same time poetic are *The Widow in Bye Street*, *The Everlasting Mercy*, *Dauber*, *Daffodil Fields*, and *Reynard the Fox*. Masefield is also a playwright. His *Tragedy of Nan*, modern and severely realistic, has the intensity and restraint of a Greek play. Among his prose works may be mentioned *A Mainsail Haul* and *Gallipoli*. The latter, an account of the disastrous Dardanelles campaign during the Great War, in which Masefield describes how the British almost accomplished the impossible, rises to the heights of the medieval *Song of Roland* — with a quotation from which Masefield prefaces his book.

### A CONSECRATION[1]

Not of the princes and prelates with peri-
wigged charioteers
Riding triumphantly laurelled to lap the fat
of the years, —
Rather the scorned — the rejected — the
men hemmed in with the spears;

The men of the tattered battalion which
fights till it dies,
Dazed with the dust of the battle, the din
and the cries,
The men with the broken heads and the
blood running into their eyes.

Not the be-medalled Commander, beloved of
the throne,
Riding cock-horse to parade when the bugles
are blown,
But the lads who carried the koppie and can-
not be known.

Not the ruler for me, but the ranker, the
tramp of the road,
The slave with the sack on his shoulders
pricked on with the goad,
The man with too weighty a burden, too
weary a load.

The sailor, the stoker of steamers, the man
with a clout,
The chantyman bent at the halliards putting
a tune to the shout,
The drowsy man at the wheel and the tired
lookout.

Others may sing of the wine and the wealth
and the mirth,
The portly presence of potentates goodly in
girth; —
Mine be the dirt and the dross, the dust and
scum of the earth!

Theirs be the music, the color, the glory, the
gold;
Mine be a handful of ashes, a mouthful of
mold.
Of the maimed, of the halt and the blind in
the rain and the cold —

Of these shall my songs be fashioned, my
tales be told.

Amen.

[1] From *Salt Water Ballads*. Copyright, 1916, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

### CARGOES[1]

Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir,
Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,

[1] From *The Story of a Round-House*. Copyright, 1918, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

With a cargo of ivory,
And apes and peacocks,
Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white wine.

Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores,
With a cargo of diamonds,
Emeralds, amethysts,
Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores.

Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack,
Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,
With a cargo of Tyne coal,
Road-rails, pig-lead,
Firewood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays.

## ROADWAYS[1]

One road leads to London,
One road runs to Wales,
My road leads me seawards
To the white dipping sails.

One road leads to the river,
As it goes singing slow;
My road leads to shipping,
Where the bronzed sailors go.

Leads me, lures me, calls me
To salt green tossing sea;
A road without earth's road-dust
Is the right road for me.

A wet road heaving, shining,
And wild with seagulls' cries,
A mad salt sea-wind blowing
The salt spray in my eyes.

My road calls me, lures me
West, east, south, and north;
Most roads lead men homewards,
My road leads me forth

To add more miles to the tally
Of grey miles left behind,
In quest of that one beauty
God put me here to find.

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## THE WEST WIND[1]

It's a warm wind, the west wind, full of bird
cries;
I never hear the west wind but tears are i
my eyes.
For it comes from the west lands, the ol
brown hills,
And April's in the west wind, and daffodils

It's a fine land, the west land, for hearts a
tired as mine;
Apple orchards blossom there, and the air'
like wine.
There is cool green grass there, where me
may lie at rest;
And the thrushes are in song there, flutin
from the nest.

"Will you not come home, brother? You
have been long away.
It's April, and blossom time, and white is th
spray:
And bright is the sun, brother, and warm i
the rain;
Will you not come home, brother, home to u
again?

"The young corn is green, brother, where th
rabbits run;
It's blue sky, and white clouds, and warm
rain and sun.
It's song to a man's soul, brother, fire to a
man's brain,
To hear the wild bees and see the merry
spring again.

"Larks are singing in the west, brother,
above the green wheat,
So will you not come home, brother, and rest
your tired feet?
I've a balm for bruised hearts, brother, sleep
for aching eyes,"
Says the warm wind, the west wind, full of
birds' cries.

It's the white road westwards is the road that
I must tread
To the green grass, the cool grass, and rest
for heart and head,
To the violets and the brown brooks and the
thrushes' song
In the fine land, the west land, the land
where I belong.

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## SEA-FEVER[1]

I must down to the seas again, to the lonely
sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship, and a star to steer
her by,
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and
the white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face and a grey
dawn breaking.

I must down to the seas again, for the call of
the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be
denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white
clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the brown spume,
and the sea-gulls crying.

I must down to the seas again to the vagrant
gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where
the wind's like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing
fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the
long trick's over.

## ON GROWING OLD[2]

Be with me, Beauty, for the fire is dying;
My dog and I are old, too old for roving.
Man, whose young passion sets the spindrift
flying,
Is soon too lame to march, too cold for
loving.

I take the book and gather to the fire,
Turning old yellow leaves; minute by min-
ute
The clock ticks to my heart; a withered
wire
Moves a thin ghost of music in the spinet.

I cannot sail your seas, I cannot wander
Your cornland nor your hill-land nor your
valleys
Ever again, nor share the battle yonder
Where the young knight the broken squadron
rallies;

Only stay quiet, while my mind remem-
bers
The beauty of fire from the beauty of em-
bers.

Beauty, have pity, for the strong have
power,
The rich their wealth, the beautiful their
grace,
Summer of man its sunlight and its flower,
Springtime of man all April in a face.

Only, as in the jostling in the Strand,
Where the mob thrusts or loiters or is
loud,
The beggar with the saucer in his hand
Asks only a penny from the passing crowd,

So, from this glittering world with all its
fashion,
Its fire and play of men, its stir, its march,
Let me have wisdom, Beauty, wisdom and
passion,
Bread to the soul, rain where the summers
parch.

Give me but these, and though the darkness
close
Even the night will blossom as the rose.

[1] From *The Story of a Round-House*. Copyright, 1918, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.
[2] From *Enslaved*. Copyright, 1920, by The Macmillan Company. Reprinted by permission.

## WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865– )

Yeats has been the foremost figure in the remarkable literary renaissance which has accompanied the national aspirations of Ireland during the last generation. He is essentially a poet, a mystic who firmly believes that truth may be reached through beauty, that the imagination and faith are more powerful than reason. Other Irish writers may surpass Yeats in special fields. Yeats, however, like his compatriot, Goldsmith, has touched nothing that he did not adorn. In 1901, with Lady Gregory, he instituted the Irish National Theater at the Abbey Theater, in Dublin. This gave impulse and direction to many Irish dramatists, notably Synge. Besides his plays and poems, Yeats has done splendid work in collecting and retelling the ancient legends of Ireland.

The complete works of Yeats are published by Macmillan. A good survey of modern Irish literature may be found in Lloyd Morris, *The Celtic Dawn* (Macmillan).

## WHEN YOU ARE OLD[1]

When you are old and gray and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true;
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face.

And bending down beside the glowing bars
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

## THE VOICE[1]

The wind blows out of the gates of the day,
The wind blows over the lonely of heart,
And the lonely of heart is withered away.
While the faëries dance in a place apart,
Shaking their milk-white feet in a ring,
Tossing their milk-white arms in the air;
For they hear the wind laugh and murmur and sing
Of a land where even the old are fair,
And even the wise are merry of tongue;
But I heard a reed of Coolaney say,
"When the wind has laughed and murmured and sung
The lonely of heart is withered away!"

## THE SONG OF THE HAPPY SHEPHERD[1]

The woods of Arcady are dead,
And over is their antique joy;
Of old the world on dreaming fed;
Gray Truth is now her painted toy;
Yet still she turns her restless head:
But O, sick children of the world,
Of all the many changing things
In dreary dancing past us whirled,
To the cracked tune that Chronos sings,
Words alone are certain good.
Where are now the warring kings,
Word be-mockers? —By the Rood
Where are now the warring kings?
An idle word is now their glory,
By the stammering schoolboy said,
Reading some entangled story:
The kings of the old time are fled
The wandering earth herself may be
Only a sudden flaming word
In clanging space a moment heard,
Troubling the endless reverie.

Then nowise worship dusty deeds,
Nor seek; for this is also sooth;
To hunger fiercely after truth,
Lest all thy toiling only breeds
New dreams, new dreams; there is no truth
Saving in thine own heart. Seek, then,
No learning from the starry men,
Who follow with the optic glass
The whirling ways of stars that pass —
Seek, then, for this is also sooth,
No word of theirs — the cold star-bane
Has cloven and rent their hearts in twain,
And dead is all their human truth.
Go gather by the humming-sea
Some twisted, echo-harboring shell,
And to its lips thy story tell,
And they thy comforters will be,
Rewarding in melodious guile,
Thy fretful words a little while,
Till they shall singing fade in ruth,
And die a pearly brotherhood;
For words alone are certain good:
Sing, then, for this is also sooth.
I must be gone: there is no grave
Where daffodil and lily wave,
And I would please the hapless faun,
Buried under the sleepy ground,
With mirthful songs before the dawn.
His shouting days with mirth were crowned
And still I dream he treads the lawn,
Walking ghostly in the dew,
Pierced by my glad singing through,
My songs of old earth's dreamy youth:
But ah! she dreams not now; dream thou!
For fair are poppies on the brow:
Dream, dream, for this is also sooth.

## THE FALLING OF THE LEAVES[1]

Autumn is over the long leaves that love us
And over the mice in the barley sheaves;
Yellow the leaves of the rowan above us,
And yellow the wet wild-strawberry leaves.

The hour of the waning of love has besee
us,
And weary and worn are our sad souls now
Let us part, ere the season of passion forge
us,
With a kiss and a tear on thy drooping brow

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# INDEXES

# INDEX TO THE MAP

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